



Norwegian Ministry
of Culture and Equality

Norwegian Ministry of Culture and Equality

**Report on the Norwegian Government's
follow-up of Beijing Declaration and
Platform (2020-2024)**

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Key development trends and new challenges in Norway related to the Norwegian government's follow-up of the Beijing declaration and platform (2020–2024)

1 Section One: Highlights

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action on women's rights was adopted at the UN's Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995. 2025 will mark 30 years since the conference. Norway's last report on Beijing+25 covered the period from 2014-2019. The time has come to submit a new report, which will in turn be collated into a regional report and later into a global report to celebrate Beijing+30. This is Norway's report for the period from 2020 to 2024.

The Minister of Culture and Equality invited civil society organisations and Sámediggi (the Sami parliament) and the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud, and other stakeholders, to a start-up meeting in February 2024. On 8 May, the ministry shared a draft report through an open consultation on the government's website and set a deadline for written input of 28 May. On 24 May, the minister invited stakeholders to a second consultation meeting, and the input received has been assessed by the relevant ministries. Norway's final report will be published on the government's website.

Gender equality starts in the family. By enhancing care policies and family policies, we enable both mothers and fathers to combine work and family life. A key factor for success is consistency in overarching political priorities over the course of years.

Women's participation in the labour market is central to gender equality. Norway has a strong tradition of involving different stakeholders in the development of new policies. The tripartite co-operation structure between authorities, employers, and employees helps to improve gender equality in the labour market.

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Some challenges remain, however. These include high rates of part-time work and gender segregation in education and the labour market. These are also the most significant origins of the gender pay gap. In light of the green transition and increasing digitalisation and given that few women embark on an education pathway within the STEM subjects, Norway is at risk of labour shortages in those roles that will form the backbone of our future society and that will contribute to our transformation into a green economy. Furthermore, there are few women in management positions in the private sector, and sexual and gender-based violence remains a serious and persistent barrier to achieving full gender equality in Norway.

An intersectoral perspective as reflected in Norway's anti-discrimination legislation is key to achieving gender equality for all women and girls. We need to take into account the needs and challenges of women and all their differences, including ethnic minority background, religious belief, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and age.

Research shows that women, to a greater extent than men, are subjected to serious and repeated violence in their close relationships, including sexual violence. One in five women have been raped in their lifetime. Recent data tells us that young women are especially vulnerable. Young women and women with disabilities, LBT+ women, women with ethnic minority backgrounds, and non-binary women are particularly vulnerable to sexual harassment.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which investigated Norwegianisation policies and injustice towards the Sami, Kven/Norwegian Finns, and Forest Finns, delivered its report to Parliament on 1 June 2023. The commission reveals, among other things, that Norwegianisation processes affected gender roles in Sami societies and introduced more patriarchal structures.

2 Section Two: Priorities, achievements, challenges, and setbacks

2.1 Question 1

2.1.1 The most important achievements in the last five years

2.1.1.1 Norway has more women in work than most other European countries

Employment in Norway is generally at a high level and has increased for both women and men in recent years. Much of this is connected to the fact that employment among women in Norway is high compared to a number of other countries in Europe and the OECD. In 2020, 64.5 percent of women and 69.7 percent of men between the ages of 15 and 74 were in work. Labour market participation has increased for both women and men and, in 2023, 67 percent of women and 73 percent of men between the ages of 15 and 74 were in work.¹ If we look at those aged 25 to 54, employment rates are much higher, at 82 percent of women and 86 percent of men. If we look at the women's cohort in isolation, the proportion of employed women with an immigrant background is lower. Since the rate of employment has increased more for men than for women in this period, the employment gap has increased. If we look only at the last year (2022–2023), the employment gap has narrowed somewhat. Political positions and appointments have become more evenly distributed between the sexes.

Most of the elected assemblies in Norway have long been dominated by men, but the trend in recent years shows that political positions and appointments have become more evenly distributed between the sexes. Most political parties have stipulated that there should be an internal gender balance in their parties. In 2017, the proportion of women in Parliament (Storting) exceeded 40 percent for the first time. Norway's parliament now has the most even gender balance in its history. In 2021, 45 percent of representatives in Parliament and 41 percent of representative in Samediggi

¹ Statistics Norway. (2024c).

(Sami parliament) were women.²³In 2023, women made up 45 percent of county council representatives and 41 percent of municipal council members.⁴ ⁵

2.1.1.2 The wage gap between women and men is slowly closing

Women's average monthly salary as a proportion of men's average monthly salary has increased in recent years. In 2020, a woman made 87.5 percent of a man's salary. In 2023, this had increased to 88.3 percent.⁶ Much of the pay gap can be explained by the fact that women and men work in different fields in the labour market, work different hours, and have different roles in the job hierarchy. A small part of the wage gap remains unexplained. This applies even when we look at women and men with the same education, in the same profession, and with the same position and seniority.

Although women's average gross income as a share of men's varies somewhat from year to year, overall it has not increased since 2020. Gross income includes salary, business income, pensions, and capital income. The income gap is larger than the wage gap in Norway.

2.1.1.3 A systematic effort in the state sector has returned good results

In the state sector, Norway has come a long way in its efforts to achieve a gender balance. The gender equality work that has been ongoing for many years has delivered good results. In 2023, 44 percent of senior managers within the state sector were women, and 44 percent of senior managers in the directorates were women. Among the director generals of the ministries, 52 percent were women, while the permanent secretaries consisted of 10 women and 7 men. If we look at all government managerial positions as a whole, the majority were held by women at 53 percent.⁷

2.1.1.4 Better gender balance on the boards of Norwegian companies

Norway is the first country in the world to introduce a requirement for gender-balanced boards in Norwegian companies of a certain size. The objective is to accelerate progress in respect of gender balance and have more women in boardrooms.

² Statistics Norway. (2021a).

³ Statistics Norway. (2021b).

⁴ Statistics Norway. (2024e).

⁵ Statistics Norway. (2024f).

⁶ Statistics Norway. (2024b).

⁷ Statistics Norway. (2024a).

The bill is based on a historic agreement in the tripartite collaboration. The new requirement came into force on 1 January 2024.⁸ The requirement will be introduced in stages. The first stage by 31 December 2024, the second stage by 30 June 2025, the third stage by 30 June 2026, the fourth stage by 30 June 2027 and the last stage by 30 June 2028.

The new rules cover approximately 8,000 companies. The first stage of its introduction includes companies with more than NOK 100 million in total operating and financial income. Thereafter, the regulation will be extended each year. By 2028, the regulation will include companies with more than 30 employees or more than NOK 50 million in total operating and financial income. The regulation will then apply to around 20,000 companies. Norwegian companies will have to recruit almost 12,700 new board members by 2028. When the first stage is introduced next year, around 6,600 new board members will be needed, most of them women.

Twenty years ago, 15 percent of board members in Norwegian limited companies were women. This number has since increased to 20 percent. The amendment to the law aims to introduce requirements for the gender composition of the boards of Norwegian companies of a certain size. If these companies have at least three board members, a maximum of approximately 60 percent of them may be of the same sex. There are separate requirements for the gender composition of alternate members, and for board members who are elected by and among employees.

2.1.2 The biggest challenges of the last five years

2.1.2.1 Gender-based violence and abuse (harassment) and incitement

There are large differences in the types of violence women and men are exposed to. Research shows that women are subjected to serious and repeated violence in close relationships, including sexual violence, to a greater extent than men. One in five women have been raped in their lifetime.⁹ Young women and women with disabilities, LBT+ women, women with ethnic minority backgrounds, and non-binary women are

⁸ Amendment act to company legislation, etc. (2023).

⁹ Dale et al. (2023).

particularly vulnerable to sexual harassment.¹⁰ Men are more subjected to physical violence, outside of close relationships. As many as half of Norwegian men report that they have been subjected to serious physical violence.¹¹ It is also men who are most often the perpetrators of violence.¹²

There are still challenges when it comes to gender stereotypes and traditional gender roles in Norway. There is still a need for competence and preventative efforts in respect of violence, sexual harassment, and harassment of women and girls in all parts of the population, perhaps particularly among the younger generations. Furthermore, it is necessary to be aware of the importance of gender, roles, norms, and traditions in the development and implementation of policy within this area.

2.1.2.2 Gender-segregated labour market, educational and vocational choices

The labour market continues to be gender-segregated. There are still systematic differences in the labour market which mean that financial resources in connection with work are distributed unevenly between the sexes. On average, women still earn less than men and, on average, have fewer financial resources. Far more women than men work part-time, while women and men work in different sectors, have different occupations, and are associated with different industries. Women dominate in the education, health, and social care sectors, while men dominate in construction, transport, industry, agriculture, and more.

The gender segregation of the labour market is relevant in terms of the growing need for skills in several sectors. This relates both to various industries not being allowed to leverage the expertise and talent of both sexes and to a growing need for staff and a workforce which reflect the composition (gender and diversity) of the population. For example, boys and men do not encounter enough male role models and representatives in the health and social care sector or at school. This applies in particular to the female-dominated health and social care sector, and to sectors and companies that recruit from vocational education programmes. Gender segregation is especially prevalent in vocational education programmes. The challenges posed by the

¹⁰ Bjerkebakke et al. (2024).

¹¹ Dale et al. (2023).

¹² See: <https://www.bufdir.no/statistikk-og-analyse/kjonnsligestilling/vold-kjonn#section-474>.

gender-segregated labour market have been investigated and discussed in several green papers and reports to Parliament in recent years.^{13 14}

2.1.2.3 Few women at the top level of business

Women are poorly represented at the very top level of business, and subsequently they are not part of important decision-making processes. Women make up only 20 percent of board members in limited companies in Norway. Since 2004, the proportion of women on boards has increased only from 15 to 20 percent. This shows that progress is overly sluggish, and we are missing out on talent and resources. In 2024, only 18 percent of general managers in limited companies are women, while 83 percent are men.¹⁵ The CORE Senior Manager Barometer for 2022 showed that almost 85 percent of managing directors in the 200 largest companies in the Norwegian business sector are men. Only a quarter of the companies had struck a gender balance in their senior management. And only 20 of the 200 largest companies had struck a gender balance in the composition of both the board and senior management. Only one in five entrepreneurs are women.¹⁶

2.1.3 Setbacks for gender equality in Norway in the last five years

2.1.3.1 Increase in homicide rates in close relationships

In 2023, 35 homicide cases were registered involving 38 victims, of whom 17 were killed by current or former intimate partners.¹⁷ This is higher than the average for the past ten years. In the period 2020 to 2022, 91 percent of the perpetrators in homicide cases were men. This is the same as in 2023. The statistics also show that slightly more women than men are killed. In 2023, 58 percent of victims were killed by someone they were in a close relationship with, and the statistics show that most often women are killed by someone with whom they are in a close relationship. In the period 2020 to 2023, 34 women were killed by a current or former intimate partner.

At the start of 2024, several appalling homicides within close relationships were reported. A permanent commission for intimate partner homicide is being established

¹³ See Report to the Storting 19 (2023–2024).

¹⁴ Report to the Storting 20 (2023–2024).

¹⁵ Statistics Norway. (2024g).

¹⁶ CORE – Centre for Research on Gender Equality. (2022a).

¹⁷ Norwegian Police. (2024).

in 2024. The commission will review all cases of intimate partner homicide in order to uncover system failures, learn from mistakes, and further develop efforts to prevent serious violence and intimate partner homicide.

2.1.3.2 Increase in the number of rapes

Nearly nine out of ten victims of reported rape are women.¹⁸ Two national surveys on violence and abuse in the population have been carried out, one in 2013 and the other in 2022.¹⁹ ²⁰ The survey from 2022 shows an increase in the number of rapes since 2013. The findings show that one in five women state that they have been raped during their lifetime. In most cases, the perpetrator is stated to be male. Younger women are most at risk. A survey on violence and abuse among young people aged 16 to 19 confirms this picture. The extent of sexual violence has almost doubled for boys and girls since 2015 and is almost four times as high for girls as for boys, with boys/men largely being the perpetrators of sexual violence.²¹

The rape committee's investigation concludes that rape is an unsolved societal problem and that the authorities have not succeeded in preventing or combating rape in Norway.²² The investigation provides an overall overview of the knowledge base, assesses the challenges, and makes some clear recommendations to the authorities regarding further follow-up.

2.1.3.3 Health and mental health, especially among young women

Reports show a rise in mental health problems among children, young people, and especially young women, both before and during the pandemic. Experts are analysing data from surveys such as Ungdata and SHoT to understand the reasons behind the increase in mental health issues. The Norwegian Institute of Public Health (FHI) highlights social media use, screen time, sleep issues, and stress as potential factors. More research is needed on the impact of screen time and social media on mental health. The government has appointed a committee to review and propose measures regarding children's screen use, sleep, and mental health.

¹⁸ Statistics Norway. (2024h).

¹⁹ Dale et al. (2023).

²⁰ Thoresen et al. (2014).

²¹ Frøyland et al. (2023).

²² Green paper NOU 2024: 4. (2024).

2.2 Question 2 – Top five priorities

2.2.1 A society without violence, rape, sexual harassment, or incitement

The committee on intimate partner homicide was established by royal decree on 12 October 2018. The committee was appointed to review cases of murder where the perpetrator is a current or former partner and to provide recommendations that can help prevent such murders in the future. The committee reviewed criminal case documents in 19 cases and, in particular, assessed the police and support services' handling of the cases before the murder. The committee identified several challenges in their handling and believes that there is potential for better prevention.

The cases reviewed by the committee show a clear gender dimension. The committee stated that it is usually men who commit intimate partner homicide, and that women are more likely to be killed by their current or former intimate partner than by anyone else. Norwegian research on intimate partner homicides committed between 1990 and 2012 show that the victim was a woman in 89 percent of the cases.

In December 2020, the committee on intimate partner homicide presented its report (Green paper NOU 2020: 17,²³ "Forewarned homicide? – Report by the committee on homicide in intimate relationships") and recommended, among other things, the establishment of a permanent commission for intimate partner homicide. Some of the committee's recommendations revolve around ensuring that the police and support services utilise existing measures in a timely manner. The committee's report underwent a broad hearing in the spring of 2021.

The government is establishing a permanent commission which will review all cases of intimate partner homicide in order to uncover system failures, learn from mistakes, and further develop efforts to prevent serious violence and intimate partner homicide. The commission will start its work during the current year.

Legislative amendments to the Norwegian Penal Code on the increased use of reverse violence alarms were adopted by Parliament (Storting) in December 2023 and came into force on 8 April 2024. The new provisions shift the burden from the victim of violence and threats to the perpetrator. This will be one of several protective measures the police have at their disposal to protect victims.

²³ Green paper NOU 2020: 17 (2017).

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A socio-economic analysis²⁴ carried out on behalf of the government in 2023 estimates that violence in close relationships cost Norwegian society a total of NOK 92.7 billion in 2021. The costs are greatest for the victims.

In December 2023, the government presented “Escalation plan against violence and abuse of children and violence in close relationships (2024–2028) – Safety for all”.²⁵ The plan was adopted by Parliament (Storting) in May 2024 and will facilitate more targeted prevention and better help and protection for persons subject to violence and abuse.

The rape committee was appointed by royal decree on 17 February 2023 and submitted its report (*Green paper NOU 2024: 4 “Rape – an unsolved societal problem”*) to the Ministry of Justice and Public Security on 8 March 2024. The rape committee was established to investigate issues related to the prevention of rape, support services for rape victims, and the prosecution of rape cases. The committee found that rape is an under-communicated social and public health problem that is not sufficiently prioritised by the authorities. Among other things, the committee found that too little is done to prevent rape, that there is too much variation in health services for rape victims, and that the investigation of rape cases is not sufficiently prioritised by the police and prosecution authorities. The committee's recommendations are aimed at strengthening the prioritisation of rape at the authority level and in the service apparatus. The committee's report has been sent for a broad hearing with a deadline for responses of 14 June 2024.

The bill to ratify the ILO Convention on Eliminating Violence and Harassment in the World of Work was passed by Parliament (Storting) in June 2023. The Working Environment Act²⁶ specifies the prohibition of sexual harassment, in addition to the duties of safety representatives relating to the psychosocial work environment. These changes came into force on 1 January of this year.

2.2.2 Part-time and full-time

Ensuring that both women and men can work full-time is important from both a gender equality and a socio-economic perspective. This is important for safeguarding women's economic freedom and strengthening their position in the labour market. It also plays a

²⁴ Pedersen et al. (2023).

²⁵ Proposition 36 S (2023–2024).

²⁶ Amendment act to the Working Environment Act (2023).

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central role in employees' participation, sense of security, and ability to plan ahead. Consequently, the government has an initiative to improve people's opportunities to work in full-time roles.

From 2022, all public-sector and the largest private-sector employers are required by law to map the prevalence of involuntary part-time work. In 2023, the right to full-time employment was strengthened in the Norwegian Working Environment Act. This means that the need for part-time positions must be documented and discussed with union representatives before the employer can recruit for part-time positions. The preferential rights of part-time employees to increase their full-time employment ratio and to take on extra shifts have been bolstered.

The government is continuing to pursue the full-time fund ("heltidspotten") follow-up research programme through to the implementation of various trial projects to reduce the use of part-time roles. In 2024 and 2023, the government allocated NOK 12.6 million for this. The projects that receive funding have been selected in collaboration with the labour market partners.

2.2.3 Gender equality in education and the labour market

In April 2024, a report was presented to Parliament (Storting) on vocational education in the university and college sector.²⁷ The report looks at certain education programmes – such as engineering, teaching, and health and social studies – and describes common challenges related to recruitment, gender balance, and diversity. The government proposes the following: 1) more experience-based knowledge to ensure that students are equipped for the professions in which they will work, 2) more flexible education programmes, so that vocational communities can design programmes that are closely aligned with practice, and 3) more accessible programmes for more people and opening doors for more practitioners to both teach and undergo further education themselves.

In February 2024, the government and 11 organisations in Norway's kindergarten and schools sector presented a recruitment strategy for teacher training and the teaching profession for 2024 to 2030. The goals include making both the teaching profession and the nursery profession more attractive and reflective of the diversity in society. This includes recruitment projects that will help to improve diversity and the gender balance

²⁷ Report to the Storting 19 (2023–2024).

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in schools and kindergartens, and a strengthening of the knowledge base regarding which measures best reach the various target groups.²⁸

The dropout figures for upper secondary education for the last five years show that boys have a higher dropout rate than girls. The government wants a higher degree of completion in education and a more even gender balance and has introduced several measures to achieve this: in the new Norwegian Education Act, which comes into force in August of this year, everyone will have the right to upper secondary education until they have achieved an academic or vocational qualification. The three-year limit stipulated in youth legislation will be removed.

The curriculum for the education pathway was renewed in 2022. Good career guidance is important for showcasing opportunities to make non-traditional choices and in efforts to counter a gender-segregated labour market. Guidance can also help ensure that young people do not interrupt their education and end up excluded from the labour market. As a follow-up to the education completion reform, the Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills has been commissioned to develop new skills standards for career guidance.

2.2.4 Family and working life

Kindergartens, after-school care facilities, and a common school for all children and young people, regardless of social and geographical background, are among the most effective means of evening out social differences. Children must have equal opportunities, free from traditional gender expectations, from the outset of their kindergarten and school education. Accessible and affordable kindergartens are crucial for parental and especially women's participation in the labour market and for integration. Today, we see that minority-language children have lower levels of participation in kindergarten and after-school care facilities than others. In 2024, the government will cut the maximum fee for kindergarten places.

Parental leave must be generous and ensure that both parents have an independent claim to leave to spend with their child. Paternity leave is an important gender equality tool and has been changed several times in the past five years to strengthen the position of fathers as caretakers.

²⁸ Ministry of Education and Research. (2024b).

Changes to the Norwegian National Insurance Act in 2024 that strengthen fathers' rights to parental allowance mean that fathers with an accrued right to parental allowance will be given the opportunity to withdraw 10 weeks of parental allowance without any activity requirements being placed on the mother. This represents a strengthening of fathers' rights. Calculations from the Labour and Welfare Administration show that around 4,900 fathers a year have gained new rights with this change. Changes to the law that come into force on 1 July 2024 mean that the parental allowance period for receiving 80 percent of the parental allowance will change for children born on or after 1 July 2024. The joint period is being extended by 11 days of parental allowance, so that the total payment is approximately the same whether the parents choose to receive 80 or 100 percent of the parental allowance. This means that fewer women will choose to take unpaid leave while waiting for a kindergarten place.

2.2.5 Women's health

The goal of the government's health and welfare policy is to prevent disease and create a society that promotes good health for all. If we are to ensure that everyone in Norway has equal opportunities to achieve good health, a good quality of life, and access to health and care services regardless of gender, we must have knowledge of the kind of gender differences that exist and why.

In March 2023, the Women's Health Committee presented the report *The Big Difference: On Women's Health in Norway and Why Sex and Gender Matter (Green paper NOU 2023: 5)*. The committee has developed better insight into the challenges that women face, linked to the risk and occurrence of disease, and the use of health and care services throughout their lives. The committee has also looked at how the gender perspective and gender differences are handled in the health and care sector.²⁹

In the National Health and Co-operation Plan, the government presents the work that has been initiated in the area of women's health. Several of the measures are in line with the Women's Health Committee's proposals. Among other things, the government presents the policy for a coherent and comprehensive pregnancy, birth, and maternity service.³⁰ The Women's Health Committee's report and the consultation input form part of the basis for the new strategy for women's health that is currently being developed.

²⁹ Green paper NOU 2023: 5. (2023).

³⁰ Report to the Storting 9 (2023–2024).

2.3 Question 3 – Women and girls in minority groups

In December 2020, the Solberg II government submitted a report to Parliament (White Paper) on national minorities. This is the second time such a report has been presented. The purpose of the report is to outline policy trends in respect of national minorities over the past 20 years and how the government can help to strengthen national minorities' languages, culture, and situation in Norwegian society going forwards. The report mentions, among other things, the forced sterilisation of women.³¹

We also see gender-related differences among those with disabilities. Women with disabilities are allocated the most aids for adapting the home, while men receive the most motorised and electrified aids, or aids that help to increase exercise and fitness.³² The government wants everyone to be able to participate and live free lives, regardless of disability. Participation in recreation has an impact on participation in other areas. In 2024, the government will distribute NOK 29.4 million across 126 initiatives to enable civil society to provide good holiday and recreation opportunities for people with disabilities. The companion certificate scheme has been digitalised, which is a clear improvement for users. This solution became available on 1 January. In January, the Minister of Culture and Equality was handed a report³³ addressing the issue of whether the UN convention in this area should be incorporated directly into Norwegian law.³⁴ The government has sent the report out for a broad consultation.

In November 2023, the government drew up a new action plan for racism and discrimination (2024–2027). The plan covers all groups that are exposed to racism and discrimination. The action plan is aimed in particular towards the racism and discrimination experienced by young people, as well as access to and progression in the labour market. Gender is one of several grounds for discrimination in situations involving compound discrimination.³⁵

In February 2023, the government's action plan for gender and sexual diversity (2023–2026) was presented. The plan contains 49 measures to help improve the quality of life

³¹ Report to the Storting 12 (2020–2021).

³² Solberg et al. (2019).

³³ The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)– Incorporation in the Human Rights Act, Part I and Part II (2024).

³⁴ The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities – Incorporation in the Human Rights Act, Part I and Part II (2024).

³⁵ Ministry of Culture and Equality (2023b).

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for people who identify as queer, safeguard their rights, and improve acceptance of gender diversity and sexual diversity. The plan's three priority focus areas are: people who identify as queer with a minority background and in religious communities; transgender people and people with gender incongruity; and inclusive sports.³⁶

In 2023, a broad majority in Parliament (Storting) adopted a ban on conversion therapy. The provision in the Norwegian Penal Code entered into force on 1 January 2024 and states that conversion therapy is punishable.

The National Sami Competence Centre (NASAK) was established in 2022 to improve the quality of services for Sami children, adults, and families in child welfare, family welfare, and crisis shelters. NASAK will ensure more equality in the services provided to the Sami population. NASAK will help to develop and implement the language and cultural skills and capabilities needed in the work of the child welfare services, family welfare services, and crisis shelters with the Sami population. The centre is responsible for training and guiding these services throughout the country and is present in several Sami areas.³⁷

Included in "The escalation plan to combat violence against and abuse of children and violence in close relationships (2024–2028) – Safety for all" includes a separate chapter on violence and abuse in Sami communities.³⁸

In 2021, the government presented an action plan regarding negative social control and honour-related violence (including forced marriage and genital mutilation) (2021–2024).³⁹ Although both women and men can be exposed to negative social control and honour-related violence, the victim is a woman in approximately three out of four cases. Control of girls' and women's sexuality is a fundamental driver in such cases. Several special support services with specialist expertise in negative social control and honour-related violence both assist vulnerable people directly and provide guidance to employees in the day-to-day support services that follow up on individual cases. These services have been strengthened over the past five years, most recently in the state budget for 2024.

³⁶ Ministry of Culture and Equality. (2023).

³⁷ See more information about NASAK at: <https://www.bufdir.no/nasak/>.

³⁸ Proposition 36 S (2023–2024).

³⁹ Ministry of Education and Research. (2021).

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The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs hosts a national conference on racism on 21 March each year in connection with the UN's International Day against Racism. The theme for the conference in 2024 was children and young people's experiences of racism and discrimination.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which investigated Norwegianisation policies and injustice towards the Sami, Kven/Norwegian Finns, and Forest Finns, delivered its report to Parliament (Storting) on 1 June 2023. The commission reveals, among other things, that Norwegianisation processes affected gender roles in Sami societies and introduced more patriarchal structures. The commission sees a need for measures to ensure that Sami women and children are fully protected and safeguarded against psychological, physical, and sexual violence.⁴⁰ The commission's report will be debated in Parliament in 2024.

Over the last few years, the government has enhanced several grant schemes intended to improve equality and combat discrimination. There are grants for operations and activities for actors who work to prevent discrimination against minorities. In addition, a new grant scheme was established in 2022 to help promote anti-racism, diversity, and dialogue, as well as to help to improve knowledge and awareness in the majority population about racism, discrimination, and hate speech.

2.4 Question 4 – Effect of crises

2.4.1 COVID-19 pandemic

Research, analysis, and other types of knowledge production have been absolutely crucial for understanding the COVID-19 pandemic. Men experienced increased mortality and a greater risk of hospitalisation than women. Women have had several late effects after COVID-19⁴¹ and have reported more frequent side effects from vaccination than men. In connection with infection prevention advice during the pandemic, separate advice was drawn up for pregnant and breastfeeding women.⁴² The student health and wellbeing survey (SHoT) showed a significant increase in reported mental health problems in spring 2021 compared to previous rounds of the survey conducted before

⁴⁰ Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2023).

⁴¹ Norwegian Institution for Public Health, (2024a).

⁴² Norwegian Institution for Public Health, (2023).

the pandemic. Although the increase is seen in both sexes, it is greater among women.⁴³ The student mental health and drug use grant scheme administered by the Norwegian Directorate of Health was expanded during the pandemic. It promotes good health and wellbeing among students and prevents problems related to drug use. When society and services shut down, it was a challenge to reach out to the population with information that crisis shelters and other services for those subjected to violence and abuse were still open and available. The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs therefore implemented a number of measures to spread information about the services available to those subjected to violence and abuse during the pandemic. Among other things, the directorate distributed several films, translated into a number of languages, about the availability of crisis shelters.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs was commissioned by the Ministry of Culture and Equality to monitor and map the consequences of the pandemic for gender equality. Through dialogue with civil society and the gathering of knowledge and statistics, as well as through self-initiated investigations, the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs prepared ten reports on the impact of the pandemic on gender equality. The last report was published in summer 2021 and summarises the pandemic's impact on gender equality from March 2020 to June 2021.⁴⁴ The reports contain not only an overview of available knowledge about the impact of the pandemic on gender equality but also the authorities' recommended measures.⁴⁵ The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs has commenced a major research initiative on the impact of the pandemic on growing up and equality.⁴⁶ The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs also organised a national (digital) conference on the impact of the pandemic on gender equality.

⁴³ Norwegian Institution for Public Health, (2021).

⁴⁴ Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs. (2021b).

⁴⁵ Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs. (2021b).

⁴⁶ See: <https://www.oslomet.no/forskning/forskningsprosjekter/langtidskonsekvenser-korona-oppvekst-likestilling>.

2.5 Question 5 – Priorities for the next five years

2.5.1 New strategies and action plans for equality

Over the course of 2024, the government will launch a strategy for equality between women and men that will provide a direction for equality efforts in several priority areas of society. The strategy will address economic independence and a gender-equal labour market; fewer gender-segregated educational choices; freedom from negative social control and honour-related violence; better health for women and men; a society without violence, rape, sexual harassment or incitement and an effective policy apparatus for equality.

The government has started work on three new action plans in the field of racism and discrimination – one against Sami hate, one against anti-Semitism, and one against discrimination and hate towards Muslims – which will highlight challenges linked to gender. The government is also starting work on a cross-sectoral strategy for research on equality and non-discrimination.

2.5.2 Parliamentary report on sexual harassment

The government is working on a parliamentary report (White Paper) on sexual harassment to be presented in 2024. The report will survey the extent of sexual harassment and propose preventative measures in the labour market and education sector, in cultural and leisure arenas, and against sexual harassment online.

2.5.3 Changes to the pension system

In March 2024, a majority of the parties in Parliament agreed on a new pension settlement. This means, among other things, that the age limits in the pension system are being gradually increased in line with the increase in life expectancy effective from the 1964 cohort. The age limit for social rights such as sickness benefits, unemployment benefits, and work verification benefits are being extended in line with the change in the retirement age. A hardship scheme will be established in the national insurance system, which will be introduced at the same time as the other changes in the pension system. The employers and employee organisations will be involved in the design of the hardship scheme. The general age limit for government employees is also being increased from 70 to 72, in the same way as in the private sector. Furthermore, there is agreement on a higher pension for people with disabilities and an improvement in the

indexation of the minimum pension. Moreover, an improvement in the indexation of the minimum pension will benefit women in particular.

2.5.4 Action plan on negative social control and honour-related violence

The government has decided to develop a new action plan on negative social control and honour-related violence for the period 2025 to 2028, when the current plan expires. In 2022, the government appointed a judicial committee to investigate legal issues in cases relating to negative social control, honour-related violence, forced marriage, genital mutilation, and psychological violence. Issues relating to involuntary stays abroad are also included in this work. The committee assesses whether the current regulations provide sufficiently good legal protection for vulnerable people, or whether there is a need for change. The judicial committee delivered its report in June 2024. The report has been sent out for public consultation. Recommendations in the report and from public consultation will be considered in connection with the work on a new action plan against negative social control and honour-related violence (2025–2028).

The national accommodation and support programme for people over the age of 18 who are subjected to negative social control and honour-related violence will be expanded in 2024 in a three-year pilot. The pilot will expand the target group to people over the age of 18 who have returned from involuntary stays abroad but are not covered by the current programme. This may include people who are not at risk or who have additional problems which render them unable to stay in their current accommodation for their own sake or the sake of others.

2.5.5 Women's health and mental health

The Women's Health Committee's report (Green paper NOU 2023: 5) forms part of the knowledge base for the government's strategy for women's health and the gender perspective in health. The Women's Health Committee states that gender is important for our health. Women and men are biologically different, they live different lives, and they are affected differently by disease. The committee concludes that insufficient attention has been paid to the inequalities between the sexes in the health and care services, in health policy, and in medical research and education.⁴⁷ The government is planning to present a strategy on women's health in 2024.

⁴⁷ Green paper NOU 2023: 5. (2023).

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Norway will present a new cancer strategy over the course of 2024. The cancer strategy, which refers to cancers that are common among women and cancers that are common among men, will, among other things, focus on prevention, equal access to good and documented effective new treatment methods, and the follow-up of patients after cancer.

General practitioner services are services with universal access for the entire population and which are important for ensuring equality in health services and reducing social inequality in health. Over time, GP services have faced major and increasing challenges with recruitment and continuity of services. These challenges affect vulnerable patients the most and have made access to equal health services difficult. The government has therefore substantially boosted funding for GP services over the past three years. The National Health and Co-operation Plan (2024) states that there must be sufficient capacity, quality, and diversity in the services offered, and that the government wants to develop interdisciplinary GP surgeries with clear management and is considering several legal and financial instruments to achieve this.

The Public Health Report (Parliamentary report (White Paper) no.15 (2022–2023)) states that the government will present a new strategy for sexual health in 2024.

A public committee has submitted proposals for a new abortion law. The majority of the committee's members proposed increasing the limit for a woman's self-determination from 12 to 18 weeks of pregnancy.

The Women's Health Committee points out that women with an immigrant background are a particularly vulnerable group in connection with pregnancy, birth, and maternity. In 2023, the Norwegian Directorate of Health published revised guidelines for pregnancy care, which recommend more guidance and follow-up during pregnancy for those who need it and those in vulnerable situations in particular. Pregnant women born outside Norway may have special needs for follow-up during pregnancy, birth, and maternity. The guidelines apply to all women but include special advice for the follow-up of pregnant women born outside Norway. Women from certain countries are at greater risk of complications in connection with childbirth. In 2024, the Norwegian Directorate of Health has also published revised guidelines for maternity and obstetrics care. A goal in the National Health and Co-operation Plan (2024) is to provide better services to pregnant women who need extra support and follow-up.

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Health centres and school health services are one of the most important services aimed at those who are pregnant, families with babies, and children and young people and their guardians. The government has strengthened health centres and school health services both professionally and financially.

In June 2023, the government presented Report to Parliament (White Paper) no. 23 (2023-2033) Escalation plan for mental health. The overall goal of the escalation plan is for more people to experience good mental health and quality of life, and for those who need mental health care to receive good and easily accessible help. The plan has three focus areas: promotion of good mental health and preventative mental health work; good services where people live; and services for people with long-term and complex needs. The plan has eight performance targets for monitoring development and goal attainment throughout the plan period.

2.5.6 Gender perspectives in climate and environmental policy

The government wants more information about and insight into when the incorporation of gender perspectives in climate and environmental policy is necessary and relevant in order to contribute to better and more effective policy in these areas in Norway. The government wants to acquire more knowledge about this, among other things, by following up on the Nordic reports on climate and equality, the Action Plan for Women, Peace, and Security (2023–2030), and goal 23 of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity to ensure gender equality and a gender-responsive approach to biodiversity action.

3 Section Three: Progress – 12 critical areas of concern

3.1 Question 6 – Gender equality in the world of work

3.1.1 Co-operation between authorities, employers, and employee organisations

Through tripartite collaboration, the Labour Market and Pension Policy Council regularly addresses equality as a topic. A separate working group under the council deals with equality in the labour market. The group is co-ordinated by the Ministry of Culture and Equality. It will help to promote equality between women and men in the labour market and to promote increased activity to achieve equality in business, as well as contribute to a strengthened knowledge base for policy.

3.1.2 Lower fixed fee for kindergartens, free core time and after-school facilities

In 2024, the maximum fee for daycare will be set at a historically low NOK 2,000 per month, and at NOK 1,500 in the least central municipalities. The government has introduced 20 hours of free core time for low-income households, and we are increasing the income limit from 1 August. In 2022, all pupils in grade one were offered 12 hours of free after-school care per week. This was extended to also include grade two from autumn 2023 and will be extended to also apply to pupils in grade three from August 2024.

3.1.3 Activity and reporting obligations

In 2020, greater activity and reporting obligations for employers came into force. This means that employers must undertake to promote equality and prevent discrimination in areas such as recruitment, promotion and development opportunities, facilitation, the opportunity to combine work and family life, and pay and working conditions, as well as undertake to reduce harassment, sexual harassment, and gender-based violence.

Public-sector and larger private-sector employers also have an obligation to conduct a survey of women and men who involuntarily and temporarily work part-time and who have taken parental leave, as well as of the gender balance in the business. Furthermore, these employers – in collaboration with employee representatives – must map pay differences between women and men who do equal work and work of equal value. The results must break down the pay differences and gender balance at different job levels and must include all types of pay (including overtime and bonuses). Employers must also account for gender differences and their work with gender equality in their annual report. The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs has developed guidance material, survey forms, templates, and webinars to equip employers in their work with equality and to help employers conduct surveys in line with the new legal requirements.⁴⁸ Furthermore, the directorate has implemented information campaigns to make employers aware of their obligations and inform them about the digital guidance material that is available.

⁴⁸ See: www.bufdir.no/arp.

3.1.4 Changes to the Working Environment Act

A greater proportion of women than men work part-time. The government's clear goal is that permanent, full-time positions should be the rule of thumb in the Norwegian labour market. The Working Environment Act has been amended such that the need for part-time employees must be documented and discussed with union representatives before the employer can recruit for part-time positions. In addition, the preferential rights of part-time employees have been strengthened. This applies both to preferential rights for increased FTE ratios and to preferential rights for extra shifts. We are continuing to pursue the full-time work ("heltidspotten") programme through to the implementation of various trial projects to reduce the use of part-time roles. This will benefit women in particular, as they work part-time more often than men.

3.1.5 Public committee on women's occupational health

The government has, on the recommendation of the Women's Health Committee,⁴⁹ set up a public committee to look specifically at women's occupational health. The committee shall assess the status of knowledge and investigate women's conditions for participating in and withdrawing from the labour market, as well as their occupational health and sickness absence. Furthermore, the committee shall assess and recommend relevant measures to improve women's occupational health. The committee's report shall be presented by 1 April 2025.

3.1.6 Norway's first entrepreneur report

In 2024, the government will submit Norway's first parliamentary report (White Paper) on entrepreneurship. A goal of the government is for public schemes for innovative start-up companies to give female and male entrepreneurs the same real opportunities. The report will help to boost female entrepreneurship and realise the untapped potential in the area.

3.1.7 Parliamentary report (White Paper) on ownership

In 2023, the government presented a new ownership report to Parliament (White Paper) with clear expectations for companies with a state ownership stake. These expectations relate to the promotion of equality, diversity, and inclusion. The ownership report for

⁴⁹ Green paper NOU 2023: 5. (2023).

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2022⁵⁰ shows that the proportion of women among managing directors in companies with a state ownership stake was 33 percent, and 42 percent in executive management. Updated figures for 2023 will be presented in the state's ownership report in June. The government's expectations will continue to be high. This is both smart and right.

3.1.8 Equality efforts in the state tariff area

In 2023, 44 percent of senior managers within the state sector were women and 44 percent of senior managers in the directorates were women. Among the director generals of the ministries, 52 percent were women, while the permanent secretaries consisted of 10 women and 7 men. The majority of all government managerial positions were held by women at 53 percent.

3.1.9 Au pair scheme abolished

The au pair scheme was abolished on 15 March 2024. Applications registered after this date will not be granted. Au pairs who currently reside in Norway, or who registered an electronic application online and booked an appointment to submit a complete application for a residence permit no later than 15 March 2024, can obtain a residence permit in Norway as an au pair for up to two years from the initial permit being granted. Existing measures to protect au pairs from abuse will continue as long as needed. This abolition is in line with the government's platform "Hurdal plattform".

3.2 Question 7 – Work-life and family balance

3.2.1 Mapping the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on equality

In order to monitor how the COVID-19 pandemic affected equality between men and women, the Directorate of Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir) tasked with monitoring and mapping the impact of the pandemic on gender equality and following developments and reporting regularly to the ministry. Among the topics that the directorate frequently reported on was the distribution of unpaid care work in the home when schools and kindergartens closed down. The directorate collaborated with the Centre for Equality on a survey that looked at the distribution of unpaid care work during different phases of the COVID-19 pandemic.⁵¹ Bufdir is also funding a larger

⁵⁰ Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries. (2023).

⁵¹ Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs. (2021b).

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research project that examines the effects of the pandemic on families, upbringing, and equality.⁵² The distribution of unpaid work in the home is also a topic in this project, and a partial report has been published which, among other things, looks at the distribution of unpaid care work.⁵³

3.2.2 Efforts to promote a culture of full-time work

The government set aside NOK 15 million in 2023 for the government's full-time work ("heltidspott") programme, a three-year investment with funding that can be applied for to implement pilot projects to reduce the use of part-time labour and increase the use of full-time labour. Funds from the programme can be given to businesses that want to introduce and try out alternative organisational structures, with the aim of having a smaller proportion of part-time workers. Funding is allocated in collaboration with the labour market partners.

3.2.3 Report to Parliament (White Paper) on vocational education

Health education programmes are heavily dominated by women and many of these programmes do not seem to be attractive to boys. In 2021, the government appointed an admissions committee which was tasked with assessing the admissions requirements for vocational education. The committee⁵⁴ proposed removing the grade requirements for both nursing and teacher training. As a follow-up, the government presented a report to Parliament (White Paper) on vocational education.⁵⁵ The government suggests that it should be easier to start studying and proposes enhancing the uniqueness and relevance of the education programmes for health and social workers, teachers, and engineers.

3.2.4 Report to Parliament (White Paper) on admission to higher education⁵⁶

In Report to Parliament (White Paper) no. 20 (2023–2024) Admission to higher education, the government presents proposals for changes to the admissions rules. The

⁵² For more information see: <https://www.oslomet.no/en/research/research-projects/consequences-pandemic-living-conditions-equality>.

⁵³ Halrynjo & Kitterød. (2023).

⁵⁴ Green paper NOU 2022: 17. (2022).

⁵⁵ Report to the Storting 19 (2023–2024).

⁵⁶ Report to the Storting 20 (2023–2024).

government will enable more people to start higher education more quickly and will simplify admissions rules. In order to equalise the gender balance in study programmes with a large imbalance, the government proposes to replace the current system of gender points with quotas for gender.

3.2.5 Extension of the benefit period for parental allowance

The benefit period for receiving 80 percent parental allowance has now been extended by 11 benefit days for children born after 1 July. This evens out the differences in parental allowance payments so that parents do not receive less overall support from the state when they choose to stay at home longer with their child. This is particularly important so that fewer women take unpaid leave to be at home with their child. Fathers are entitled to independently withdraw eight weeks of parental allowance. Leave arrangements give fathers and co-mothers the right to be at home with their children, regardless of whether the mother is in work or education. The National Insurance Act was amended in 2024 to improve fathers' and co-mothers' rights to parental leave from 8 to 10 weeks.

3.2.6 Analysis of the division of labour in the home

In 2023, Statistics Norway (SSB) published an analysis⁵⁷ commissioned by the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs on the division of labour in the home based on data from the "Generations and Gender Survey" from December 2020. The analysis shows that most parents with children under 15 feel that, although they share care duties equally, women do the most among couples who do not share equally. The analysis shows a positive but moderate correlation between a more equal division of household tasks and the degree of satisfaction in the couple's relationship. The effect is more evident for women than for men. The correlation between equal sharing of care duties and satisfaction with the distribution of duties is not as strong. The plan is to carry out the survey again with the same sample in the spring of 2024.

3.2.7 FamilieForSK project

The FamilieForSK project has provided new knowledge about whether fathers and mothers experience demands and responsibilities in family life as negatively exceeding demands and responsibilities in working life and vice versa, known as the work-family

⁵⁷ Arnesen. (2023).

conflict.⁵⁸ The study does not find that there are differences in the work-family conflict between fathers and mothers, but it finds that there are factors other than gender that are important for parents' experience of the work-family conflict. The researchers discuss whether good conditions for equality in family life and working life in Norway could be a reason why gender differences are not found in work-family conflicts. The sample in the survey consists of parents who have been in contact with a family welfare office. Find out more here: [Results and news from FamilieForSK - FHI](#)

3.2.8 Next of kin policy

The next of kin of people who are ill or in need of care can find themselves in very demanding situations over time, which can affect their own health and quality of life. The next of kin is a consistent theme in the government's policy, which includes the "live safely at home" reform and the escalation plan for mental health. The next of kin provide almost as much care for their loved ones as the state does. The government's next of kin strategy and action plan aim to recognise the next of kin as a resource and provides good and comprehensive care for all next of kin so that they can live good lives of their own and combine the role of relative with education and work, and also ensures that no child should have to take on care responsibilities for their family or others.

3.3 Question 8 – Gender digital divide

3.3.1 Girls and technology

In 2016, the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (NHO) started a national project which co-ordinated and intensified efforts to get more girls to choose technology, with financial support from the former Ministry of Children and Equality.⁵⁹ In 2018, NHO entered into a collaboration agreement with Norwegian Association of Engineers and Technologists (NITO) to strengthen the team behind the project. In 2019, the National Centre for Science Recruitment also became a partner. An annual nationwide tour has been organised where this girls and technology initiative meets with around 4,000 girls in grades 9 and 10. More than 60 role models go on tour as speakers. Annual state

⁵⁸ Bårdstu et al. (2023).

⁵⁹ Report to the Storting 7 (2015–2016).

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funding is awarded to finance this project. In 2023, the initiative was awarded funding of NOK 3.6 million.⁶⁰

3.3.2 Artificial intelligence

In 2023, the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs funded a research report on the use of artificial intelligence in the public sector and the risk of discrimination.⁶¹ The purpose of the study was to provide a better knowledge base for efforts to prevent discriminatory effects when using artificial intelligence in public administration. The researchers have investigated the extent to which public enterprises have adopted or plan to use artificial intelligence, the risks of discrimination that public-sector use of artificial intelligence may entail, the extent to which public bodies are aware of the risk of discrimination, and what they are doing to prevent such risks.⁶²

3.4 Question 9 – Macroeconomic policies to support a gender-equal economy

3.4.1 Universal measures and individual rights

Norway has a very well-developed system of universal welfare schemes that cover all citizens from birth to death. This requires huge economic transfers to facilitate the implementation of family and social care policies. The welfare schemes are financed through taxes. Equality in Norway is the result of political choices and decisions over time and about how a democratic Norway organises society to equalise differences and correct biases. Equality policy is about ensuring equal rights and equal opportunities to live safe, good, and free lives. This report contains several concrete examples of policies that form part of social and welfare schemes designed to promote equality. The policy is about getting more people into work and keeping people in work for a functioning welfare society. High employment rates affect productivity growth in society. In 2023, almost 79 percent of the available workforce between the ages of 20 and 66 was

⁶⁰ Proposition 1 S (2022–2023) Ministry of Culture and Equality. (2023)

⁶¹ Corneliussen et al. (2022).

⁶² Corneliussen et al. (2022).

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employed.⁶³ Women make up 47 percent of the workforce in Norway.⁶⁴ The government's main lines for economic policy and descriptions of the outlook for the Norwegian economy will appear in the government's parliamentary report – A long-term perspective on the economic policy – which is to be presented this autumn (2024).

3.5 Question 10 – Poverty among women and girls

3.5.1 Kindergartens, after-school facilities, and common schooling

A universal kindergarten programme, accessible after-school facilities, and common free schooling for all children and young people, regardless of social or geographical background, are among the most effective means of evening out social differences. The fee of kindergarten places is capped, and after-school facilities are made available to those on a low income. In 2022, the government appointed an expert group to look at the importance of kindergartens, schools, and after-school facilities for social equalisation and social mobility. The expert group submitted its report on 15 February 2024. In Norway, primary schools, junior high schools, upper secondary schools, and higher education are all free. All Norwegian citizens are entitled to grants and student loans through the Norwegian State Educational Loan Fund ("Statens Lånekasse"). Foreign nationals can and do receive support for education in Norway if they meet certain conditions regarding affiliation.

3.5.2 New action plan on children and young people's participation in recreational activities

The government aims for all children and young people to have the opportunity to participate in recreational activities, and in April 2024 it presented an action plan for participation in cultural, sports, and outdoor activities for children and young people. In 2024, NOK 29.4 million has been set aside for civil society to provide good holiday and recreation opportunities for persons with disabilities.

3.5.3 Children living in families with a low-income

Low labour market participation is the most significant cause of poverty among families with children in Norway. Measures to increase parents' participation in the labour

⁶³ Statistics Norway. (2024c).

⁶⁴ Statistics Norway. (2024i).

market is considered the most effective way to combat child poverty, in both the short and the long terms. For children under the age of 18, parents receive a tax-free, non-means-tested monthly child benefit. Child benefit is a universal benefit but is particularly important for supporting children and families living in poverty. Single parents, in many cases women, are entitled to extended child benefit. In the period 2023 to 2024, both the extended child benefit and the ordinary child benefit for children over the age of six have been increased. The maximum monthly fee for kindergartens has been reduced from NOK 3,315 in 2022 to NOK 2,000 as of 1 August 2024, and free core hours are offered to low-income families. After-school facilities provide 12 free hours per week for all grade one and two pupils, and from 1 August 2024, grade three pupils also get 12 free hours of after-school care per week. The national grant scheme for including children and young people through the development of open meeting places, participation in holiday and recreational activities, and completion of education has been strengthened. In the period 2022 to 2024, the grant scheme has been increased by NOK 231 million. Municipal start-up loans are offered to low-income families who cannot get a mortgage from a regular bank, and low-income families with high housing costs may be entitled to a state-financed housing grant.

3.5.4 Action plan against social dumping

Immigrant women in particular are a vulnerable group in the labour market. In the autumn of 2022, the government presented an action plan against social dumping and workplace crime⁶⁵ which will come into effect during this parliamentary term. The action plan contains 35 measures to prevent the exploitation of employee rights.

3.5.5 Strategy for children and young people in low-income families (2020–2023)

A strategy for children and young people in low-income families (2020–2023)⁶⁶ was presented in 2020. The strategy, which contains measures to improve the situation for children in low-income families and provide equal opportunities to participate in social learning activities, was extended until 2024. A separate youth panel was established by the Ministry of Children and Families in February 2020. The panel provided input for the strategy in a separate report.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion Action. (2022).

⁶⁶ Ministries. (2020a).

⁶⁷ Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs. (2020).

3.5.6 Expert group on children in low-income families

The government appointed an expert group on children in low-income families which submitted its recommendations in a report⁶⁸ in October 2023 on how public-sector efforts should be prioritised in order to best strengthen the upbringing conditions in the short term for children in poor families and prevent poverty from being inherited in the longer term. This forms the knowledge base for further efforts to develop new policies to prevent and reduce poverty.

3.6 Question 11 – Social protection for women and girls

3.6.1 Child benefit

For children under the age of eighteen, parents receive a tax-free, non-means-tested monthly child benefit. Child benefit is a universal benefit but is particularly important for supporting children and families living in poverty. Single parents with the main responsibility for the child/children, in many cases women, are entitled to extended child benefit. In the period 2023 to 2024, extended child benefit and ordinary child benefit for children over the age of six have both been increased. From 1 September 2024, the rate for ordinary child benefit will increase for children from the age of six up to and including the month before their 18th birthday. The new rate for children in this age group will be NOK 1,766. This is an increase of NOK 712 compared to the rate on 1 March 2019.

3.6.1.1 Parental leave arrangements

Norway is known for having one of the world's most generous parental leave schemes. In Norway, you can choose between receiving 80 percent of your salary for 59 weeks or 100 percent of your salary for 49 weeks. In 2024, the parental allowance period for those who choose the 80 percent option has been extended by 11 days. This scheme gives parents the right to leave from work and a secure financial framework to be able to spend valuable time with their child in the first year of their life.

The parental leave scheme is divided into three parts. In the case of the 100 percent parental allowance option, 15 weeks are earmarked for the mother, 15 weeks are earmarked for the father, and the rest is distributed freely between the parents. The

⁶⁸ Ministry of Children and Families. (2023).

vast majority of fathers take the portion of leave earmarked for them. Fathers' use of parental leave can serve to increase equality both at home and in the labour market.⁶⁹

3.6.2 The right to accrue a pension

A new act came into effect in the private sector on 1 January 2022, stating that the accrual of an occupational pension should start from the first krone, without any requirements in respect of income level or the full-time equivalent (FTE) ratio.

Following a government proposal, Parliament has decided to abolish the 20 percent threshold for entitlement to membership in statutory public service pensions. The change is expected to come into effect in 2025. Once abolished, the crediting of pension entitlements will be the same in both the public and private sectors, enabling workers to accrue a pension from the very first krone.

The share of women recipients of the minimum pension in Norway is indeed higher than the share of men. However, the share has fallen considerably over the last decade. The disproportionate share of women receiving the minimum pension is a result of a previously more traditional labour market with fixed gender roles. This is reflected in the age distribution, where 44.6 percent of women aged 85 and over receive the minimum pension, whilst the equivalent share for women aged 67 to 69 is down by 2.8 percent.⁷⁰ As younger cohorts with higher labour-market participation and acquired rights become pensioners, the share of female recipients of the minimum pension is expected to decline further. The minimum pension for single pensioners was increased in 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2023.

3.6.3 Increased rates for schemes under national insurance

The child supplement for Work Assessment Allowance, Qualification Allowance, and Unemployment Benefit has been increased and amounts to NOK 36 per child per day from 1 January 2024.

In 2022, an amendment to the Social Services Act § 18, third paragraph, entered into force. The amendment states that child benefit shall not be taken into account when assessing an application for financial support. The purpose of the change is to improve

⁶⁹ Østbakken et al. (2018).

⁷⁰ NAV. (2023).

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the economy of families with children who receive support under the Social Services Act.

The guiding rates for financial support under the Social Services Act were increased by 10 percent in 2023 and adjusted by 3.8 percent from 2024 in line with the forecast for growth in consumer prices in the National Budget for 2024.

The basic amount is used when calculating pensions from national insurance and is adjusted every year. The basic amount in national insurance in 2023 increased by 6.41 percent to NOK 118,620 compared to the rate for 2022. The rules mean that the basic amount and retirement pension during accrual are regulated in accordance with wage growth.

3.7 Question 12 – Improving health for women and girls

3.7.1 Mental health

While the incidence of mental illness among adults is relatively stable over time, the proportion of children and young people who have been registered with diagnosis codes in the primary healthcare service has increased. There has also been an increase in the proportion of young girls being treated for mental illness in the specialist health services. The Norwegian Institute of Public Health emphasises that the most important factors that may have contributed to the increase are the use of social media and screen use, perceived stress and pressure, and sleep and sleep problems. The government therefore presented a 10-year escalation plan for mental health in 2023.

3.7.2 Research on women's health (specialist health services)

Health is one of six priority areas in the government's long-term plan for research and higher education presented in 2022. Within health, research linked to gender differences in health, with a particular focus on women's health, has been highlighted. The Ministry of Health and Care Services earmarks NOK 20 million per year to the research council for women's health research. According to the Women's Health Committee (Green paper NOU 2023: 5), this amounts to 5.5 percent of the Ministry of Health and Care Services' total allocation to the research council. The council⁷¹ has

⁷¹ Szukol et al. (2022).

mapped the research on women's health that it is funding (approximately 15 percent of all research on health nationally). Seventy-nine ongoing research projects have been identified and the research council has concluded that it has funded research on women's health research totalling NOK 413 million between 2018 and 2021.

The national centre for women's health research receives an annual grant of approximately NOK 15.5 million. Ongoing research projects are in the areas of pregnancy and birth, cardiovascular disease, migration health, osteoporosis and fractures, and immune disease and cancer.

3.7.3 Pregnancy, birth, and maternity services

Pregnancy, birth, and maternity services in Norway provide good outcomes for mother and child. The results are largely due to the efforts of committed and skilled professionals. These good results must be continued. The Norwegian Directorate of Health has published guidelines for maternity and obstetrical care, maternity services, and health centre and school health services, in addition to national quality indicators for maternity care.

Some conditions have changed in recent years. Women who give birth are older, a larger proportion of those who give birth are born outside Norway, and more have chronic diseases, such as heart disease or obesity. Such changes contribute to more births being induced and to an increasing proportion of children being delivered by caesarean section. The Norwegian Directorate of Health states that these conditions help to explain the increased workload on the maternity wards, even though the number of births is falling. Increased awareness among pregnant women and improved welfare in general are giving rise to higher expectations of maternity services and the service provided.

In the last three years, changes have been implemented that affect maternity services. Since the adoption of changes to the Biotechnology Act, all pregnant women are offered an early ultrasound between the 11th and 13th prenatal weeks. The ultrasound is voluntary and free of charge. The non-invasive prenatal test (NIPT) blood test is offered to pregnant women over the age of 35 and to pregnant women at increased risk of having a foetus with chromosomal abnormalities. Early ultrasounds for everyone and a NIPT for pregnant women at increased risk are important reforms in prenatal care. Pregnant women receive early information about a number of serious conditions and developmental abnormalities in the foetus. Furthermore, egg donation is now

permitted. This is also the case for testing for disease in fertilised eggs (PGT). PGT is a service for women or couples who are at risk of having a child with a serious illness or condition.

Figures from the medical birth registry show that the average length of stay in hospital after birth has reduced slightly, from 2.8 days in 2012 to 2.7 days in 2022. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the average length of stay was 2.6 days. Municipal health centres and school health services have been enhanced. According to figures from Statistics Norway, between 2015 and 2022 the number of FTEs increased by a total of around 2,380 in health centres and school health services. This includes an increase of approximately 800 FTEs for health nurses and 290 FTEs for midwives and has contributed to the desired increase in home visits by midwives and health nurses after birth.

3.7.4 Decrease in fertility rates

The government will commission a committee to produce an official Norwegian report in 2024 on the causes, consequences, and possible political measures to counteract the trend of falling fertility rates. In 2009, 61,800 children were born in Norway. This gave a total fertility rate (TFR) for women of 1.98, which was among the highest in Europe. Fertility has declined in recent years. In 2023, 51,392 children were born in Norway, giving a TFR of 1.4 children per woman. This is the lowest rate that has ever been measured in Norway. The OECD⁷² has looked into why Norway's fertility rates are declining and offers some guidance:

As the drivers behind Norway's fertility decline do not seem to be found in family policy, the economy, or labour market opportunities, a part of these developments may be attributed to changes in social norms and attitudes towards family formation. This is perhaps most noticeable in the fact that Norwegian parents have their children later in life and opt for smaller families than previous generations did. The causes of these changes are complex and varied, but can include shifting gender roles, increasing focus on careers and education, and how parenthood is prioritised relative to other life goals.

⁷² OECD, (2023).

3.7.5 Cancer

When we look at all forms of cancer overall, there has been a clear increase in survival rates. This increase is due both to the earlier diagnosis of cancer and the improvement in cancer treatment. Fewer women than men die of cancer. Breast cancer is the most common cancer among women and accounts for 23 percent of all cancer cases in women in total. Outcomes after breast cancer treatment have improved over the course of many years. Relative survival five years after diagnosis has increased over the past 20 years from 79 percent to just over 93 percent. Although mortality has decreased in recent years, almost 600 women still die annually from breast cancer.

The cervical screening programme includes women aged 25 to 69 and recommends that women have a cervical exam every five years. From 2023, the HPV test will be introduced as the primary screening test for all women participating in the programme. However, 3 out of 10 women do not follow the screening programme as recommended. A project has therefore been started with a home test for women and others with a cervix who do not take cervical tests due to physical, psychological, or cultural challenges, in order to increase participation in the screening programme. In 2022, no cases of cervical cancer were registered in Norway among women aged 25 or younger. This was the first cohort of girls offered the HPV vaccine in grade seven (ages 11 to 12).⁷³

The mammography programme is a screening programme for breast cancer for women aged 50 to 69 who initially have no symptoms of breast cancer. Several European countries also include women who are younger than 50 and older than 69. The Norwegian Directorate of Health will start an investigation into whether the age groups invited to mammography screening should be expanded in line with recommendations from the European Commission.

3.7.6 Gender incongruence (trans)

The guidelines for healthcare services for people with gender incongruence were launched in 2020. In line with national guidelines, a regional centre for gender incongruence was established in each health region during 2023. The centres are located at major hospitals and receive referrals from the municipal health service. The

⁷³ For more information see: <https://www.kreftregisteret.no/Generelt/Nyheter/2023/null-krefttilfeller-blant-25-aringer/>

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regional centres offer guidance and support to patients and their families and work closely with the national treatment service.⁷⁴

3.7.7 Next of kin strategy and action plan 2021–2025

The government is following up on the *We – the Next of Kin – the government's Next of Kin and action plan 2021–2025* (Erna Solberg's government). Looking after relatives is one of the government's goals in the "live safely at home" reform. The primary aim of the Next of Kin strategy and action plan is to recognise relatives as a resource and look after them so that they can live good lives of their own and combine the role of relative with education and work, and also to ensure that no child should have to take on care responsibilities for their family or others. The Next of Kin strategy and action plan makes it clear that the care of relatives is relevant from a gender perspective.⁷⁵ Women have traditionally taken the primary responsibility for caring for next of kin, and various surveys confirm that this is still the trend.⁷⁶

3.7.8 Public Health Report (Parliamentary Report no. 15 (2022–2023))

The Public Health Report from 2022 covers, among other issues, gendered patterns of health and structural measures to deal with the challenges that affect women and men disproportionately.⁷⁷ Health and quality of life are clearly linked. During 2024, the government will present a national strategy for quality of life that is anchored in the public health report. The strategy will define and highlight goals that reflect people's experiences of what is important to enjoy a good life and that can even out social differences and gender differences in terms of quality of life.

3.8 Question 13 – Improve education outcomes

3.8.1 Education choices in upper secondary education

About 4 in 10 pupils in upper secondary education attend vocational education programmes. Most vocational subjects are either male- or female-dominated.

⁷⁴ For more information see: <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/topics/health-and-care/hospitals/national-services-in-the-specialist-heal/id614574/>

⁷⁵ Ministries. (2020b).

⁷⁶ Green paper NOU 2023: 5. (2023).

⁷⁷ Report to the Storting 15 (2022–2023).

From 2020 to 2023, an improvement in the gender balance was seen in all male-dominated fields of study at the upper secondary school level. The same pattern is not seen in female-dominated fields of study. The proportion of women in female-dominated education programmes increased between 2020 and 2023.

The application figures for upper secondary education for the 2023/24 school year also show that more girls than boys apply for study preparatory education programmes and more boys than girls apply for vocational education programmes. In seven of the vocational programmes, the gender distribution is very skewed, while there is more gender balance in the study preparation programmes.⁷⁸ Applicant numbers for upper secondary education programmes in recent years show that more girls than previously are applying to traditionally male-dominated programmes, such as electrical and computer technology and technology and industrial subjects, even though boys still largely dominate these programmes.⁷⁹

Girls complete upper secondary education to a greater extent than boys, and they also complete their education within the normal time frame to a greater extent. In the new Norwegian Education Act (coming into effect on 1 August 2024), everyone will have the right to upper secondary education until they achieve an academic or vocational qualification. Boys complete upper secondary education to a lesser extent than girls today. The new right to completion may have a positive impact on the number of boys who complete their education.

3.8.2 Education choices in higher education

As in upper secondary education, higher education is also characterised by male-dominated and female-dominated subjects. Within health, social studies, and sports subjects, the proportion of men is 21.9 percent. This subject group makes up the largest number of students.⁸⁰ Men dominate in sports, ICT, and technological studies, while women are in the majority in health and social studies, teacher training, law, and

⁷⁸ For more information see: <https://www.udir.no/tall-og-forskning/statistikk/statistikk-videregaende-skole/sokere-vgs/sokere-utdanningsprogram/>

⁷⁹ For more information see: <https://kommunikasjon.ntb.no/pressemelding/17959855/flere-jenter-soker-guttetominerte-utdanningsprogram?publisherId=17847813>

⁸⁰ See: <https://www.samfunnsforskning.no/core/publikasjoner/core-indikator-status/kjonn-og-utdanning/>

language studies. We find a more even gender balance among applicants who embark on studies in the fields of science, history, and economic-administrative subjects.

The trend since the end of the 1970s up to the present day shows that more and more of the education programmes that were previously male-dominated are now female-dominated, while men apply to female-dominated education programmes only to a small extent.⁸¹ Women also outperform men to a certain extent in some popular and so-called prestigious studies. The reason is that girls achieve higher grades on average in upper secondary education.

Since 2020, there has been little change in the gender balance among students in the various subject groups in higher education. There has nevertheless been a decline in the proportion of male applicants to all gender-skewed education programmes.

The gender distribution among applicants and those who get a place on foundation training programmes in higher education has remained stable at around 60 percent for women and 40 percent for men for a couple of decades, notwithstanding rising or falling applicant numbers.⁸²

3.8.3 Efforts to combat gender-segregated educational choices

See the discussion of the government's efforts under 3.2.3 and 3.2.4 above. The fact that boys and girls largely choose different education pathways is the main reason for the gender divide in the Norwegian labour market.⁸³ The Ministry of Culture and Equality has tasked the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs with building up knowledge and skills about work in order to counteract gender-segregated educational choices. Over the course of several years, the ministry has funded a project to recruit more girls into technology vocations. The project was evaluated in 2021.⁸⁴ See also 3.3.1 and 3.18.1.

The funding scheme for family and equality policy measures, which is financed by the Ministry of Culture and Equality, aims to safeguard operations, improve diversity, and stimulate activity among voluntary organisations that work with family and equality

⁸¹ Reisel et al. (2019).

⁸² For more information see: <https://rapport-dv.uhad.no/t/SO-datavarehus/views/KjnnsfordelinghistoriskskereogskeremedtilbudtilKD/Sker-ogtilbudstallkjnnnsfordeling?%3Aembed=y&%3AisGuestRedirectFromVizportal=y>

⁸³ Reisel et al. (2019).

⁸⁴ Corneliussen et al. (2021).

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policy in Norway. Projects with an overall aim to improve the gender balance in educational choices are given priority.⁸⁵

In 2024, the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs has announced a research and development project to examine how secondary and upper secondary schools facilitate students' development of the knowledge, experience, and awareness that help to give them better opportunities when choosing an education pathway regardless of gender. The knowledge will be used to assess whether schools have access to the measures, tools, knowledge, and support they need in their work to enable pupils to make choices regardless of gender to a greater extent. A pilot project conducted by the four centres for equality in Norway in 2021 provided useful content and tools to improve skills in schools in relation to gender and educational choices.⁸⁶

The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs has also created an online resource bank aimed at secondary schools and upper secondary education, with examples of measures to reduce gender-segregated educational choices.⁸⁷

3.9 Question 14 – Economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic (see 2.4.)

3.10 Question 15 – Prioritised action

3.10.1 Police certificates

In May 2023, Parliament adopted amendments to the Children's Act etc. (requirement for police certificates).⁸⁸ The amendments require several professional groups that may come into contact with minors (girls and boys) to present a police certificate. The amendment will help prevent violence against and abuse of minors. The change applies to, among others, experts appointed by public authorities in cases covered by the Children's Act and the Child Welfare Act, representatives of the child in cases covered by the Children's Act, external mediators in cases covered by the Children's Act and the

⁸⁵ Proposition 1S (2021–2022). *For the 2022 budget year*. Ministry of Culture.

⁸⁶ Brochmann et al. (2022).

⁸⁷ Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs. (2024c).

⁸⁸ Amendment act to the Children's Act, etc. (2023).

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Marriage Act, and employees at the Ombudsperson for Children and at family welfare offices.

3.10.2 New investigations system for violence, abuse, and gross neglect of children

In 2024, the Ministry of Children and Families will establish an investigation system for cases related to violence, abuse, and gross neglect of children. The primary purpose is to uncover failures in the service apparatus, contribute to learning, and strengthen preventative efforts and co-operation across services. The government is working on a bill that will regulate the framework for the investigation system.

3.10.3 The Stine Sofie Centre

State authorities provide grants for the operation of the Stine Sofie Centre, which is a national centre for children subjected to violence and their safe carers and siblings. The centre offers a free six-day stay for families. The centre has the capacity to offer approximately 500 children one stay per year. The aim is for participants to be able to experience joy and a decent quality of life in a safe environment.

3.10.4 Crisis shelters – (see statistic appendix)

3.10.5 Incest and sexual abuse shelters – (see statistic appendix)

3.10.6 New provisions on co-operation and co-ordination

As of August 2022, 14 welfare service laws have new provisions on co-operation, co-ordination, and children's co-ordinators.

3.10.7 Expert team against negative social control and honour-based violence⁸⁹

The expert team is a national inter-agency team of professionals that assists the support system, voluntary organisations, and individuals in specific cases of forced marriage, genital mutilation, or other forms of honour-related violence.

The number of cases that the team has assisted in does not reflect the actual scope in Norway. The figures show only how many cases the team has assisted in. The figures will be affected by the extent to which the support system and services have a need for guidance and have an understanding of the phenomena that enables them to uncover

⁸⁹ Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs. (2024d).

cases, as well as the extent to which the guidance offered by the expert team is familiar to and used by the support system and services. In 2023, the expert team assisted in 1,137 individual cases, compared to 649 cases in 2020.⁹⁰

The gender distribution of the cases has remained relatively stable since 2020. In 2020, 496 cases concerned girls/women, which corresponds to 76 percent of the total number of cases. In 2023, 809 of the cases concerned girls and women, which is 71 percent of the total number of cases. About three out of four cases that the expert team assists in relate to girls/women.

3.10.8 Sexual harassment

A survey initiated by the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs in 2022 shows that the extent of sexual harassment is considerable in the labour market, among students, and among young people. It also shows that we know most about sexual harassment in the labour market.⁹¹ A new population survey is examining for the first time the extent of sexual harassment across sectors, including in the labour market, in organised and partially organised recreational activities, in digital networks and other digital arenas, in the public realm, and in recreational activities with friends. The findings show that more than half of the population has experienced some form of unwanted sexual attention in the past year. The incidence is highest in the labour market, followed by the public realm and unorganised recreational activities, as well as digital networks and arenas. It is in the female-dominated professions that employees are most exposed to sexual harassment.⁹²

Women are subjected to sexual harassment at a higher degree than men. The young are subjected to harassment more than older people.^{93 94} In 2024, the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs will initiate a survey and evaluation of measures to prevent sexual harassment. The government is currently working on a report to Parliament (White Paper) on sexual harassment to be presented during the course of 2024. See 2.5.2.

⁹⁰ Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs. (2024e).

⁹¹ Jardim et al. (2022).

⁹² Statistics Norway. (2024j)

⁹³ Bjerkebakke et al. (2024).

⁹⁴ Bjerkebakke et al. (2024).

3.10.9 Efforts to combat violence in close relationships and sexual abuse

The government's platform "Hurdal plattform"⁹⁵ underlines that violence in close relationships and sexual assault are serious crimes that must be given greater priority throughout the chain of criminal proceedings. In the period 2019 to 2024, the government has drawn up and followed up on several plans to help prevent and combat violence and abuse, including the government's action plan to prevent and combat violence in close relationships (2021–2024),⁹⁶ the "Prevention and combating of internet-related abuse of children" strategy for the period 2021 to 2025,⁹⁷ the "Freedom from negative social control and honour-related violence (2021–2024)" action plan,⁹⁸ and the escalation plan to combat violence against and abuse of children and violence in close relationships (2024–2028).⁹⁹ See the description of these initiatives in part 2. The escalation plan to combat violence against and abuse of children and violence in close relationships (2024–2028) contains measures to prevent and combat violence towards children, including internet-related abuse, and measures to combat violence in close relationships, including negative social control and honour-related violence. This is the first time that all these forms of violence have been included in the same plan.

Around 25 percent of all homicides in Norway are committed by a former or present intimate partner, and most victims in these cases are women. The government has had a particular focus on intimate partner homicide during the period, including through the establishment of a public committee in 2018. The committee on intimate partner homicide, which delivered its report in 2020,¹⁰⁰ has reviewed cases of homicide where the perpetrator was a current or former partner and given recommendations that can help prevent serious violence and intimate partner homicides in the future (cf. mention of the committee on intimate partner homicides under part 2). The committee's recommendations are followed up, among other things, by way of measures in the escalation plan to combat violence against and abuse of children and violence in close relationships (2024–2028).

⁹⁵ The government. (2021). Hurdal platform (2021–2025).

⁹⁶ Ministry of Justice and Public Security. (2021).

⁹⁷ Ministry of Justice and Public Security (2021 b).

⁹⁸ Ministry of Education and Research. (2021).

⁹⁹ Ministry of Justice and Public Security. (2023).

¹⁰⁰ Green paper NOU 2020: 17. (2017).

Results from the national survey¹⁰¹ on violence and abuse in the adult population show that one in five women have been subjected to rape by force or coercion, incapacitated rape (rape carried out while the victim was intoxicated or asleep), or both during their lifetime. A study of respondents aged 17 to 19 carried out by Norwegian Social Research (NOVA)¹⁰² finds a marked increase in the extent of sexual violence from 2015 to 2023. Approximately one in four young people who took part in the study in 2023 had been subjected to at least one case of sexual violence during their lifetime. The gender gap is large. The extent of sexual violence is almost four times higher among girls than it is among boys. In order to develop new measures to prevent rape, ensure legal certainty for victims, improve the quality of investigation, and assess existing measures, the government set up a rape committee in February 2023, which delivered its report in March 2024 (cf. description of the committee's report under part 2). The committee's recommendations will be considered in the context of the implementation of measures in the escalation plan to combat violence against and abuse of children and violence in close relationships (2024–2028) and in other relevant processes.

3.11 Question 16 – Gender-based violence

3.11.1 Crisis shelters

Crisis shelters for those subjected to violence in close relationships are a municipal responsibility regulated under the Crisis Shelter Act. The purpose of the act is to ensure a good and comprehensive crisis shelter service for women, men, and children who are subjected to violence or threats of violence in close relationships. The service includes a temporary accommodation, a day visit service, help in the re-establishment phase, and a telephone service. Several research reports, as well as the evaluation report from GREVIO (the monitoring body for the Istanbul Convention), show that there are a number of deficiencies in the service. The ministry has sent out a consultation paper with proposed changes to the Crisis Shelter Act. Key themes in this work include services for victims of violence in especially vulnerable situations, such as victims with an active addiction and those with a mental illness or disability, provisions for men,

¹⁰¹ Dale et al. (2023).

¹⁰² Frøyland et al. (2023).

provisions for the Sami population, provisions for children, and co-operation in the re-establishment phase.

The Sami crisis and incest shelter in Karasjok was closed in 2019. Despite the efforts made to re-establish a crisis shelter service, there are still no adequate services for those living in Indre Finnmark. The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs has followed the matter closely since 2019 and has awarded several rounds of project funding to Karasjok municipality (approximately NOK 2.1 million) to re-establish a crisis shelter service. See the discussion of the statistics from the crisis shelters in the statistics appendix.

3.11.2 Service for perpetrators of violence and those at risk of perpetrating violence

The provision of services for perpetrators of violence and those at risk of perpetrating violence, abuse, or aggressive or harmful sexual behaviour is an important part of efforts to prevent violence. Treatment services have been set up within the specialist health services for sexual offence issues (BASIS). BASIS is a voluntary treatment service for people serving sentences after being convicted of sexual offences and who are assumed to be at increased risk of recidivism and committing new sexual offences.¹⁰³ A comprehensive service has also been set up for adults who have a sexual interest in children and who want help to avoid acting on this interest ("Help is available"). The service consists of the low-threshold service Detfinneshjelp.no and a treatment service within the specialist health services.¹⁰⁴ The focus has also been on competence in and the prevention of harmful sexual behaviour towards children, including the establishment of low-threshold services for children and young people who are at risk of engaging in problematic or harmful sexual behaviour. Furthermore, the Norwegian Directorate of Health, commissioned by the Ministry of Health and Care Services, has developed an overarching strategy and comprehensive expansion of follow-up efforts in respect of those who have committed, or are at risk of committing, violence or sexual abuse.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ For more information see: <https://sifer.no/basis/>.

¹⁰⁴ For more information see: <https://www.helsenorge.no/sykdom/psykiske-lidelser/pedofili/det-finnes-hjelp/>

¹⁰⁵ Norwegian Directorate of Health. (2024).

3.11.3 Research programme on violence in close relationships

In 2014, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security established a separate five-year research programme on violence in close relationships.¹⁰⁶ This programme was continued for another five years for the period 2019 to 2024.¹⁰⁷ The programme is carried out by the Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies (NKVTS) and the NOVA welfare research institute at OsloMet. As part of the research programme, the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion also funds research into negative social control and honour-related violence at NOVA, as well as research, information dissemination, and networks relating to female genital mutilation under the auspices of NKVTS. The research programme has helped to fulfil research needs and to realise the objective of building stronger competence centres in the field.

3.11.4 The Attorney General's circular on violence in close relationships

In December 2023, the Attorney General issued a new circular on violence in close relationships¹⁰⁸ which replaces the circular from 2008 on family violence. In the new circular, the Attorney General emphasises that it is essential that the police and prosecuting authority be able to identify cases of violence in close relationships that may be a warning sign of homicide or serious violence, so that investigations and protective measures can be initiated. It is also clear from the Attorney General's annual circular on objectives and priorities that such cases must be prioritised by the police and prosecuting authority, including the circular on objectives and priorities for 2024.¹⁰⁹

3.11.5 The new Act on compensation for violent crimes

The new Act on compensation for violence crimes came into effect on 1 January 2023. According to the act, a person who has been subjected to a serious criminal offence, or the person's next of kin, may claim compensation from the state. Although the law is gender-neutral, this legislation is especially important for women. According to the new act, the compensation claim ought to be handled by the courts during the criminal proceedings. Once the judgement becomes legally binding, the state will pay compensation almost automatically and simultaneously seek recourse from the

¹⁰⁶ Ministry of Justice and Public Defence. (2013).

¹⁰⁷ Proposition 36 S (2023–2024).

¹⁰⁸ Director of Public Prosecutions. (2023).

¹⁰⁹ Director of Public Prosecutions. (2024).

perpetrator. This ensures a legally secure and efficient process. If the compensation claim has not been handled by the courts, such as when a criminal case has been dismissed, the victim can apply for compensation to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authorities. Because the former condition of harm has been removed, and the scope of the law is linked to paragraphs in the Penal Code, applications for compensation for violence can also be processed more efficiently than before.

3.11.6 Criminalisation of extrajudicial forced marriages

In 2021, the prohibition against forced marriages in the Penal Code, Section 253, was expanded to include extrajudicial forced marriages. Extrajudicial forced marriage means a marriage that is not formally valid but has been entered into in accordance with a religious or cultural tradition. The amendment was made because extrajudicial forced marriages in practice can be experienced as equally binding as formally valid marriages, and that forcing someone into an extrajudicial marriage constitutes a serious infringement on the individual's freedom and independence. The new penal provision in the Penal Code (§ 253, first paragraph, letter b) targets those who, by violence, deprivation of liberty, other criminal or wrongful behaviour, or undue pressure, coerce someone into a marriage-like connection.

3.11.7 Expansion of the duty to avert and protection against discrimination in the penal code – higher penalty for purchase sexual services from adults and deferred statute of limitations in cases where the victim is under 18 years of age

The Penal Code (§ 196) establishes a duty to seek to avert specified criminal acts through reporting or otherwise, regardless of confidentiality. Effective from 1 January 2021, the duty to avert was expanded to include more offences, including forced marriage, aggravated human trafficking, entering into marriage with children under the age of 16, and aggravated sexual activity with children aged between 14 and 16. In addition, the duty to avert female genital mutilation now applies to everyone. The legal protection under criminal law against discrimination against transgender persons and persons with a gender identity or expression that breaks with the expectations of their surroundings is strengthened. Furthermore, "gender identity or expression" is included as a basis for discrimination in the Penal Code (§ 185) with regard to hate speech.

Also, the penalty for purchasing sexual services from adults is raised to one year's imprisonment, so that even an attempt to purchase sex is punishable. Lastly, a deferred

statute of limitations is introduced in cases of sexual acts with children under the age of 16. This means that the limitation period begins to run only when the victim turns 18. The statute of limitations for forcing or inducing a child under the age of 16 to exhibit sexually offensive or other indecent conduct is also extended from two to five years.

3.11.8 Criminalisation of covert stalking and taking pictures in secret

In September 2021, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security sent out for consultation proposals for amendments to the Penal Code that would make covert stalking punishable. Covert stalking refers to stalking that is not perceived by the victim while it is happening, such as repeated instances of covert peeking, surveillance, and photography. The background for the proposal was a Supreme Court ruling from 2019, which established that such actions were not covered by the current penal provisions on stalking. The proposal to criminalise covert stalking is justified by the fact that these are clearly punishable actions, and that such stalking in some cases can be a precursor to later acts of violence. The ministry also proposed a new penal provision aimed at those who secretly photograph someone who is in a place that belongs to the private sphere, for example, indoors in a residence, in a toilet, in a changing room, or in another comparable place.

3.11.9 Revision of the Penal Code's chapter on sexual offences

The government's political platform, the Hurdal Platform, sets out how the government will explore a change in the Penal Code so that the wording reflects that sexual activity without consent is prohibited and defined as rape. The government will present proposals on this. On 10 March 2021, the Criminal Law Council (which has been tasked by the Ministry of Justice and Public Security with exploring and presenting proposals for changes in criminal legislation) was tasked with reviewing the entire chapter of the Penal Code on sexual offences, including the penal provision on rape. The Penal Law Council submitted the green paper NOU 2022: 21 "Legal Protection of Sexual Self-Determination: Proposal for Reform of Penal Code Chapter 26" on 19 December 2022. In the report, the Criminal Law Council proposes a number of changes to Penal Code Chapter 26 on sexual offences. One of the proposals is a new penal provision on sexual activity without consent, which covers more cases of involuntary sexual activity than the current provision on rape in the Penal Code (§ 291). The report was sent for consultation on 13 January 2023, with a consultation deadline of 13 April 2023. The ministry is now working to follow up on the report, and the government will present

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proposals for legislative changes to Parliament as soon as possible with the aim of obtaining a consent law in Norway.

3.12 Question 17 – Strategies to prevent gender-based violence

3.12.1 Crisis shelter service – (See 3.11.1)

3.12.2 Alternative to violence

The Alternative to Violence Foundation (ATV) provides a low-threshold treatment service to perpetrators of violence in close relationships and their family (family mandate). ATV was strengthened in the period 2020 to 2022, and new offices have been established in Trøndelag and Finnmark. The office in Finnmark has, among other things, specialist expertise to cater for Sami perpetrators and victims of violence.

3.12.3 Family welfare service

The family welfare service's expertise in violence in close relationships has been strengthened. The family welfare offices offer counselling, guidance, courses, and discussion groups and provide help within couples' relationships and to family members. The family welfare service often encounters families where one or more members perpetrate or are subjected to violence. Knowledge of violence must therefore be part of the basic competence of all employees.

3.12.4 Marriage

In 2021, Parliament passed amendments to the Marriage Act stating that, as a general rule, marriages entered into under foreign law should not be recognised if one or both parties were under the age of 18 at the time of marriage. This applies where the parties had no connection to Norway in terms of citizenship or residence when they married. Consequently, this rule is now consistent with the rule that applies to individuals with ties to Norway at the time of marriage. The amendment has not entered into force, as regulations regarding the administrative procedure are yet to be fully investigated.

In 2024, Parliament passed amendments to the Marriage Act to ban marriage between close relatives (between cousins or between a biological aunt or uncle as one party and a niece or nephew as the other party). The primary purpose of the ban is to prevent health damage to children. It is assumed that the ban will also prevent forced marriage and negative social control. A dispensation has been adopted which can be used if there are strong reasons for doing so.

3.12.5 Socio-economic analysis of violence in close relationships

In 2023, the government conducted an analysis of the socio-economic costs of violence in close relationships. The report shows that measures that directly or indirectly prevent violence in close relationships can deliver significant socio-economic savings. However, the individual victim of violence stands to benefit the most from good preventative work, as they bear the brunt of the consequences of violence. Based on an overall survey of the socio-economic costs of violence in close relationships in Norway, Menon Economics estimates that the costs amounted to NOK 92.7 billion for 2021.

3.12.6 Establish the RISK model nationally

The work of the police is central in the escalation plan to combat violence against and abuse of children and violence in close relationships (2024–2028). The Oslo police district has had good experiences with the RISK model, whereby police specialists, social workers, and health professionals work together in teams to prevent new violence. The government will establish RISK in all of the country's police districts, and funds have been set aside to start up in the Nordland, South-West, and South-East police districts in 2024.

3.12.7 Police protection measures

The police have a number of protection measures at their disposal, including restraining orders, reverse violence alarms, mobile violence alarms, and "address blocking". See 2.2.4 above. In December 2023, amendments regarding the reverse violence alarm were made to the Criminal Procedure Act, the Penal Code, and the Sentence Enforcement Act. The aim is to improve compliance with restraining orders and visitation bans. The amendments facilitate the increased use of electronic control, also known as the reverse violence alarm, and are intended to strengthen the protection of individuals at risk of violence, threats, and other forms of unwanted contact.

The new regulations allow the prosecution authority to impose electronic control of a visitation ban where it is an appropriate and proportionate measure. Electronic control can, as a general rule, be imposed only on someone who is reasonably suspected of violating a visitation ban, and only when it is deemed necessary for compliance with the ban. A corresponding right to impose electronic control has been introduced in respect of the reasonable suspicion of a violation of a restraining order. In order to cover a need for protective measures in other cases, a narrow right has also been introduced to impose the electronic control of visitation bans in special cases without the requirement

of a prior breach. The prosecution authority's decision to impose electronic control should, as a general rule, be brought before the court for review.

The use of reverse violence alarms and restraining orders has been evaluated and the reports are now being followed up on by the Directorate of Police and the Attorney General. The use of "address blocking" is under evaluation. The evaluations shall help the police to make structured and systematic use of the security and protection measures that they have at their disposal, so that those subjected to violence and threats receive the necessary support and protection.

3.12.8 Permanent commission for intimate partner homicides

The government is currently establishing a permanent commission to review homicide cases where the perpetrator is a current or former intimate partner. The purpose of the commission is to reduce the occurrence of cases of serious violence in close relationships, uncover system failures, learn from mistakes, and further develop efforts to prevent serious violence and intimate partner homicide. The commission will be under the Norwegian Civil Rights Administration, and the Ministry of Justice and Public Security is now working on a law that will give the commission access to the necessary information. Annual funding of NOK 10 million has been allocated for the commission's work.

3.12.9 Testing integrated crisis shelter services for women and men

The Crisis Shelter Act requires housing for women and men to be physically separate (§ 2). Research and reporting from the shelters show that the service for men, and for children who come with their father, is not of the same quality as the service for women.¹¹⁰
¹¹¹ The Romerike Crisis Shelter IKS has been granted permission under the Trial Act to test an integrated service for women and men. The trial will undergo a follow-up evaluation looking into, among other things, the consequences of the provision of integrated housing for different groups of women and men in terms of the quality of the provision, safety and security, and access to other services.

¹¹⁰ Bakketeig et al. (2014).

¹¹¹ Bliksvær et al. (2019).

3.12.10 Stronger legal protection against sexual harassment

Norway ratified ILO Convention no. 190 concerning the elimination of violence and harassment in the world of work in 2023. Legislation was strengthened in 2023 to ensure greater clarity relating to protection from sexual harassment in the labour market. The Working Environment Act specifies sexual harassment, in addition to the duties of safety representatives relating to the psychosocial work environment. The changes came into effect in 2024.¹¹²

3.12.11 New curricula for primary and secondary education

The new curricula for primary and secondary education, which came into effect in autumn 2020, take a broad approach to sexuality education. Boundary-setting related to the body and the definitions of violence and sexual abuse have been highlighted. Pupils will also learn where to get help if they are subjected to violence and sexual abuse. Sexuality education is included as a competence goal for several grades and in several subjects. In addition, topics such as gender, sexuality, and boundary-setting form part of the interdisciplinary topic of public health and mastery in life. The Directorate for Education and Training has developed a support resource for school employees as a basis for planning age-appropriate teaching. This resource discusses, among other things, how students should be trained to discuss the representation of the body and sexuality in social media and porn, and how this can affect self-image and attitudes and relationships with the body and sexuality.

3.13 Question 18 – Technology-facilitated gender-based violence

3.13.1 Safe digital upbringing

The Ministry of Children and Families is working on a report to Parliament (Storting) (White Paper) on a safe digital upbringing for girls and boys and for young women and men. The report will follow up on and further develop the themes from "*Right online*" – *National strategy for safe digital upbringing*, which was launched in September 2021.¹¹³ We recognise that today's children are growing up in a digital environment quite different to the environment in which any previous generation grew up. Girls and boys

¹¹² Working Environment Act. (2005).

¹¹³ Ministry of Children and Families. (2021).

are susceptible to different challenges during their upbringing, including those encountered online. We need to both protect and empower children in the online world. One of the main objectives of the report to Parliament (Storting) is to describe more comprehensive policies which promote safer internet use for children and young people. The report is due to be presented to Parliament (Storting) in the autumn of 2024. The main purpose of the report is to implement policies to protect and empower girls and boys and to facilitate a safer digital upbringing. The Norwegian Media Authority is co-ordinating efforts at the directorate level, encompassing the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs, the Data Protection Authority, the Consumer Authority, the Directorate of Health, the Norwegian Media Authority, the Police Directorate, and the Directorate for Education.

3.13.2 Survey on sexual harassment

A population survey from 2023 shows that 18 percent of the population participating in online gaming or other online networks or groups (from the age of 15 onwards) has experienced one or more unwanted and/or degrading actions or comments in these networks or groups. Fourteen percent of the population has experienced such actions or comments on digital platforms.¹¹⁴ See also 2.5.2. The digital dimension of violence against and abuse of children and violence in close relationships is also included in the escalation plan to combat violence against and abuse of children and violence in close relationships (2024–2028).

3.13.3 Ung.no

Ung.no provides quality-assured information for young people. Ung.no is a public-sector information channel for young people. The website is operated by the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs. Ung.no offers information and guidance to young people through a website that provides public information and an enquiry service where young people can ask questions. The target group is young people aged 13 to 20.

3.13.4 Online learning resources

The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs has developed online resources targeting children and young people, professionals working with children,

¹¹⁴ Bjerkebakke et al. (2024).

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and municipal services to prevent and detect violence and ensure support for persons exposed to domestic or sexual violence.

“Jeg vet” (I know) is a website providing didactic material for teaching children in kindergartens and pupils in elementary and high school about domestic and sexual violence, sexual harassment, and bullying. The material also includes information and learning material about digital violence, legislation, and services that provide help.

Snakkemedbarn.no (Speaking with children) is a website where professionals can simulate conversations with children and young people who might be exposed to domestic, sexual, or digital violence. The resource uses avatars and gamification, and its main aim is to enable professionals to practise difficult conversations with children in order to uncover abuse and provide help.

TryggEst (SafeBeing) is a model for safeguarding vulnerable adults in the municipal services. (See also 3.16.6.) Training tools on violence and violence prevention, where digital violence is one of the topics, have been developed for employees in the municipal services.

3.13.5 Expert team against negative social control and honour-based violence¹¹⁵

The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs co-ordinates an expert team against negative social control and honour-based violence. The team is a national inter-agency team of professionals that provides advice and guidance to frontline aid services in specific cases of negative social control, forced marriage, genital mutilation, or other forms of honour-related violence. The team also provides advice to people who are at risk. Digital violence can be an effective tool for attacking someone's honour or can be used as a means of pressure to exert negative social control and violence. Through case studies, the expert team has found that digital violence can often be part of the regime of violence a person is exposed to. The expert team gives advice on what constitutes illegal digital violence and how victims can protect themselves against such violence.

¹¹⁵ Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (2024f).

3.13.6 Working against digital violence at crisis shelters

Ten percent of the residents at crisis shelters have experienced digital violence, often in combination with other forms of violence.¹¹⁶ The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs has developed a guide, including checklists and tools, to help the crisis shelters map the victim's risk of being exposed to digital violence, as well as tools on how to advise victims on how to handle phones, digital communication, and social media. The goal is to help victims protect themselves from digital violence and digital control.

3.13.7 New penal provision in the Penal Code on sharing offensive images

On 1 July 2021, a new penal provision was introduced in the Penal Code (§ 267 a), targeting the sharing of images, films, and sound recordings of an offensive or obviously private nature. The penal provision will, among other things, cover the sharing of sexualised and other intimate images without consent. The reason for the change is that the sharing of sexualised and other offensive images without consent is a growing social problem that can have serious consequences for those affected. The change is intended to ensure that all unjustified sharing of offensive images is punishable, and that this is clearly expressed in the law. The new penal provision has a penalty framework of a fine or imprisonment for up to one year, and imprisonment for up to two years if the offence is aggravated.

3.14 Question 19 – Resources for women's organisations

3.14.1 Grant scheme to prevent and combat violence in close relationships

Commissioned by the Ministry of Justice and Public Security, the Secretariat for the conflict councils administers a grant scheme that will help to prevent and combat violence in close relationships. In 2024, NOK 12.58 million of the total grant pool of NOK 15 million will be allocated to voluntary organisations.

The Ministry of Justice and Public Security administers a grant scheme of nearly NOK 38 million for measures to combat human trafficking and prostitution, including the ROSA project for the co-ordination of accommodation services and the operation of a helpline. The purpose of the grant scheme is to prevent children and adults from being

¹¹⁶ For more information see: <https://www.bufdir.no/statistikk-og-analyse/krisesentrene>

subjected to human trafficking, to help people out of prostitution, and to reduce the demand for prostitution. Organisations that run voluntary activities are eligible for grants.

The grant scheme for operations and project grants for measures to combat violence and abuse received a one-year increase of more than NOK 10 million in 2022 for COVID-19-related measures. The aim of the grant scheme is to help prevent and combat violence and abuse in close relationships, and to look after adults and children who are subjected to violence. The target group for the scheme is voluntary organisations and other actors, as well as municipalities and crisis shelters. The Crisis Shelter Secretariat is one organisation that receives grants through the scheme. This is an organisation for crisis shelters that engages in opinion shaping and interest-based policy efforts to combat violence against women and in close relationships. Crisis shelters can also apply for funding to further develop their service for especially vulnerable groups, such as victims of violence with problems related to drug addiction, serious mental illness, or disability, and to develop the crisis shelter service for the Sami population. Around NOK 13.7 million has been allocated to the scheme for 2024. The scheme is managed by the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs on behalf of the Ministry of Children and Families.

3.14.2 Grants for family and equality policy organisations and projects

The grant scheme for family and equality policy measures aims to safeguard operations, improve diversity, and stimulate activity among voluntary organisations that work with family and equality policy in Norway. In this scheme, equality means equality between the sexes.¹¹⁷ Through the grant scheme, women's organisations have the opportunity to apply for funding for operations and projects related to prevention of and measures to combat gender-based violence. The grant scheme has been increased over the past five years from NOK 6.15 million in 2019 to NOK 16.5 million in 2024.¹¹⁸

The grant to Norway's four regional equality centres in Norway increased by 33 percent between 2021 and 2022. Grants to the equality centres have also increased in 2024. The increase in funds will be used, among other things, for the establishment of a fifth equality centre. In addition, the government has almost doubled the support for

¹¹⁷ Proposition 1S (2021–2022). *For the 2022 budget year*. Ministry of Culture.

¹¹⁸ Proposition 1S (2023–2024). *For the 2024 budget year*. Ministry of Culture and Equality.

organisations for people who identify as queer and created a new grant scheme to strengthen efforts for mental health among those who identify as queer.

3.15 Question 20 – Gender bias in the media

3.15.1 The Marketing Act

In 2022, the government introduced measures in respect of body pressure in the Marketing Act's requirements for good marketing practice. In 2022, an obligation was introduced to label retouched advertising where the shape, size, or skin of a body has been changed by retouching or other manipulation, including the use of filters.¹¹⁹ The labelling obligation applies to both motion advertising (video) and still advertising, on all surfaces and platforms.

The aim is to help counter body pressure by making the consumer aware that the idealised persons in the advertisements are fictitious; i.e. they deviate from how people look in real life. The labelling obligation applies to advertising by Norwegian advertisers, as well as advertising by foreign advertisers that is aimed at the Norwegian market. The labelling obligation also applies to influencers if they advertise a product, service, or business. It can be assumed that certain advertisers are now, to a greater extent, using advertisements where the people are not retouched in order to avoid the labelling obligation. Compliance with the labelling obligation is enforced by the Norwegian Consumer Authority, with the Norwegian Markets Council as the appeal body.

3.16 Question 21 – Violence against women in minority groups

3.16.1 Violence and abuse in Sami communities in the escalation plan

The SAMINOR 2 survey shows that Sami people, especially Sami women, report a higher incidence of physical, psychological, and sexual violence than non-Sami people in the same geographical area. The escalation plan to combat violence against and abuse of children and violence in close relationships (2024–2028) contains a separate chapter on violence and abuse in Sami communities. The plan has been drafted in close co-operation with Sámediggi. Sámediggi has also prepared a separate action plan against violence in Sami communities for the period 2023 to 2025.

¹¹⁹ *Regulations on the labelling of retouched advertising. (2022).*

3.16.2 Action plan for the police's work with diversity, dialogue, and trust (2022–2025)

The National Police Directorate has drawn up an action plan for the police's work with diversity, dialogue, and trust (2022–2025).¹²⁰ Among other things, the plan will help to improve knowledge and competence related to Sami language and culture in the police.

3.16.3 Development of efforts to combat violence and abuse in Sami communities

With funds from the Ministry of Justice and Public Security, the regional resource centre on violence, traumatic stress, and suicide prevention (RVTS) Nord has established a forum for the development of efforts to combat violence and abuse in Sami communities and the exchange of experience and expertise between participants. The participants in the forum come from both the public and the voluntary sectors.

With funding from the Ministry of Justice and Public Security, the Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies (NKVTS) is conducting a research project on violence and abuse in reindeer-herding Sami communities.

3.16.4 State children's house in the Sami area

The state children's houses are a central actor in ensuring that children's rights are safeguarded, and that help given to children subjected to violence and abuse, or to children who witness violence, is well co-ordinated. To help ensure that Sami children are provided services that are adapted to their own language and culture, a separate children's house is being established in Finnmark. The children's house in Finnmark will have three locations: Alta, Kirkenes, and Karasjok. Karasjok will be responsible for the service for Sami children.

3.16.5 National Sami competence centre (NASAK)

NASAK, a national Sami competence centre for child welfare, family welfare, and crisis shelter services, was established in 2022. The centre will contribute to the more equal provision of better-quality services to the Sami population throughout Norway.

NASAK will help to develop and implement the language and cultural skills and capabilities needed in the work of the child welfare services, family welfare services, and

¹²⁰ Norwegian Police. (2022).

crisis shelters with the Sami population. NASAK is responsible for training and guiding these services throughout the country and is present in several Sami areas.

3.16.6 “TryggEst” (SafeBeing)

“TryggEst” (SafeBeing) is a model for how municipalities can work to prevent the abuse of and violence against adults at risk. Adults at risk can be people with multiple vulnerabilities such as advanced age, cognitive difficulties, mental health disorders, drug problems, etc. The project started in 2018 with 12 municipalities. Follow-up research showed that the municipalities detected and handled six to eight times more cases than before they started with TryggEst.¹²¹

Seventy-two percent of the TryggEst cases reported for 2023 related to women exposed to violence. In 2023, 55 municipalities were already working with, or had decided to start working with, TryggEst. In total, these municipalities cover close to 40 percent of the Norwegian population. The number of TryggEst cases that the different municipalities handle varies. This variation is largely caused by a lack of employee competence in the municipal services. Materials such as e-learning courses, digital training tools, specialist literature, and study subjects at university level have been developed to help improve competence. There is also a grant scheme for competence-enhancing measures that the municipalities can apply for. In 2024, NOK 7.5 million has been allocated to the scheme.

3.17 Question 22 – Women’s participation in public life

3.17.1 Representation barometer and gender representation in youth councils

The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development prepared a “representation barometer” which shows the proportion of women in various local political bodies and the proportion of female chairs of municipal councils after the 2019 election.

As of 2019, all municipalities and county councils are required by law to establish youth councils or other participatory bodies for young people. This requirement follows from § 5-12 of the Local Government Act.¹²² Youth councils are advisory participatory bodies in municipalities and county councils. Youth councils have the right to express

¹²¹ Elvegård, et al. (2020).

¹²² Local Government Act. (2019).

themselves in all matters concerning young people. The councils can also address matters on their own initiative. The purpose of the youth councils is to help ensure broad, open, and accessible participation in matters concerning young people.

The municipal councils in the municipalities and the county councils in the county municipalities elect the youth councils. The municipal councils and county council must consider the gender balance requirement set out in the Local Government Act. Both sexes must have representation of at least 40 percent if the council is to consist of four or more members. If there are only two or three members, both sexes must be represented.¹²³

3.18 Question 23 – Women's access to decision-making

3.18.1 Encouraging girls and young women to choose STEM education

The government allocates grants annually to a project that works to encourage more girls and young women to choose an education within science and technology, including communication technologies. Through the project, girls and young women can meet role models, participate in inspiration days, and visit companies in the technology sector. An evaluation of the project finds that the project can play an important role in nudging girls into the sector, especially those who have an interest in technology-related subjects but do not have any role models in their surroundings to encourage them.¹²⁴ See 3.8.3.

3.19 Question 24 – National women's machinery

3.19.1 National gender machinery

The Ministry of Culture and Equality has overall political, administrative, and co-ordinative responsibility for the national policy on gender equality and anti-discrimination. All sectors and all ministries and public authorities at all levels (state, regional, and local levels) are responsible for promoting gender equality and assessing the effects of measures on gender equality within their areas of responsibility. This is according to the principle of sectoral responsibility, which is derived from an integration strategy (gender mainstreaming) and requires efforts to promote the integration of

¹²³ Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs. (2021 a).

¹²⁴ Corneliussen, H.G. et al. (2021).

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equality into day-to-day work and all decision-making processes at every level and at every step of the process, and by the parties that normally participate in decision-making.

The Norwegian Directorate of Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir) is the specialist agency for gender equality, disability, ethnicity and sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender issues. The directorate's tasks include documentation and knowledge development, promotion and guidance activities, implementation of measures in national action plans, and administration of grants for gender equality policy organisations, among others. The funds from the Ministry of Culture and Equality to the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs has increased by 157 percent in the period 2020 to 2024.

The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud is an independent agency, although administratively subordinate to the Ministry of Culture and Equality. The ombud's main task is to promote actual equality and prevent discrimination in all areas of society based on gender, pregnancy, leave in connection with childbirth or adoption, care responsibilities, ethnicity, religion, faith, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or age. In the period 2020 to 2024, the funds to the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud increased by 11 percent.

The Anti-Discrimination Tribunal reviews cases regarding discrimination pursuant to the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act, the chapter in the Working Environment Act on equality, and the anti-discrimination provisions in housing legislation. The tribunal is a low-threshold alternative to the legal system. In the period 2020 to 2024, the government increased funding to the Anti-Discrimination Tribunal by 41 percent.

3.19.2 The role of county governors

Following the strengthening of employers' and public authorities' activity and reporting obligations, county governors have been tasked to help drive the municipalities' active promotion of equality by, for example, helping to make the activity and reporting obligations known. Furthermore, county governors must ensure that equality issues, methods, and goals are known within their own operations and practised within their own administration, and that the county governors' expertise in equality is passed on. In recent years, the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs has had increased dialogue and co-operation with county governors regarding equality work in the municipalities.

3.19.3 Regional centres for equality and the resource centre for men

The Centre for Equality (KUN), the Centre for Equality and Diversity, Reform – Resource Centre for Men, and the Centre for Gender and Equality at the University of Agder receive public funding from the Ministry of Culture and Equality. In 2022, the government granted an additional NOK 5 million in funding for regional gender equality efforts and the centres' efforts to promote knowledge and competence related to equality. This funding now totals NOK 21.4 million. In 2023, NOK 22 million was received from the government. The increase was continued in 2024, when the government provided an additional NOK 4 million for the establishment of a new regional centre in Western Norway. The new centre is expected to be up and running by 8 March 2025.

3.19.4 Tripartite co-operation: state, employers, and employee organisations

Tripartite co-operation (i.e. cooperation between the authorities, employers, and employees) plays a crucial role in the Norwegian labour market and politics. Such input has resulted in more decent working conditions and gender equality in the labour market.

3.19.5 Civil society

The government emphasises that civil society and organisations that represent women and girls are consulted on initiatives and policies that concern them.

In 2022, the government granted an additional NOK 5 million in funding for the grant scheme for family and equality policy organisations, which now totals NOK 12.1 million. This was an increase of 70 percent compared to the grant in 2021. The increase was continued in 2023, resulting in a total of NOK 15.3 million for family and equality policy organisations. In 2023, the government also granted an additional NOK 21 million to the grant scheme for organisations promoting gender and sexual diversity for a total of NOK 40.1 million. This is close to double the amount in 2022. In 2021, the government established a new grant scheme in the fight against racism, discrimination, and hate speech, with a starting budget of NOK 8 million. In 2022, the government more than doubled this for a total of NOK 19 million. This was further strengthened in 2023 for a total of NOK 22.5 million. In 2023, NOK 248.5 million was allocated to the grant scheme for organisations for the disabled, compared to NOK 227.4 million in 2022. Furthermore, in 2023, NOK 25.7 million was granted for recreational activities for people with disabilities. In total, NOK 31.1 million was allocated in 2023 to improve the living conditions and quality of life for people with disabilities.

3.19.6 National Human Rights Institution (NIM)

The Norwegian Centre for Human Rights was the former name of Norway's National Human Rights Institution. The National Human Rights Institution (NIM) is now the official name of the institution that promotes and protects human rights in Norway. This occurred due to amendments in the act on Norway's National Human Rights Institution (NIM) which came into effect on 1 January 2023. Other legal changes with the same effective date include the following: the institution's director is to be appointed by the board and provisions regarding the relationship between the board and the director are to be adjusted accordingly; a provision has been made for a new fixed-term appointment of the director for an additional period of six years; the provision regarding the reappointment of board members has been adjusted; the NIM instruction has been repealed and integrated into the NIM act; personnel regulations and financial regulations have been changed; and a new provision has been made allowing NIM to submit a special report to Parliament (Storting).¹²⁵

3.20 Question 25 – Tools to mainstream across sectors

3.20.1 Activity and reporting obligations for public authorities

In 2020, a concrete activity and reporting obligation came into force for public authorities. This obligation means that public authorities such as ministries, directorates, regional authorities, and municipalities must work actively, purposefully, and systematically to promote equality and prevent discrimination in services and other exercises of authority, as well as to prevent harassment, sexual harassment, and gender-based violence and to counteract stereotyping. Public authorities must also explain which principles, procedures, and standards they have for their equality work, as well as provide results for their work and describe plans in their annual reports.

This obligation provides the legal anchoring of the Norwegian strategy on equality integration and is intended to help ensure that public authorities fulfil their sectoral responsibility for working with equality and preventing discrimination. The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud follows up on this obligation.

¹²⁵ For more information see: <https://www.nhri.no/en/>

Since the last report, the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs has developed guidance material, indicators, and webinars to help support public authorities at various administrative levels to improve their work with equality in line with the new legal requirements. The Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs has also engaged in close dialogue with county governors and the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS) regarding the municipalities' work with equality. In the spring of 2024, the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs launched an e-learning course for employees and managers in the public sector on equality, inclusion, and diversity in the duties and services of the public sector. The course was launched at the government's national equality conference, which focused on equality work at the local level.

The Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs is funding a major multi-year research project which will look at factors that promote and inhibit active equality work.¹²⁶

3.20.2 Activity and reporting obligations for employers

In 2020, greater activity and reporting obligations for employers came into force. This means that employers must work to promote equality and prevent discrimination in areas such as recruitment, promotion and development opportunities, facilitation, the opportunity to combine work and family life, and pay and working conditions, as well as work to prevent harassment, sexual harassment, and gender-based violence.

Public-sector and larger private-sector employers must conduct a survey of women and men who work part-time, who involuntarily work part-time, who are employed on a temporary basis, and who have taken parental leave, as well as of the gender balance in the business, and report on this every other year. Furthermore, employers – in collaboration with labour market partner representatives – must map pay differences between women and men. The results must break down pay differences and the gender balance at different job levels and must include all types of pay (including overtime and bonuses). Employers must also account for gender differences and their work with gender equality in their annual report or another publicly available document.

¹²⁶ For more information see: <https://www.samfunnsforskning.no/core/prosjekter/aktivt-likestillingsarbeid>.

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Since the last report, the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs has worked with labour market partners to develop guidance material, survey forms, templates, and webinars to equip employers in their work with equality and to help employers conduct surveys in line with the new legal requirements. Furthermore, the directorate has implemented information campaigns to make employers aware of their obligations and inform them about the digital guidance material that is available.

The Ministry of Culture and Equality and the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs are funding several research projects that will look at factors that promote and inhibit active equality efforts and the impact of the requirements for salary mapping.¹²⁷

3.21 Question 26 – National Human Rights Institution (NIM)

According to NIM's annual report for 2023,¹²⁸ NIM issued more than 60 statements, submissions, and letters to the government, Parliament, and other bodies. NIM also sent several submissions to international monitoring bodies and launched five new reports on issues regarding children and families and in the area of health and social care. NIM also provided input on several issues regarding the climate and environment that are significant for girls and women in Norway. NIM's mandate includes international monitoring. In 2023, in connection with the hearing by the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) on Norway, NIM prepared a supplementary report and provided oral input for the committee's hearing.

3.22 Question 27 – Societies for sustainable development

3.22.1 Strategies and action plans in foreign affairs and development policy

The basis for Norway's efforts to achieve gender equality is "A Just World is an Equal World: Action Plan for Women's Rights and Gender Equality in Norway's Foreign and Development Policy (2023–2030)". Its main priorities are ensuring women's and girls' rights to decide over their own bodies, protecting against violence and harmful practices, strengthening women's and girls' economic and political rights, and

¹²⁷ See <https://www.samfunnsforskning.no/core/prosjekter/aktivt-liestillingsarbeid> and <https://www.samfunnsforskning.no/core/prosjekter/lonnskartlegging.html>.

¹²⁸ Human Rights in Norway. (2023).

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promoting the importance of women's participation in climate, energy, and food security work. Education, including sexuality education, is central to strengthening girls' and women's rights and opportunities to participate in society.

Norway developed its first national action plan (NAP) for women, peace, and security in 2006. Over the last five years, Norway has had two national action plans for women, peace, and security. The national action plan for 2018 to 2023 was published in 2019. Our current plan was launched in September 2023 and covers the period 2023 to 2030.

Norway's work on women, peace, and security (WPS) has been led by a special envoy. The envoy co-ordinates the government's efforts and represents the country in various international fora.

Norway is a significant contributor to peace and reconciliation work globally and currently supports a range of dialogue and peace processes. In all its work, Norway strives to ensure the integration of the WPS agenda, and dialogue and facilitation teams prioritise targeted WPS strategies where Norway is involved.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs developed a results framework for the NAP for 2018 to 2023 and separate guidelines for the foreign service's implementation of the national action plan. Data is collected from embassies in priority countries and from the implementing ministries and is published in an official report every year.

In addition, in 2022 the Norwegian Agency for Development Co-operation published an evaluation of Norway's women, peace, and security efforts over the past 20 years.

The national action plan for 2023 to 2030 makes it clear that Norway's work on the women, peace, and security agenda is to be intensified at both the national and international levels, and links Norway's national and international efforts more closely than before. At the national level, the gender perspective is to be integrated into the security sector, asylum policy, and climate policy. There are six ministries included in the government's national action plan.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Justice and Public Security, and Ministry of Climate and Environment all develop separate follow-up plans. It is the first time that other ministries have developed such plans. This charts the progress of our joint effort across government entities.

Women, peace, and security are mainstreamed across sectors and integrated into other policy documents. An example is the national action plan for women's rights and gender

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equality for 2023 to 2030 and our revised humanitarian strategy. A new results tool is being developed in 2024 to capture both national and international efforts.

Norway's Action Plan for Women's Rights and Gender Equality in Foreign and Development Policy for 2023 to 2030 is about the rights of girls and women and gender equality as a just and equitable distribution of power, influence, and resources irrespective of gender.

Throughout Norway's development of its women, peace, and security agenda, co-operation with civil society and the research community has been key. They have been included in the development of plans and have provided written responses. For this purpose, a 1325 resolution contact group meets regularly and is a channel for communication.

A full overview of the budgetary allocation is not available, as it involves staff and resources across the government. However, Norway committed NOK 332 million to the implementation of its National Action Plan for Women, Peace, and Security (2019-2023), one of the main targets of which is ensuring that local women's groups and activists have the capacity and opportunity to participate in peace and reconciliation processes. In 2022, Norway spent NOK 50 million or more on national-level WPS efforts through its embassies, NOK 25 million on local and international civil society efforts for women's participation and rights in peace processes through a specific call for applications, and NOK 20 million on the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (and support of the Rapid Response Window and the women human rights defenders window). In addition, approximately NOK 15 million was given to research institutions for research on WPS. In other words, we have fulfilled the commitments set.

3.22.2 Implementation of the women, peace, and security action plan

Based on the new national action plan for women, peace, and security (WPS), the Norwegian Armed Forces have developed their own implementation plan for WPS called the plan for Gender in Military Operations (GMO), completed in February 2024. This plan constitutes the framework for the implementation of the WPS agenda in national and international contributions of the armed forces and in contributions in support of UN activities and operations.

In addition, the Norwegian Armed Forces have launched their new action plan for equality and diversity (September 2023). This plan sets ambitious goals for a systematic approach to recruiting and retaining more women at all levels in the armed forces, from

scription to senior management. The plan also sets a clear direction for the Norwegian Armed Forces to become a more inclusive and diverse organisation that reflects society as a whole. The action plan forms the basis for the fundamental pillars of the GMO action plan.

3.22.3 Norway's priorities in the UN Security Council

As an elected member of the UN Security Council, in November 2022 Norway organised the first informal meeting of the Security Council on climate, peace, and security. Opportunities for the UN's peace and security architecture were discussed, including the use of measures within climate, peace, and security to support women in taking a leading role in adaptation efforts, peace and security efforts, and mediation. The meeting also discussed the recognition of women as partners in efforts to achieve sustainable peace.

In addition to Norway's contributions to peace processes, the most significant action regarding the women, peace, and security (WPS) agenda has been to prioritise women, peace, and security as one of Norway's four main areas of concern during its membership in the UN Security Council (2021–2022). We continued to work in close contact with civil society and our embassies, maintaining ongoing dialogue with relevant partners on the ground and working strategically to implement the commitments made in the WPS agenda. We worked systematically for more context-specific and concrete references to women's full, equal, and meaningful participation in peace and security processes, and for women to be able to participate safely. Norway worked on the operationalisation of the WPS agenda and on improving the operative paragraphs in UN peace operations and sanctions regime mandates. Norway prioritised the implementation of the operative parts of mandates from the UN Security Council and the council staying closely connected with activities on the ground. For example, during Norway's presidency in January 2022, we focused on women human rights defenders in our signature event, while assisting in the launch of the funding mechanism for women human rights defenders in the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund. Norway ensured that the council heard examples directly from the ground and facilitated the participation of several civil society briefers in the council, in close co-operation with the NGO Working Group for WPS. Norway was penholder for Afghanistan in the UN Security Council and facilitated the renewal of the mandate for the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) in the spring of 2022. All pillars of the mandate are maintained, including references to women's participation and rights.

During our membership, Norway and 15 other current and incoming members signed a statement of joint commitments on women, peace, and security, committing to make the agenda a top priority during their presidencies, ensuring its tangible implementation, and promoting the participation of civil society representatives in the council. It was launched December 2021 and continued in 2022. The statement was a first step in institutionalising how the Security Council safely, inclusively, and meaningfully involves civil society in its work. All presidencies are welcome to join the commitments, with the aim of making it a continuing initiative.

3.22.4 Women in the Norwegian Armed Forces

Universal conscription was implemented in 2015. This has had an impact on gender equality in the Norwegian Armed Forces and will likely continue to affect the proportion of women among professional military employees in the long term. The proportion of female conscripts has increased considerably, from 12 percent in 2013 to 26 percent in 2018 and 36 percent in 2022. The proportion of female officers and specialists has increased slowly but steadily, from 9 percent in 2013 to 13 percent in 2018 and around 16 percent in 2022.

3.22.5 Personnel in crisis-affected areas

The gender balance perspective is emphasised in the recruitment of personnel who serve abroad in crisis-affected areas. There are a total of 46 women in the active personnel pool of the Norwegian Directorate for Civil Protection (DSB). This represents 29 percent of the pool.

Training and courses are provided on the gender perspective in connection with women in crisis situations. Together with its partners in the International Humanitarian Partnership (IHP), in 2023 the DSB agreed and set requirements such that all personnel stationed through the IHP must have completed the UN's e-learning courses:

I know gender: International Frameworks for Gender Equality; and Promoting Gender Equality throughout the UN System:

- Prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA)
- United to respect: Preventing sexual harassment and other prohibited conduct

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) also requires UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) experts to complete these courses. For EU experts, the gender dimension is a consistent theme in the course

portfolio of the European Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM). In addition, gender-related issues and discussions about these issues are included in safety courses that are mandatory for all personnel associated with the DSB's international capacities. Ethical and cultural issues and how to deal with them are also a regular topic of courses and seminars.

The DSB's personnel adhere to recognised international guidelines for planning tent camps and take account of women's safety when planning facilities. The Norwegian Emergency Medical Team (NOR EMT) has specialist knowledge of and works with mother-child-related health challenges and, in connection with the new design of the NOR EMT clinic, great emphasis has been placed on ensuring safe places of work, residence, and treatment for women and children.

3.23 Question 28 – Leadership, representation, and participation of women

3.23.1 Women, peace, and security

Where Norway has a role in peace processes, whether formal or through technical assistance or support to the UN or NGOs, Norway aims for gender balance in its own delegations. Norway consistently strives to strengthen gender balance and gender perspectives. Norway always conducts a gender analysis of the processes it is involved in and sets out plans for promoting the WPS agenda in dialogue and peace processes. Norway aims for 40 percent women's participation in the peace mediator conference Oslo Forum, a goal that has been met in recent years. When involved in peace processes, we emphasise women's rights and equal participation and strive to strengthen gender balance and gender perspectives at all levels. Norway is the co-convenor of the annual UN High-Level Seminar for Inclusive Mediation Strategies, a ceasefire course where women's participation is sought out and where capacity is developed for targeted audiences in governments and civil society. Norway also supports a range of INGOs that integrate the WPS agenda in dialogue and peace process efforts, and it actively follows up on these organisations.

Norway believes the focus needs to be on the implementation of the WPS agenda rather than on the launch of new initiatives and resolutions. In this regard, Norway has signed up to the Compact for Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action. From October 2022, Norway has had the honour of co-chairing the compact together with the Global Alliance of Women Peacebuilders. The first physical board meeting took

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place in Pretoria in December 2022. The compact is a suitable platform for highlighting progress and areas that lack implementation and for promoting action in tangible ways. Norway is therefore encouraging other countries and organisations to sign up and commit to the compact. It is a platform where member states, the UN, NGOs, and the private sector come together and where women's voices are amplified.

Furthermore, Norway exchanges its experiences and lessons learnt with other countries and supports other countries in developing or renewing their own WPS national action plans. Currently both our Special Representative and 17 of Norway's embassies participate in this work.

Norway took the initiative to establish the Nordic Women Mediator Network, as well as the Global Alliance of Women Peacebuilders. This is an important network where mediators exchange knowledge and experiences, and where we jointly mobilise for women in mediation. Norway actively supports the Global Alliance, with a view to increasing the number of female mediators at the regional, national, and local levels. Norway is also a driver for more strategic partnerships with UN DPPA and UN Women to promote women mediators in conflict resolution.

3.23.2 Women in the Norwegian Armed Forces and international operations

The proportion of women in the Norwegian Armed Forces who participated in international operations has increased steadily, from 6 percent in 2015 to 10 percent in 2018 and 15 percent in 2023. In 2023, 38 percent of Norwegian UN observers were women, 22 percent of our UN staff officers were women, and overall 29 percent of personnel contributed by Norway to the UN were women.

Gender considerations and women's rights are key elements in Norway's peace and security work. Since 2017, these considerations have been included in all operational plans for the places where Norway sends its military forces. The women, peace, and security agenda is an integral part of the Norwegian delegation's work in all peace processes in which Norway has a formal role.

3.24 Question 29 – Armed conflicts or military action

3.24.1 Foreign policy and development policy

Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) is a widespread problem in humanitarian crises. In many conflicts, sexual violence and abuse are used as a method of warfare.

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Women and girls are particularly vulnerable, but men and boys are also affected. SGBV protection and response have been a key priority in Norway's humanitarian strategy.

In line with Norway's humanitarian strategy (2019–2023), Norway has worked actively to promote compliance with international humanitarian law and to counter attempts to weaken international humanitarian law obligations. Norwegian humanitarian efforts have had a rights-based approach. Norway has given priority to protecting people affected by conflict and crisis, with a particular emphasis on protecting against sexual and gender-based violence and protecting children and young people, as well as refugees and internally displaced people. Norway has worked to combat the use of weapons and methods of warfare that have particularly harmful effects on civilians. Norway held the presidency for the Mine Ban Convention and hosted the Review Conference in 2019. We contributed to the inclusion of strong language on gender and diversity in the Oslo Action Plan, with clear indicators for how this should be addressed in the implementation of the convention. A mid-term review of the humanitarian strategy, which was conducted in 2021, concluded that Norwegian leadership in the protection of civilians has yielded good results.

The gender perspective has been an integral part of all our humanitarian efforts, and special priority has been given to women's rights and participation.

Norway made a financial commitment of NOK 1 billion to SGBV in emergencies over a three-year period. The pledge was met in 2021, and Norway has since maintained a high level of funding through the UN, the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement, and Norwegian NGOs.

For example, Norway provided multi-year flexible funding to United Nations Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict and the work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict (SRSG SVC). Conflict-related sexual violence is unacceptable, and the prevention of the use of CRSV is an important part of SRSG SVC's mandate.

In partnership with the UN, Norway contributed to the development of the Handbook for United Nations Field Missions on Preventing and Responding to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence. The handbook was launched in 2020 and is relevant to all UN field missions.

Norway has also supported IHL training for parties to armed conflict, through partners such as Geneva Call and ICRC. Furthermore, support of UNFPA's humanitarian response

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has increased substantially over the past five years. The partnership with UNFPA contributes to essential protection from and response to sexual and gender-based violence, including sexual and reproductive health services. UNFPA follows a survivor-centred approach to sexual and gender-based violence.

Norway is contributing to capacity building on the prevention and investigation of sexual and gender-based violence in South Sudan, through participation in a specialised police team in UNMISS that is led by Finland.

WPS, including SGBV and conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV), was among the key priority areas during Norway's non-permanent membership of the UN Security Council (2021–2022). Norway aimed to strengthen both normative and operational efforts on protection, including SGBV/CRSV in mandate renewals in country situations, as a cross-cutting issue in UN peacekeeping operations and special political missions, as well as in sanction regimes. This kept the topic high on the agenda in regular consultations, as well as in open and closed debates. Norway helped to strengthen and/or maintain formulations regarding SGBV and CRSV in resolutions and mandates for UN peacekeeping operations and special political missions. Examples include UNAMA/Afghanistan (S/RES/2626 (2022)) and ATMINS/Somalia (S/RES/2628 (2022)).

Norway has used gender-inclusive language in key documents such as the new National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, the new Action Plan for Women's Rights and Gender Equality in Norway's foreign and development policy (2023–2030), and the revised humanitarian strategy (2024–2029).

3.24.2 Norwegian Armed Forces

In recent years, the Norwegian Armed Forces have systematised, structured, and reorganised the handling of whistle-blowing cases and breaches of national ethical guidelines and the UN Code of Conduct, both in national and international operations. In addition, the Norwegian Armed Forces have structured timely reporting and comprehensive and consistent sanctioning of breaches of ethical guidelines and the organisation's values.

3.25 Question 30 – Girl children and adolescent girls

3.25.1 Expert team for honour-related violence – see 3.10.7.

3.26 Question 31 – Gender equality in climate policies

3.26.1 Gender equality perspective in work with climate change

The gender perspective is a consistent theme in Norwegian international co-operation, including international co-operation on the climate and environment. This forms part of efforts to fulfil UN SDG number 5 and the Action Plan for Women's Rights and Gender Equality in Norway's Foreign and Development Policy (2023–2030). Norway's general position in international fora on equality, such as UN Women, is to promote women's rights, including the right to land and natural resources in accordance with the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Action Plan, and women's participation in such processes.

Norway also promotes specific references to women environmental and human rights defenders in international fora, such as in the UN Environment Assembly, the UN Human Rights Council, and the Forest and Climate Leaders' Partnership, in accordance with established UN language on women human rights defenders. The rationale for such explicit references is that they help to recognise that women environmentalists are separate rights holders who are entitled to support and protection when they exercise their human rights, such as the right to participate in peaceful meetings and organisations.

Furthermore, Norway works actively to promote women's rights and meaningful participation in the international climate negotiations under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). This is particularly relevant in the negotiations under the gender and climate change agenda item, where Norway is an active contributor. Norway is concerned that equality should not be discussed only in the negotiating room on gender and climate change. Equality is a cross-sectional theme that applies in all areas of negotiation, such as during the negotiations on emissions reductions, adaptation, and financing. Norway is playing an active role in the continued development of strategies for gender balance in international financing institutions in the area of the environment, the Green Climate Fund (GCF), and the Global Environmental Facility (GEF). Norway is also keen to promote gender balance at both the delegation and leadership levels, as well as diversity in national climate and nature

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delegations. As an example, the Norwegian negotiating delegation on climate and the delegation on nature each have two youth representatives, a representative from Sámediggi, and a representative from the environmental organisations.

Gender and women's participation is a cross-sectional consideration in Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative (NICFI). This includes a focus on gender equality in national development plans, as well as in agreements and the implementation of specific measures. It also means paying attention to the fact that climate change affects men and women differently, in terms of survival strategies, adaptation, and access to technology and capital. Indigenous women and women living in traditional communities are particularly vulnerable to poverty and they may be exposed to further discrimination, violence, and persecution because of their indigenous identity. However, women also constitute a special target group, such as within the Norwegian Indigenous Peoples Programme (NIPP) in Brazil. Two-thirds of the projects supported have women as their main target group. For forty years, the programme has helped to improve the visibility of indigenous peoples, the securing of land rights, access to capacity building, and climate finance. The programme has also helped to highlight female indigenous leaders, including at the ministerial level. In Central Africa, access to contraceptives is supported as part of national family planning programmes.

Another example of how Norway sees climate and the environment, security, and the position of women as interconnected is the UN Environment Programme's (UNEP) work with safeguarding the environment in conflicts, with a mandate to assess the environmental consequences in conflict-affected countries. UNEP's fieldwork in conflict-prone areas has shown that climate adaptation and environment-related interventions offer opportunities to strengthen the inclusion of women and vulnerable groups, politically and economically. In Sudan, for example, the establishment of inclusive natural resource management has provided the opportunity to consciously promote female leadership.

Norway is also working to integrate the gender perspective in its national climate and environmental work. In 2021, a report commissioned by the Nordic Council of Ministers was prepared on the connection between climate and gender equality in the Nordic countries. The report showed several connections between climate and gender equality in the Nordic countries. For example, men account for the majority of students within science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), which can give them an

advantage in workplaces designated as important in the green transition, and men also have a dominant role in the oil and gas industry, where there is a need for restructuring and emissions reductions. The report concluded that Nordic climate policy lacks a sufficient gender perspective and that there is a need for more knowledge in the field to address these challenges. A new report on the Nordic countries' implementation of the UNFCCC Gender Action Plan (GAP) will be published in the spring of 2024. A study is underway in order to strengthen the Norwegian government's knowledge of the distributional effects of climate policy, including how climate policy can affect men and women differently.

3.26.2 Equality in agriculture

A goal of agricultural policy is for men and women to have equal opportunities to pursue business activities within agriculture and in agriculture-based industries. The proportion of female farmers increased from 12.9 percent in 1999 to 17.1 percent in 2022. Only one person can be registered as a user in the producer database, and so in reality there may be a higher proportion of women who farm. Women generally run smaller farms than men, and female farmers are on average 3.5 years younger than male farmers.

Of those who took over agricultural property in 2021, around 61 percent were men and 36 percent were women. The proportion of young women with a high level of education who take over a farm is higher than the equivalent for men, but young women less often choose agricultural education as their highest level of education. Women are particularly active in other agriculture-based industries, such as local food, tourism, social care, and work, which often require different skills than traditional agriculture-based knowledge. In 2020, women performed an average of 23 percent of the work on farms, both as users and as a spouse/cohabitant or family member, or as other help.

Good welfare schemes are important for equality in and recruitment to agriculture. In the agricultural settlements in 2022 and 2023, the government emphasised improving the plans in the event of illness and childbirth and providing better opportunities for taking holidays and having time off throughout the year. For the agricultural settlement in 2024, a party-representative working group will look at the welfare schemes. In recent years, an average of half of the grant funding for, for example, the investment and business development scheme in agriculture, and up to 80 percent of the rural development funds for other business-based measures, have been given to women.

3.26.3 Equality in reindeer husbandry

Equality between the sexes in reindeer husbandry requires a joint effort by several stakeholders, including the public authorities, reindeer herders, and their organisations. In 2022, 87 women were registered as owners of a siida share, which gives women 16.1 percent of a total of 540 siida shares. Women own 27 percent of the total number of reindeer in Norway. In 2022, 261 FTEs were performed by women. This constitutes 27 percent of all FTEs in reindeer husbandry. The annual reindeer husbandry agreement includes measures to improve the finances of reindeer herders. The agreement contains a concrete measure aimed at women who own a siida share. It is also possible to apply for funding for projects aimed at strengthening the position of women. Similarly, the Sami Reindeer Herders' Association of Norway can apply for funds for development projects. Reindeer husbandry is a family-based business. The annual reindeer husbandry agreement has measures aimed at strengthening joint ownership by married couples or cohabitants. In 2022, 97 siida shares were owned by married couples or cohabitants. All governing bodies within reindeer husbandry are required to promote the representation of both men and women.

3.26.4 Emergency preparedness – disaster risk reduction

Norway emphasises equality and equal treatment regardless of gender in accordance with current legislation. This also applies within disaster risk reduction, climate prevention, and damage limitation. Although there are no special measures or plans for the gender dimension of natural disasters and other accidents and crises, resources from voluntary organisations for women, such as the Norwegian Women's Public Health Association (NKS), can be included in municipal emergency plans.

3.26.5 Proportion of women in the Directorate for Civil Protection and the Civil Defence Force

There is considerable awareness of equality and inclusion in the Norwegian Directorate for Civil Protection (DSB). At the end of 2023, 43 percent of the total of 680 employees in the directorate were women. In the part of the DSB that makes up the Civil Defence Force, 38 percent of the 219 employees were women at the end of 2023. Of the 18 district commanders for the Civil Defence Force, four were women. To increase the proportion of female managers, all job advertisements must specify that the position is open to both men and women.

3.26.6 Fire services

In Norway, the municipalities are responsible for fire and rescue services. For many years, the number of female employees in the fire and rescue services has been low. A new education programme for employees in the fire and rescue services has now been established. There has been a good application rate among women of 10 percent of total applications in the first year of the school. Over time, the school will help to achieve the goal of improving diversity, including gender diversity, among employees in the fire and rescue services. Some municipalities have also initiated their own “girls’ days” in the fire and rescue services to recruit and establish interest among girls.

3.26.7 Nordic Council of Ministers for Gender Equality and LGBTI

In the autumn of 2021, the Nordic Council of Ministers for Gender Equality and LGBTI decided to commit the Nordic countries to a multi-year effort (2022–2024) in the action coalition Feminist Action for Climate Justice under the UN Women’s Generation Equality initiative. The purpose is to promote equality and women’s rights in the face of climate change. In January 2022, Norway organised a round table conference with FOKUS and UN Women titled “Gender Equality and Climate Justice”, which led to a joint Nordic declaration on the climate and equality that was presented to the UN Commission on the Status of Women in 2022 (CSW66).

3.27 Question 32 – Disaster risk reduction

3.27.1 Report to Parliament on climate change

Report to Parliament (White Paper) 26 (2022–2023) “Climate change – together for a climate-resilient society”¹²⁹ states that the government will obtain more knowledge about how climate change and climate adaptation can affect gender equality within various sectors in Norway. The equality perspective is one of several relevant cross-sectional themes to be highlighted in the climate vulnerability analysis.

The protection and restoration of forests is supported through Norway’s International Climate and Forest Initiative (NICFI). Its relevance is exemplified through efforts to protect and restore mangroves in Myanmar and Indonesia. This helps to reduce

¹²⁹ For more information, see <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumenter/meld.-st.-26-20222023/id2985027/>

emissions from deforestation, assists in adaptation to climate change, protects biodiversity, improves local food security and productivity in fisheries, and reduces damage from storm surges, tsunamis, and other natural disasters that are exacerbated by climate change. These disproportionately affect women's often nature-based survival strategies, and women are consequently central to the protection and restoration of mangroves.

4 Section Four: National institutions and processes

4.1 Question 33 – Strategy for gender equality

4.1.1 National strategy on gender equality and Parliamentary report on the SDGs

The government will launch a strategy for equality between women and men in the course of 2024, which will provide a direction for equality efforts in several priority areas of society. To accelerate efforts to achieve the SDGs, the government has decided to present a Parliamentary report (White Paper) on the government's work with sustainability in 2024.

4.2 Question 34 – System for promotion of gender equality

4.2.1 Main budget circular and evaluation instructions

All public authorities in Norway have a particular statutory duty to ensure gender equality when developing new legislation and policies. See 3.20.1 on the duty to promote gender equality in all activities and to report on this in annual reports.

In the annual main budget circular, there is a requirement for the ministries to account for equality in their activities and measures for the purpose of promoting equality in their budget submissions to Parliament. The instructions for official studies¹³⁰ relate to early involvement in the policy development process, the co-ordination of stakeholders, impact analyses, proposals for alternatives, and public hearings. The instructions are being revised. Some important features of the Norwegian central government administration and mode of decision-making set the stage for how policies are

¹³⁰ Instructions for Official Studies. (2016).

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developed and implemented. These features are also important in the policy area of gender and equality mainstreaming.

The government's work on gender equality is based on the principle of sectoral responsibility. The purpose of rules, budgets, and funding schemes is to ensure equal treatment and predictability. Each level of the public sector has an obligation to undertake active, targeted, and systematic efforts to promote gender equality. All ministries are responsible for promoting gender equality and integrating efforts to promote gender equality in the ordinary operations of their areas of responsibility. The individual sectoral ministries are responsible for services and policies aimed at meeting the needs of the entire population.

The ministries are responsible for policy development and execution. Each ministry is responsible for developing, administering, and overseeing regulations and policy measures within their own sector. Each minister is accountable to the Storting (the Norwegian parliament). Each ministry has several subordinate state agencies in its own sector, often called directorates. As a main rule, the ministries provide annual instructions to their agencies on how to execute the policies. The annual reports from the state agencies contain a great deal of information on results and achievements related to political goals. Some of this information, but far from all, is included in the annual report to Parliament in the government's annual budget proposal.

The Norwegian Directorate of Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir) is the specialist agency for gender equality, disability, ethnicity and sexual orientation, and gender identity. The state budget contains various measures and arrangements of a general character that include a gender equality perspective and either benefit women in particular or facilitate more gender equality. These measures and arrangements are covered in the different ministries' budgets, as illustrated in this report. Despite this formal division of responsibility, most decisions of political and economic importance are made by the cabinet. Cabinet decisions are made in plenary meetings and are mostly based on consensus. Typically, the cabinet meets in plenary sessions once a week. As a part of this, there is considerable inter-ministerial co-ordination, including a comprehensive submission practice ahead of any proceedings in the cabinet.

The Ministry of Finance, in its capacity as the ministry responsible for budgeting and general economic policy, scrutinises new proposals (regulations and economic measures) for economic and structural consequences before cabinet decisions are made. The ministry also makes comments on such proposals at an administrative level

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earlier in the policy formulation cycle. The Ministry of Culture and Equality has a specific responsibility regarding gender equality mainstreaming. This ministry is taking the lead in co-ordinating national gender equality policies. It provides comments on gender and equality mainstreaming when new policy proposals are due for submission within the government administration. These comments are not public, as they take place within and between the ministries.

4.3 Question 35 – Mechanisms for implementation

The Ministry of Culture and Equality co-ordinates Norway's implementation of the Beijing platform and action plan. The Ministry of Digitalisation and Public Governance is responsible for co-ordinating Norway's follow-up of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development. In line with the sectoral responsibility principle, responsibility for follow-up lies with the individual sectoral ministries.

4.4 Question 36 – Involvement of stakeholders

The Ministry of Culture and Equality invited civil society organisations, professional circles, and other actors to a start-up and input meeting in February 2024. On 8 May, the ministry shared a draft report and asked for written input by 28 May. On 24 May, a new input meeting was held. The input from the civil society organisations has been assessed by the responsible sectoral ministry, which has taken a position on what should be included in Norway's report. Due to a mistake in the invitation list, the social partners were invited only to the second consultation meeting. The input received from the various stakeholders has been assessed by the relevant ministries. The final national report will be published on the government's website. The Norwegian Union of Municipal and General Employees (NUMGE), one of the largest unions in Norway and part of the LO (Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions), has informed the Ministry of Culture and Equality that it intends to submit a shadow report.

4.5 Question 37 – CEDAW and Universal Periodic Review (UPR)

Norway was heard by the CEDAW committee in 2023. The sectoral ministries are responsible for following up on the committee's recommendations in their own areas of responsibility. Norway will be examined in the UPR set for November 2024.

5 Section Five: Data and statistics

5.1 Question 38 – Areas of progress

5.1.1 Statistics on income

In 2020, an assessment was made of which tables for personal income – which are part of “Tax statistics for individuals” – are suitable for being broken down by gender in Statistics Norway's statistics database in order to provide more equality parameters in official statistics. Priority was given to the inclusion of gender variables in subcategories of the gross income in order to obtain more information about gender inequality in forms of income other than salary. Gross income consists of several subcategories (including capital income, salary income, business income, and pensions). The tax for individuals' statistics and income and wealth statistics for households were published in February and March 2021. Following this, two tables were expanded with a variable for gender published in Statistics Norway's statistics database.^{131 132}

In light of several income tables now broken down by sex, Statistics Norway wrote an analysis article that takes into account some of the new breakdowns in the statistics database.¹³³ The main focus of the article is differences in capital income, with Statistics Norway finding that there are not that many more men than women who earn money from capital, but that there are big differences in investment methods, returns, and how much men and women invest.

5.1.2 New statistics on the distribution of parental allowance

In 2020, Statistics Norway continued the work started in 2018 on the parental allowance files and created descriptive analysis tables. The analysis tables are based on birth cohorts and follow a sample taken during the three years that parents can make use of parental leave. The tables show the number of days of parental allowance per cohort between 2009 and 2016, broken down by father's quota, mother's quota, joint period, and graduated leave.

¹³¹ Statistics Norway. (2024k)

¹³² Statistics Norway. (2024l).

¹³³ Gram, (2020).

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In 2021, the data was considered ready for analysis purposes and an analysis article was published in 2021 on mothers' and fathers' parental allowance withdrawals broken down by industry or occupation. The article shows that mothers take most of the parental leave, even after the introduction of the three-part division of leave, and the length of fathers' leave largely follows the fathers' quota. There are small differences among wage earners in different occupational groups when it comes to the length of leave for mothers and fathers, while self-employed workers take slightly shorter periods of leave.¹³⁴

In addition, the data source for parental allowance in the indicators for gender equality in the municipalities was replaced with this database.¹³⁵

5.1.3 Statistics and knowledge about quality of life

The report "A good life in Norway – A study of the measurement of the population's quality of life"¹³⁶ recommended the further development of Norway's statistics on quality of life on the basis that knowledge of the population's quality of life is an important indicator for societal development, together with indicators such as gross national product.

In 2020, Statistics Norway conducted the first national population survey on quality of life. The purpose of the survey is to survey quality of life in the population, follow trends over time, and shed light on differences in quality of life between different groups. The findings of the survey are intended to shed light on social inequality in people's quality of life and can be broken down by gender as well as by age, sexual orientation, immigrant background, disability, finances, and education. The Ministry of Culture and Equality contributed funding in order to increase the gross sample so that the findings from the survey could also be broken down by the respondents' sexual orientation and gender identity. The survey has since been carried out annually. The results of the survey were published as reports in 2020¹³⁷ and 2021.¹³⁸ In 2022, quality of life was

¹³⁴ Engvik et al. (2021).

¹³⁵ Statistics Norway. (2024m).

¹³⁶ Norwegian Directorate of Health. (2016).

¹³⁷ Støren et al. (2020).

¹³⁸ Støren et al. (2021).

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presented as a separate statistic, with the results published as tables in the statistics database.¹³⁹

5.1.4 Intersectional perspectives in data and statistics

It has long been a goal of the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs and the Ministry of Culture and Equality for Statistics Norway to include questions about respondents' sexual orientation in their quality-of-life surveys to improve the knowledge base about LGBT+ people's quality of life. In Statistics Norway's quality-of-life survey in 2020,¹⁴⁰ questions about sexual orientation and gender identity were included in a national survey for the first time. Statistics Norway has subsequently published several analyses shedding light on living conditions and quality of life among various groups of non-heterosexuals, breaking these down by gender.

In 2020, the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs launched a knowledge portal on equality and living conditions among the Sami, national minorities, and people with an immigrant background.¹⁴¹ This is the first time that statistics and research on equality and living conditions among groups that may experience discrimination due to ethnicity and religion have been compiled in one place. On the portal, the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs disseminates statistics and research-based knowledge about how minorities experience their lives in Norway and what barriers they encounter to equal participation in society. The gender perspective is covered where we have statistics and research that illuminate this. The knowledge portal covers areas such as education, the labour market, health, discrimination, and attitudes in the population and will be updated regularly with new statistics and research.

5.2 Question 39 – Priorities for national statistics

5.2.1 Continued co-operation with Statistics Norway on an equality co-ordinator

Norway has good public statistics, which are also broken down by gender. However, there are still gaps in the existing research and knowledge regarding equality issues. An important element in continuing to strengthen the national statistics on gender and equality challenges linked to gender is the continuation of a co-ordinator scheme for

¹³⁹ Statistics Norway. (2024n).

¹⁴⁰ Støren et al. (2020).

¹⁴¹ Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs. (2024g).

equality-related statistics. This scheme, which started in 2004, financed by the Ministry of Culture and Equality, involves financing two-thirds of a position at Statistics Norway. This role is tasked with maintaining statistics in the field of equality based on an understanding of equality that includes all grounds for discrimination. As the agreement covers all grounds for discrimination, it contributes to the goal of producing more data and statistics from an intersectional perspective.

5.2.2 Knowledge on wages and income

Wage differences between women and men have long been an established measure of the degree of equality between the sexes, both in the labour market and in society in general. Structural causes of pay differences – such as the importance of the gender division in sectors and occupations, and the significance of having children – have received a lot of attention in the equal pay debate in recent years. At the same time, few studies have had a special focus on the pay differences between women and men who perform work of equal value. In 2023, the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs, in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture and Equality and labour market partners, entered a contract with the Institute for Social Research (ISF) to provide up-to-date knowledge about pay differences between women and men, and more specifically about work of equal value. The report from the project is to be delivered in the autumn of 2024. In 2024, the Ministry of Culture and Equality and the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs have been given the task to obtain up-to-date knowledge about gender differences in income (professional income, capital income, taxable transfers, tax-free transfers), assets, ownership, shares, and entrepreneurial activity. Furthermore, the directorate has been commissioned to conduct a survey of financial living conditions among people with disabilities. It is natural that this survey will also include a gender perspective.

5.2.3 Time-use survey

Statistics Norway conducted a new time-use survey in 2022/2023. The survey provides an overview of how much time people spend on various tasks, when and where they do them, and with whom. The time-use survey has been carried out every ten years since 1970 and provides information on several topics that are important for monitoring social development between 1970 and the present day:

1. Care work, division of labour between women and men
2. Gender equality and the informal economy

3. Consumption
4. Welfare and lifestyle in different social strata and age groups
5. Impact of technological development
6. Leisure time

Statistics from the survey will be available in 2024. The Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs has commissioned three analyses from the survey which will provide more specific knowledge and statistics about how girls and boys, mothers and fathers, women and men spend their time. The analyses will also compare results from previous surveys in order to identify trends.

5.2.4 Statistics on people with disabilities

Norway's work with equality for people with disabilities is based on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). The Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs develops and disseminates statistics and indicators in the field of equality at the national level.¹⁴² The indicators are aimed particularly at mapping the status in respect of the CRPD. The Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs is working with Statistics Norway to produce a better statistics database on people with disabilities, by way of both statistics from sample surveys and new statistics from public registers. In 2020, Statistics Norway, through collaboration with the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs, published official living conditions statistics for selected groups of people with disabilities for the first time.¹⁴³ The statistics can be broken down by gender and other background variables, such as level of education, overcrowding, home ownership status, and working conditions. The statistics are important for obtaining up-to-date knowledge about women and men with disabilities.

Furthermore, there is an ongoing collaboration between Statistics Norway and the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs on the development of a new and more accurate definition of persons with disabilities in Statistics Norway's sample surveys. The intention is for the statistics to give more detail about the living conditions and equality of people with disabilities and to be widely included in Statistics Norway's sample surveys. In 2024, Statistics Norway, commissioned by the Directorate for

¹⁴² Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs. (2024h).

¹⁴³ Statistics Norway. (2024o).

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Children, Youth and Family Affairs, will investigate and test new methods for collecting statistics on people with disabilities.

5.2.5 Knowledge of violence and abuse

In 2023, the Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies (NKVTS) launched the report "Violence and rape in Norway. A national incidence study of violence in a life course perspective".¹⁴⁴ In 2023, the welfare research institute NOVA launched the research report "Violence and abuse towards children and young people", which is based on the UngVold study from 2007, 2015, and 2023.¹⁴⁵ The study provides insight into the role that violence and abuse play in the upbringing of children and young people, as well as into whether the extent of such experiences changes over time.

On behalf of the Ministry of Justice and Public Security, two national crime surveys have been carried out to map unrest and vulnerability to crime in the Norwegian population, one in 2020¹⁴⁶ and the other in 2022.¹⁴⁷ These surveys are to be continued in following years.

5.2.6 Women in prison

New prison research shows that 75 percent of all women had a psychiatric diagnosis when they entered prison, compared to 59 percent of men. Reporting from the correctional service shows that female inmates have problems with self-harm and suicide attempts to a far greater extent than men. A high proportion of invasive coercive measures in prisons are aimed at a small group of women.

The government and correctional services are working to improve women's prison conditions and will closely monitor the situation for women in prison. Among other things, NOK 55 million has been allocated for establishing a national reinforced community department (NFFA) for women at Skien prison.

¹⁴⁴ Dale et al. (2023).

¹⁴⁵ Frøyland et al. (2023).

¹⁴⁶ Løvgren et al. (2022).

¹⁴⁷ Løvgren et al. (2023).

5.3 Question 40 – Gender-specific indicators for the SDGs

5.3.1 Statistics Norway's platform with global indicators for the SDGs

The set of global indicators contains 231 indicators divided into 17 goals and 169 sub-goals. In 2021, Statistics Norway published a digital platform in which it had collected statistics and documentation for a selection of the global indicators for sustainable development. The aim is to add more indicators in order to better illuminate the breadth of the various SDGs. The following indicators are gender-specific:

- 3.1.1: Maternal mortality per 100,000 births
- 3.2.1: Mortality among children under the age of 5, by gender
- 3.2.2: Mortality among newborns, by gender
- 3.3.1: New HIV infections per 100,000 uninfected people, by gender
- 3.4.1: Number of deaths due to cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and chronic respiratory disease, by gender
- 3.4.2: Suicide, by gender
- 3.7.2: Birth rate among young girls aged 15 to 19 per 1,000 women in the relevant age group
- 3.a.1: Proportion of smokers in the population aged 16 to 74, by gender
- 4.2.2: Participation in organised education one year before the start of compulsory education, by gender
- 4.3.1: Participation in formal education and non-formal education during the last twelve months among those aged 15 to 24 and 25 to 66 years, by gender
- 4.3.2: Participation in higher education, by gender
- 4.3.3: Proportion of young people (aged 15 to 24) pursuing technical or vocational education, by gender
- 5.1.1: Legal framework to promote, implement, and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of gender
- 5.3.1: Number of women aged 20 to 24 who were married before the age of 18
- 5.4.1: Time spent on unpaid household and care work, by gender
- 5.5.1: Proportion of female representatives in the Storting, Sami parliament, municipal councils, and county councils
- 5.5.2: Employees in senior positions, by gender
- 5.6.2: Laws and regulations that ensure that women and men aged 15 and over have full and equal access to services, information, and training related to sexual and reproductive health
- 5.a.2: Legal frameworks that ensure that women have an equal right to ownership of and/or control over land
- 5.c.1: Systems for registering and advertising grants that promote equality and strengthen the position of women
- 8.8.1: Reported occupational accidents per 1,000 employees, by gender
- 10.3.1: Proportion of the population who have felt discriminated against or harassed during the last twelve months, 2019, by gender
- 16.1.1: Number of homicide victims, by gender
- 16.1.4: Proportion of the population who have recently been worried about violence or threats at their place of residence, by gender
- 16.b.1: Proportion of the population who have felt discriminated against or harassed during the last twelve months, 2019, by gender

5.3.2 National measurement points and launch of a new indicator platform

The action plan for Norway's work with the UN SDGs, "Goals with meaning",¹⁴⁸ puts the UN SDGs into a Norwegian context and presents possible national indicators for goal fulfilment that Norwegian businesses, organisations, and public authorities can use as tools in their work with the SDGs. Statistics Norway has, in collaboration with ministries and subordinate agencies, collected statistics and documentation for many of the indicators proposed in the action plan. The indicators, also called "measurement points" in the plan, are presented on the website [Sustainable development goals – National indicators](#). Among the national indicators that have been published (which differ from the global ones), the following are gender-specific:

- 2.3.d: Number of employees within aquaculture, by gender
- 3.1.a: Pregnant women's weight before pregnancy
- 3.2.b: Daily smokers among pregnant women
- 3.3.c: Influenza as a cause of death, by gender
- 3.5.b: Proportion of those aged 16 to 24 who report using alcohol and cannabis, by gender
- 3.7.a: Termination of pregnancy
- 3.7.c: Average age of mother at birth of first child
- 4.3.a: Proportion of men and women in higher education
- 5.1.a: Share of the population who have experienced discrimination, by gender
- 5.2.a: Women's and men's self-reported exposure to violence and threats
- 5.2.b: Number of personal victims of violent offences reported to the police, by gender
- 5.2.c: Partner homicide, by gender
- 5.2.d: Users of crisis shelters, by gender
- 5.2.e: Digital sexual violence, by gender
- 5.2.f: Experienced unwanted sexual attention at place of work or study, by gender
- 5.2.g: Exposure to various forms of sexual harassment, by gender
- 5.4.b: Unpaid care work for the sick, elderly, and disabled, by gender
- 5.5.b: Proportion of women chairs of municipal and county councils
- 5.5.f: Gender distribution in executive management groups, boards, chairs of the board, and managing directors in the 200 largest companies in the Norwegian business sector
- 5.6.a: FTE midwives per 10,000 inhabitants, aged 0 to 20
- 8.5.b: Employed immigrants by national background and gender, last year
- 8.5.c: Average monthly salary by occupation and gender, last year
- 8.6.b: Proportion of young people (aged 25 to 29) who are neither in work nor in education or training, by gender
- 8.6.c: Proportion of young people aged 15 to 29 who are unemployed, by gender
- 8.8.d: Doctor-confirmed sickness absence for wage earners (aged 16 to 69 years), by gender
- 10.2.a: Employment rate, by gender
- 10.2.b: Income for disabled men, women, immigrants, and people with an immigration background
- 10.2.c: Level of education among candidates for the Storting, last election, by gender

¹⁴⁸ Report to the Storting 40 (2020–2021).

5.3.3 New national wellbeing surveys

New national wellbeing surveys are to be carried out which will map unrest and vulnerability to crime in the Norwegian population for a new five-year period. A similar survey will be initiated for children aged 12 to 16.

5.3.4 Development of statistics on violence and abuse

As a measure in the escalation plan to combat violence against and abuse of children and violence in close relationships (2024–2028),¹⁴⁹ the government, in collaboration with Statistics Norway, will investigate the possibility of the further development and quality assurance of statistics on violence against and abuse of children and violence in close relationships. This must be seen in the context of the need to ensure more uniform recording and use of statistics across agencies.

5.4 Question 41¹⁵⁰ – Data disaggregation

Major surveys in Norway break down respondents by geography, income, gender, age, level of education, marital status, and immigrant background. Disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity are also asked about in some surveys. Ethnicity and race are not asked about in any of the major surveys.

6 Section Six: Conclusion and next steps

One of the government's top priorities is eradicating violence against women. The government has plans to follow up the evaluation of the Crisis Shelter Act. Changing discriminatory social norms and gender stereotypes is still a top priority for Norway. The government is working on a report to the Storting on sexual harassment that will address this. The aim is to engage the whole population in the discussions on future gender equality policies in Norway. Women's participation in the labour market is still a political priority in Norway. The government will continue to address the challenges of the part-time work culture, a gender-segregated labour market, and the gender pay gap. Norway needs to have a diverse workforce and to lay the foundations for a gender-balanced future labour market with the transformation to a digital and green world. Women's health is also a top priority. The Women's Health Committee's report and the

¹⁴⁹ Proposition 36 S (2023–2024).

¹⁵⁰ As specified in A/RES/70/1, with the addition of education, marital status, religion, and sexual orientation.

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consultation input form part of the basis for a new strategy for women's health that the government is developing.

The government plans to launch a strategy for gender equality between women and men (2025–2030) in the autumn of 2024. The strategy will be cross-sectoral and ensure better co-ordination and gender mainstreaming. The strategy will provide an overview of the government's priorities on gender equality issues. The follow-up includes monitoring through indicators.

The government is also working on a cross-sectoral strategy on research on equality and discrimination. The aim is to identify needs and priorities for future research and development efforts.

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8 Statistics appendix

Table: Gender balance among elected members of Parliament (Storting) and Sámediggi (the Sami parliament). Share. 2021

	Women	Men
Members of Parliament	44.9	55.1
Members of Sámediggi	41.1	58.9

Source: Statistics Norway, table 05923 and table 08219

Table: Gender balance among elected members of municipal councils, executive committees, and county councils. Share. 2023

	Women	Men
Members of county councils	45.2	54.8
Members of municipal councils	40.6	59.4

Source: Statistics Norway, table 12874 and table 01183

Table: Share of respondents reporting poverty issues, by gender. 16 years and over. 2020–2023

	2020		2021		2022		2023	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Difficult or very difficult to make ends meet	7.2	6	6.7	6.4	6.1	7.1	7.6	8.5
Not possible to cover an unforeseen expense	20	20.3	20.1	22.3	19	21.7	21	22.3
Problems paying housing expenses	5.4	4.5	4	3.8	4.4	4.1	5.6	4.5

Source: Statistics Norway, table 12123

Table: Share of women and men with income in each income range, gross income. 2020–2022

	2020		2021		2022	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
NOK 0 - 249,999	18.5	28.3	17.0	25.9	16.0	23.6
NOK 250,000 - 499,999	33.4	41.3	32.1	40.8	30.0	39.6
NOK 500,000 - 799,999	29.6	24.2	30.1	25.8	31.1	27.8
NOK 800,000 - 999,999	8.2	3.4	8.8	3.9	9.8	4.8
NOK 1 – 3 million	9.9	2.8	11.2	3.4	12.6	4.0
NOK 4 million and over	0.4	0.1	0.7	0.1	0.5	0.1

Source: Statistics Norway, table 08411

Table: Share of women within different income ranges. Gross income. 2020–2023

	2020	2021	2022
NOK 0 - 249,999	60.3	60.1	59.5
NOK 250,000 - 499,999	55.1	55.7	56.8
NOK 500,000 - 799,999	44.8	45.9	47.1
NOK 800,000 - 999,999	29.0	30.9	32.8
NOK 1 – 3 million	21.6	23.3	24.0
NOK 4 million and over	15.3	16.5	15.5

Source: Statistics Norway, table 08411

Table: Gender balance among students in gender-skewed educational programmes in upper-secondary education, by gender dominance. 2020–2023

		2020	2021	2022	2023
Proportion of women in female-dominated fields of study					
	Art, design, and architecture	79.1	80.9	83.0	83.2
	Health and youth development	81.7	83.2	84.6	85.3
	Hairdressing, floristry, interior design and marketing	88.5	92.1	92.0	92.4
Proportion of men in male-dominated fields of study					
	Building and construction	92.0	91.0	88.8	89.0
	Electrical and computer technology	93.2	93.4	92.9	92.2
	Technology and industry	87.1	85.4	84.5	83.8

Source: Statistics Norway, table 13159

Table: Share of women among students in higher education in Norway by field of study. 2020–2022

	2020	2021	2022
General subjects	24.5	25.2	26.7
Humanities and aesthetics	60.3	60.8	61.1
Teacher training and education in pedagogy	72.4	72.6	72.8
Social studies and law	65.3	65.8	65.7
Economics and administration	53.3	53.4	52.9
Sciences, crafts, and technical fields	34.7	35.0	35.4
Health, social studies, and sport	77.7	78.3	78.1
Primary nutrition	57.9	57.7	57.9
Transport and safety, and other services	35.9	37.5	39.2

Source: Statistics Norway, table 08823

Table: Share of male applicants for gender-skewed educational programmes in higher education. 2020–2023

	2020	2021	2022	2023
Nursing	18.9	18.6	17.9	17.9
Kindergarten teacher	20.9	21.1	21.0	18.6
Engineer	71.0	70.7	68.1	67.7
Civil engineer	60.1	59.9	58.1	58.2
Primary school teacher, grades 1–7	26.9	25.3	25.6	22.6
Child protection pedagogue	18.6	18.1	17.3	16.2

Source: Norwegian Universities and Colleges Admission Service (NUCAS)

Table: Number of residents and day users at crisis shelters. 2020–2022 ¹⁵¹

Users	Gender	2020	2021	2022
Number of residents	Women	1,529	1,631	1,916
	Men	137	159	189
	Total	1,668	1,795	2,110
Number of day users	Women	2,029	2,318	2,684
	Men	180	204	250
	Total	2,212	2,538	2,952

Source: Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs, statistics from crisis shelters

Since 2020, there has been an increase in the number of residents and the number of day users at the crisis shelters. In 2022, there were 2,110 residents and 2,952 day users registered. Since 2020, women have made up approximately 90 percent of the residents and day users at the crisis shelters. Although the number of residents increased during this period, the number of crisis shelter stays in 2020 and 2021 was significantly lower than in previous years. In 2022, the number of crisis shelter stays returned to the same level as in 2019. These changes must be seen in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

¹⁵¹ Before 2021, no record was made of whether a stay was the resident's first in that registration year or whether the resident had refused such a record to be made. This was changed in 2021 so that this information was recorded for all stays. Reservations must therefore be made for comparisons between years.

Table: Experiences of violence among residents at crisis shelters. 2020–2022. Percent

Type of violence	2020	2021	2022
Psychological violence	91	92	92
Physical violence	64	65	66
Sexual violence	19	20	21
Threats	60	59	56
Negative social control	34	34	35
Material violence	26	22	22
Economic violence	25	23	23
Digital/electronic violence	10	10	10
Forced marriage	2	1	1
Honour-related violence	8	6	5
Human trafficking	2	1	1
Psychological violence towards the user's children	16	15	13
Physical violence towards the user's children	8	7	6
Sexual violence towards the user's children	1	1	1
Threat of violence towards the user's children	3
Violence towards pets/service animals	2	1	1
Threat of violence towards pets/service animals	1	1	1
Other	5	5	3

Source: Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs, statistics from crisis shelters

The most common reasons for residents and day users seeking help at the crisis shelters in the period 2020 to 2022 were psychological violence, physical violence, threats, and negative social control. In 2022, 92 percent of residents were subjected to psychological violence, 66 percent to physical violence, and 56 percent to threats. Furthermore, 35 percent of residents had been exposed to negative social control. Among the day users, 94 percent stated that they were subjected to psychological violence, while 55 percent were subjected to physical violence. Fifty-two percent had experienced threats, and 32 percent were exposed to negative social control. The proportions of those exposed to these forms of violence have been stable over the past three years.

Table: Experiences of violence among day users at the crisis shelters. 2020–2022. Percent

Type of violence	2020	2021	2022
Psychological violence	91	92	94
Physical violence	58	57	55
Sexual violence	23	24	22
Threats	57	53	52
Negative social control	29	30	32
Material violence	23	22	22
Economic violence	25	22	22
Digital/electronic violence	10	10	10
Forced marriage	1	1	1
Honour-related violence	3	3	3
Human trafficking	1	1	1
Psychological violence towards the user's children	17	16	16
Physical violence towards the user's children	8	6	6
Sexual violence towards the user's children	2	1	1
Threat of violence towards the user's children	2
Violence towards pets/service animals	1	1	1
Threat of violence towards pets/service animals	1	1	1
Other	4	3	3

Source: Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs, statistics from crisis shelters

Physical violence was cited as a slightly less frequent reason among day users than residents. Moreover, there are small differences between day users and residents in terms of the types of violence and abuse they were subjected to.

Table: Crisis shelter residents' relationship with perpetrators of violence. 2020-2022. Percent

Relationship	2020	2021	2022
Spouse/cohabitant	62	65	63
Former spouse/cohabitant/partner	15	14	14
Partner (living apart)	4	3	4
Parent/stepparent	11	12	11
Son/daughter	3	2	2
Sibling	3	4	3
Other family member/family-in-law	7	6	6

Source: Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs, statistics from crisis shelters

Almost all adult residents of the crisis shelters had a close relationship with the perpetrator(s). For 63 percent, the perpetrator was a current spouse or cohabitant. There have been small changes in residents' relationships with perpetrator(s) in the period from 2020 to 2022. In order to improve the quality of the services provided through the Ministry of Children and Families, the government is investigating the need for changes to the Crisis Shelter Act and the development of crisis shelter services. Furthermore, it is assessing the range of services for vulnerable groups, including those exposed to violence who have drug problems. The plan is to present a consultation paper during the first half of 2024.

Table: Users of incest and sexual abuse shelters/Nok. centres who have themselves been subjected to sexual abuse. 2020–2022. Percent and number

Themselves subjected to sexual abuse	2020	2021	2022
Women	84	86	86
Men	15	14	13
Other gender identity	0	0	1
Total (no.)	1,544	1,682	1,867

Source: Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs, statistics from incest and sexual abuse shelters and Nok. centres

The number of users of incest and sexual abuse shelters who have themselves been subjected to sexual abuse has increased since 2020. In 2022, 1,867 users were registered – the most since records began in 2009. The use of the shelters in 2020 and 2021 must be seen in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The gender distribution has been relatively stable in recent years. Women have made up more than 80 percent of users since 2020.

Table: Age at first instance of sexual abuse among users of incest and sexual abuse shelters/Nok. centres. Broken down by victim's gender. 2020–2022

Gender	Age bracket	2020	2021	2022
Women	7 and younger	28	26	26
	7 to 13	27	25	25
	14 to 15	10	11	9
	16 to 17	10	11	10
	18 or older	22	25	26
	Unclear	3	2	3
Men	7 and younger	23	23	26
	7 to 13	45	48	43
	14 to 15	13	15	14
	16 to 17	7	6	3
	18 or older	9	8	11
	Unclear	3	1	3

Source: Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs, statistics from incest and sexual abuse shelters and Nok. centres

Most of the users of the incest and sexual abuse shelters (who themselves have been subjected to abuse) stated that they had been subjected to abuse at a very young age. This applies to both women and men. In 2022, 26 percent of both women and men were first subjected to abuse before they turned 7. In total, 52 percent of women and

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69 percent of men were first subjected to abuse before they turned 14. In the period 2020 to 2022, a greater proportion of women than men had been subjected to abuse when they were 14 or older, while a greater proportion of men than women had been subjected to abuse before they turned 14.

Table: Total number of cases that the competence team for negative social control and honour-related violence has managed, 2020–2022

	2020	2021	2022
Total number of cases	649	759	891

Source: Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs, the competence team for negative social control and honour-related violence

Table: Gender distribution of cases managed by the competence team for negative social control and honour-related violence. 2020–2022

	2020	2021	2022
Boys/men	21.4	23	21
Girls/women	76.4	74	76
Unknown	2.2	3	3

Source: Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs, the competence team for negative social control and honour-related violence

Table: Subjected to sexual harassment in the workplace, by gender. Employed, aged 18 to 66. Percent. 2022

Survey on living conditions in the work environment 2022		
Subjected to unwanted sexual attention at work, last 12 months		
	Men	1.5
	Women	8.3
Quality-of-life survey 2022		
Proportion subjected to unwanted sexual attention in the workplace during the last 12 months		
	Men	2.3
	Women	6.2

Source: Statistics Norway, Quality-of-life survey, Survey on living conditions in the work environment

Table: Subjected to sexual harassment in the workplace, by gender and profession. Employed, aged 18 to 66. Percent. 2022

Subjected to unwanted sexual attention at work, last 12 months	Proportion of all employed	Women	Men
Managers	2.1	3.7	1.2
Academic professions	5.3	8.3	1.3
College professions	3.5	6.6	1.3
Clerical professions	4.4	6.5	2.0
Sales and service professions	9.5	11.9	4.3
Farmers, fisher people, etc.	0.6	..	0.3
Artisans	1	6.7	0.6
Process and machine operators, transport workers, etc.	1.6	5.6	1.0
Cleaners, carers, etc.	2.3	2.5	2.0

Source: Statistics Norway, Survey on living conditions in the work environment

Table: Vulnerabilities in TryggEst cases reported in 2023¹⁵²

Vulnerabilities in TryggEst cases	2023
Mental health difficulties	36%
Advanced age	34%
Cognitive difficulties	17%
Drug problems	17%
Dementia	13%
Other vulnerabilities	13%
Physical disabilities	10%
Difficulties with self-care	9%
Difficulties with communication	7%

Source: TryggEst, Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs

¹⁵² Note that one case may have multiple vulnerabilities.