**STATEMENT**

**UPR47
Review of Norway**

**4 November 2024**

 **Statement delivered by State Secretary Even Hagen, Ministry of Culture and Equality**

*Check against delivery*

President/Vice-President, distinguished members and observers states of the Council. It is a great honour to be here.

Participation, inclusion, and diversity are crucial for an equal and democratic society and form the foundation for all the Sustainable Development Goals.

In the last review in 2019, Norway received several recommendations regarding equality and non-discrimination. Let me update you on development in some relevant areas:

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The Norwegian government promotes a progressive equality policy to ensure equal rights and opportunities for all.

An important tool for coordinating efforts across Government is action plans in various areas of discrimination. These action plans are followed up through reporting and further development of measures, indicator work, and cross-sectoral working groups. Civil society plays an important role throughout the process, both in the development and implementation of the action plans.

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President/Vice-President,

Our strong commitment to ensuring gender equality applies to all women in all their diversity and will be clearly expressed in the Government’s new strategy on gender equality, launching later this year. The strategy, which will apply for the period of 2025 to 2030, will guide the national efforts for gender equality and strengthen gender mainstreaming.

In recent years, we have initiated political efforts across various sectors to promote gender equality and I will highlight a few of these.

Although the gender pay gap is narrowing, it still exists; in 2023, women’s salaries were 88.3% of men’s. We believe that pay transparency is an important tool to close the gap. Since 2020, all public employers and private sector employers with over 50 employees must map and report wage differences and involuntary part-time work by gender every two years. A major research project on the implementation of these duties is initiated.

We have also taken steps to reduce part-time work by strengthening the right to full-time positions and enhancing part-time employees’ preferential right to extended positions. And we work purposefully to improve gender balance in education and industries with significant gender disparities.

Access to affordable, quality childcare is crucial for enabling women to prioritize paid work. Several measures have been implemented to ensure access for all children, regardless of economic situation or background, to kindergartens and after-school care. In 2024, parental fees for kindergartens have been set at a historic low.

We have also taken steps to combat sexual harassment. For instance, in 2023, we ratified the ILO Convention No. 190 on the elimination of violence and harassment in the world of work. Later this year, we will submit a white paper on sexual harassment to Parliament.

Norway has also made significant progress in ensuring equal rights for LGBT+ persons. The Government’s Action Plan on Gender and Sexual Diversity (2023-2026) aims to improve LGBT+ quality of life, safeguard rights, and enhance recognition of diversity, and includes measures to increase knowledge in all areas of society. As part of the implementation of the action plan, we have increased grants for LGBT+-organizations significantly. Important legislative changes have been made to protect LGBT+ persons, including the introduction of a ban on conversion therapy in 2024.

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President/Vice-President,

Implementing the CRPD at all government levels and across society is a high priority for Norway. The action plan for universal design, lasting until 2025, includes measures in spatial planning, infrastructure, construction, transport, and digitization. Municipalities assess and plan for universal design, and many apply for grants to enhance competence.

Our strategy for equality of people with disabilities runs until 2030. The strategy focuses on education, work, health and care, and culture and leisure. An action plan, which is based on this strategy, includes 85 measures across 8 ministries. The Project “CRPD in the municipalities” is a key measure to increase CRPD competence also at local and regional level, and our aim is to involve all municipalities in this project by 2025.

We take the safety of at-risk adults, such as elderly or persons with disabilities, seriously. TryggEst is a comprehensive safeguarding model aimed at protecting vulnerable adults at risk of abuse, neglect, and exploitation. By October 2024, a total of 85 municipalities, which cover nearly 47 percent of the Norwegian population, have either adopted TryggEst or decided to do so.

Persons with disabilities should have equal access to the labour market, and we are committed to ensure this. Inclusive policies and regulations support workplace accessibility and provide incentives for employers. To increase employment rates for all, we focus on skills development and labour market programs with a particular emphasis on youth and ordinary workplaces.

A new Education Act entered into force the 1 August 2024. The right to individual adaption of education and training still applies. The new Act clarifies the school’s duty to ensure that all pupils benefit from the education. It also sets the requirements for teacher competencies necessary to ensure the provision of individually adapted education.

In June 2022, the government appointed an expert committee to review the use of coercion in mental health care when patients lack consent competence. The aim of this evaluation was to contribute to legislation and practices that secure patients’ rights **to** necessary and appropriate healthcare services while preventing misuse of coercive measures. The committee presented its report in June 2023, recommending a range of legislative changes. The Ministry of Health and Care Services is actively working on implementing these proposals. Additionally, the government has committed to addressing some recommendations from the 2019 Coercion Law Committee’s report.

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President/Vice-President,

Norway remains committed to combating racism in all its forms.

In 2020, we introduced a comprehensive action plan to address racism and discrimination. Building on this plan, we launched a renewed action plan last year with 50 measures, aimed at protecting all groups subjected to racism and discrimination. The plan has a special emphasis on inclusion in the labor market and challenges young people face.

Further, in the coming months, we are preparing to introduce three new action plans targeting specific forms of discrimination: antisemitism, anti-Muslim hatred, and, for the first time, a dedicated national action plan to prevent hate speech and discrimination against the Sámi.

The strategy against hate speech, which ran from 2016 to 2020, was evaluated in 2021. This evaluation highlighted significant knowledge development and increased awareness of hate speech issues, as well as positive impacts within the police and judicial system.

Measures against hate speech are integrated into various governmental procedures and documents. Specific measures include the establishment of a national grant scheme to combat racism, discrimination, and hate speech, **increased** funding for the “Stop Hate Speech” movement, and funding for a digital guide designed to address racism and discrimination.

Hate speech and hate crime are prohibited by law, and the Director of Public Prosecutions has directed the police to prioritize investigating criminal acts motivated by the victim’s skin color, nationality, ethnic origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or disability.

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President/Vice-President,

Norway has made significant progress, but there is still work to be done. We are continuously developing and strengthening our policies to ensure that our measures are not only responsive to immediate needs, **but** also focused on long-term, sustained progress.

Thank you.