



**Convention on the Elimination
of All Forms of Discrimination
against Women**

Distr.: General
22 November 2010

Original: English

**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women**

**Consideration of reports submitted by States
parties under article 18 of the Convention on the
Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination
against Women**

Eighth periodic report of States parties

Norway*, **

* In accordance with the information transmitted to States parties regarding the processing of their reports, the present document was not formally edited before being sent to the United Nations translation services.

** Annexes can be consulted in the files of the Secretariat.

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I. Introduction

1. This is the eighth State report of Norway to the United Nations on Norway's implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion has coordinated the reporting process, in which relevant ministries have been involved. The comments of Sámediggi (the Sami Parliament) are included in this report. The process of consulting civil society stakeholders has taken place in several phases. The Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion began by holding a meeting informing about the process and inviting contributions and suggestions for Norway's report. Several drafts of the report have been circulated for comments. Furthermore, a website has been established on the home page of the Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion containing information on the process, as well as links to relevant background documents.

2. The report, which in accordance with the new United Nations guidelines is a response to the comments by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women after its last examination of Norway (CEDAW/C/NOR/CO/7), covers Norway's implementation of the articles in part I–IV for the period 2007–2010. The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud's annual report SaLDO for 2009 includes information on women's factual situation and availability in Norway during the past year and on what the Ombud sees as remaining challenges in this area. See annex 20 of SaLDO – An Account of Equality and Discrimination in Norway.

II. Issues raised in the concluding comments of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in 2007

3. Reference is made to paragraphs 12–41 of the Committee's concluding comments (CEDAW/C/NOR/CO/7) to Norway's seventh periodic report, which was submitted in 2006.

Paragraph 12

4. Following the examination of 2007, the Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion has distributed the comments of the Committee to all relevant ministries and Government institutions in order to ensure the follow-up of these. The Storting (the Norwegian Parliament) has been kept informed about the Government's implementation of the Convention via the annual Budget Propositions to the Storting and through a number of bills.

Paragraphs 13 and 14

5. Regarding the amendments to the Human Rights Act, we refer to paragraph 105 of Norway's common core document (HRI/CORE/NOR/2009). Since June 2009, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol have been incorporated into the Norwegian Human Rights Act and given precedence when in conflict with domestic law.

Paragraphs 15 and 16

6. The Cabinet has recently (spring 2010) initiated the development of an Action Plan for Gender Equality. The Cabinet will base the action plan on the normative framework of the convention and intends to emphasize the various political goals on gender equality, as well as the policies for reaching these goals and for identifying indicators for measuring the

results. The Equality and Anti-discrimination Ombud, was established in 2006, and is responsible for monitoring and enforcing the Gender Equality Act, the Anti-Discrimination Act, the Anti-Discrimination and Accessibility Act and the Working Environment Act (chap. 13). The Cabinet considers this to be a strengthening of the Ombud's mandate in relation to promoting gender equality and the advancement of women. Owing to additional law enforcement responsibilities following the changes in the Anti-Discrimination Act and the implementation of the new Anti-Discrimination and Accessibility Act, the Ombud's resources were increased by approximately Nkr 17.7 million in 2009. The law enforcement role and the promotional role of the Ombud were evaluated in 2008, and the findings will be followed up by the Ombud herself. See also article 2 (c) below.

Paragraphs 17 and 18

7. Traditional gender choices of education and occupation are among the main causes of systematic differences between women and men at the workplace and otherwise in society. In 2008, the Ministry of Education and Research presented an Action plan for Gender Equality in Kindergarten and Basic Education 2008–2010. The Action Plan aims to ensure that preschool and primary and secondary education is conducive to an equitable society, and that equal status and equality form the foundation of all learning and pedagogical activities in day-care facilities and in the school. The Ministry of Education and Research will prepare guidance with information for pupils and for parents and guardians concerning conscious educational choices. Reports on the status of the equality situation in Norwegian schools and the day-care facilities were issued in 2010.¹ These reports provide relatively little evidence of development work on gender equality in pedagogical work in the school and in day-care facilities. The Ministry of Education and Research has begun statistical records to determine the extent of girls' participation in science subjects. Measures implemented in education institutions to increase equality include mentor programmes, network building, start packages, career planning, research fellowships and management development programmes. See also article 10, below, for details of measures designed to prevent gender segregation directed towards education institutions.

8. The Norwegian media are independent and enjoy full editorial freedom. The authorities have a continuing dialogue with the media and their organizations regarding their role and regarding labelling and stigmatization of certain Norwegian social groups. The media actors have themselves created a code of ethics with guidelines defining limits for what the media may write about (Vær Varsom Plakat). There is also a ban on gender discrimination in advertisements.

Paragraphs 19 and 20

9. The Norwegian Government has given high priority to efforts to combat violence against women. In December 2007, the Government submitted its third Action Plan on Domestic Violence for the period 2008–2011. Evaluation of the work of the police on domestic violence will commence during 2010. In order to strengthen the knowledge base concerning the extent of violence against women, the Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies has been assigned responsibility for conducting a national scope

¹ "Likestilling er jo ikke lenger det helt store ... Likestillingsarbeid i skolen 2009–2010" (Gender Equality is no longer the thing to do ... Gender Equality in the schools 2009–2010, NIFU STEP juni 2010).

"Nye barnehager i gamle spor? Hva vi gjør, og hva vi tror." (New Day-Care Facilities in old Tracks? What do we do, and what do we think) Likestillingscenteret, 2010.

survey of domestic violence and sexual abuse. The survey will commence during 2010, and the results will be available in 2012 at the earliest. See indicators Nos. 20–25 in annex 2 concerning statistics on violence against women.

10. A separate penal provision concerning domestic violence entered into force on 1 January 2006. This provision of the Penal Code includes all forms of domestic abuse including mental abuse. On 8 June 2010, the Storting adopted amendments to the sentencing framework laid down in this provision in order to ensure the possibility of raising the normal level of penalty in such cases with immediate effect. For domestic abuse, the maximum sentence has been raised from three to four years' of imprisonment, while the maximum sentence for gross domestic abuse is imprisonment for up to six years. A considerable increase in penalty levels within the sentencing frameworks has also been decided for all forms of domestic abuse. In the new Penal Code, which has not yet entered into force, the levels will be raised further to a maximum of six years for domestic abuse and 15 years for gross domestic abuse.

11. The Government has also tightened and strengthened the duty of prevention provided in section 139 of the Penal Code. This provision involves a duty to contact the police or otherwise attempt to prevent a serious criminal act if one regards it as most probable that such an act will be committed. It is also now a criminal offence to be an accessory to a breach of the duty of prevention. In addition, the duty of prevention has been extended to include a number of serious offences, such as domestic violence as well as several types of sexual offence against children. From 2000 to 2009, 86 women in Norway were killed by their current or former partner. This figure has remained stable during the last 10 years. Killings of women where the perpetrator is a partner or former partner constitute between 20 and 30 per cent of homicides annually during this period. See also indicator No. 20 concerning the number of victims, 21 concerning the number of cases reported and 22 concerning the number of penalties in annex 2.

12. In 2009, the Ministry of Justice and the Police implemented a research project to examine a selection of cases of homicide where the perpetrator is the victim's current or former partner. The purpose of the project is to help identify risk factors and to develop preventive measures. Furthermore, a number of measures will be implemented in order to strengthen the protection of persons exposed to violence, including a project on electronic control of perpetrators. The police will try out the security tool SARA, a tool for survey and assessment of the risk of future partner violence. The number of portable safety alarms has increased from 681 in 2005 to 1,803 in 2009. For further details concerning efforts to combat violence, see article 6 below.

Paragraphs 21 and 22

13. The Government aims to help in combating all forms of human trafficking both in Norway and abroad. In the Norwegian Government's policy platform, the Government stresses the importance of strengthening the work of the police on combating human trafficking and of enabling victims more easily to obtain residence in Norway. In 2006, the Government presented the Action Plan "Stop Human Trafficking 2006–2009", see annex 18. The Ministry of Justice is following up Norway's further work on human trafficking. See also further details concerning efforts to combat human trafficking under article 6 below and Norway's fifth report concerning implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights under question 12 (a)–(b).

14. Norway makes active efforts to combat trafficking in women and minors exploited through prostitution. Human trafficking for forced labour may take place within apparently legal frameworks, such as recruitment agencies and contract work or private households. There has been an increase in organized begging in Norway during recent years that gives grounds for suspicion of exploitation. The authorities will consider measures to reduce this

activity and to improve knowledge of the phenomenon. The Norwegian police is dependent on victims of human trafficking reporting and testifying against ring leaders. Ensuring that victims can testify safely requires close cooperation between the police and other agencies and organisations.

15. A new Act, which entered into force on 1 January 2010, provides a statutory duty for local authorities to provide shelter services and coordinated assistance for victims of violence. The shelters are available for everyone exposed to domestic violence and to young people subjected to forced marriages and human trafficking. This entails a duty for the local authorities to ensure that women, men and children are given comprehensive assistance and follow-up in the form of coordinated crisis centre services for the users. The Act takes two different gender perspectives into account: the one perspective involves promoting special equality for women by ensuring particular protection to the group most exposed to domestic violence. The second perspective involves promoting general equality between the sexes by giving men and women exposed to domestic violence equal provision of emergency assistance. The Act states that the residential arrangements for women and men should be physically separate.

16. The Norwegian Police Directorate administers the Coordination Unit for Victims of Human Trafficking (the KOM Project), a project that assists the police and support services in coordinating and mobilising support and protection measures. According to figures from this project, support services followed up approximately 300 persons assumed to be victims of human trafficking in 2009. In order to ensure support and protection for women subjected to human trafficking, the Ministry of Justice provides annual support of approximately Nkr 2 million to the ROSA project under the auspices of the Secretariat of the Shelter Movement. The KOM Project will continue its work on support and protection for all types of victims of human trafficking. The KOM project is charged with developing information materials directed at assumed and identified victims.

17. From 1 January 2009, the purchase of sexual activity or a sexual act from adults is a criminal offence, cf. section 202a of the Penal Code. For further details concerning this provision, see article 6 below. See also indicators Nos. 24 and 25 in annex 2 for statistics and data concerning possible victims of human trafficking and crisis centre facilities. Before the prohibition entered into force, a survey of the prostitution market was carried out. The survey was conducted in such a way that it can be repeated after some time in order to evaluate the effect of the Act. The survey of the prostitution market, with particular emphasis on the organization of activities and prostitutes' own experiences, is not only of importance as a basis for subsequent evaluation; it is also relevant for the design of targeted measures for limiting any injurious effects of criminalization. The travaux préparatoires of the Act emphasize that implementation of the prohibition will be carefully monitored, as regards both enforcement of the Act and how it seems to affect the potential for social measures among prostitutes. For further details of Norway's efforts to combat violence, see also article 6, below.

Paragraphs 23 and 24

18. See article 7 concerning women in private and public positions and indicators Nos. 59–65 in annex 2 providing statistics concerning the numbers/proportions of women and men in various political offices. See also annex 6, which contains an overview of statistical publications from Statistics Norway concerning immigrants in Norway during the period 2008–2010. The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development has initiated the project, "Utstillingsvindu for kvinner i lokalpolitikken" (Encouraging women to participate in local politics) for the period 2007–2010, the purpose of which is to increase women's representation in local politics. The Ministry contributes Nkr 20 million to various municipal initiatives implementing measures to increase the number of women who

take part in municipal councils. Women's networks, mentor schemes and greater publicity in local media concerning female local politicians are some of the measures designed to encourage more women to take a leading role in local politics. Encouraging political party groups to recruit more women to their party lists and to put more women at the top of their lists are further important measures designed to ensure better gender balance in local politics in the future.

19. Through its Action Plan for Gender Equality 2009–2013, Sámediggi (the Sami Parliament) signals that work on gender equality and equal status has high priority. Sámediggi (the Sami Parliament) has actively encouraged submitters of party lists to ensure gender equality, and has decided that each gender shall have at least 40 per cent of the proposed candidates in each list. In the last two periods, there has been an even gender distribution among the elected representatives.

20. See indicator No. 61 in annex 2 concerning the proportion of female judges. A strategy for the courts has been prepared for recruitment of more women to posts as judges and court administrators. The Director General of Public Prosecutions is making an effort to recruit more women to the prosecuting authority. Furthermore the Judicial Appointments Committee has prepared guidelines for gender distribution in the courts. The introduction of moderate gender quotas is a measure used to attain a more even gender balance in the courts. A number of measures have also been implemented with the aim of increasing the proportion of women in academia. For further details of these measures, see article 10 below. See also indicator No. 3 in annex 2.

21. The Government has implemented quotas through a 40 per cent gender balance requirement for wholly owned public enterprises (from 2004) and privately owned public limited companies (ASA) (from 2006) and for limited companies of which municipalities and county authorities together own at least two thirds of the shares (from 2010). Figures from 2009 indicate that most companies meet the requirement regarding gender balance. See also article 4.1, below, on women in the board room.

22. In 2008, the Government submitted an Action Plan to Increase Entrepreneurship among Women. The objective is to strengthen women's position and participation in industry. The Ministry of Trade and Industry also supports the organization Young Entrepreneurs Norway, which works to promote entrepreneurship in education, and has established a separate management development programme for girls called Jenter og ledelse [Girls and Management]. This initiative has given positive results, and reports show that the proportion of girls in management and boards is approximately 50 per cent in Young Entrepreneurs Norway's youth enterprises.

23. There is a need to improve the access to and participation in the labour market of women with minority background. Enhanced economic equality for women with minority background is a prioritized objective for the Government. Rapid and successful integration of immigrant women on arrival in Norway is of major importance for achieving genuine equality for immigrant women. Financial independence, knowledge of Norwegian society, language competence and access to a social network are important requirements for immigrant women's participation in society. See also annex 14, Action Plan to Promote Equality and Prevent Ethnic Discrimination (2009–2011).

Paragraphs 25 and 26

24. Closing wage gaps between women and men is an important goal of the Government's income policy. The Government plans to submit a white paper on equal pay with a long-term strategy to meet the objective of equal pay. In the white paper, the Government will take as its starting point the report of the Equal Pay Commission, Official Norwegian Report 2008:6 "Kjønn og lønn. Fakta, analyser og virkemidler for likelønn"

(Gender and Pay. Facts, analyses and measures for equal pay) and the public consultation following the report. Women work more part-time than men. During the period 2007–2009, there has been a slight reduction in the proportion of women who work part-time. The Government’s role involves facilitating that parents are able to combine responsibilities for family and work. It is up to the individual to decide whether he or she wishes to work full or part-time. The right to work part-time for parents providing for children under 12 years of age also contributes to high workforce participation in Norway. Many women choose to work 80–90 per cent of a full-time post for large parts of their working life. The option of working part-time also enables more people to participate in the workforce late in their lives.

25. The proportion of persons working involuntarily part time (underemployed) has fallen somewhat during recent years. In 2009, there were 60,000 underemployed. In the case of women, this amounted to 3.9 per cent of employed persons and, in the case of men, 1.1 per cent. The proportion of underemployed persons is greatest in cleaning work, health and social services and in the retail trade. The Working Environment Act was amended in 2006, and now includes a provision in section 14-3 giving part-time employees a preferential right to an extended post rather than that the employer shall create a new appointment in the undertaking. The aim of this preferential right is to help part-time employees who wish to increase their working hours. In 2009, amendments to the Working Environment Act enabled rota work arrangements in female-dominated sectors to be more comparable with shift work arrangements in industrial sectors as regards working hours. See also article 11.1 (c), below, for further details of these amendments. Further to this, the Norwegian Government through its policy platform (Soria Moria II) has declared that it aims at strengthening the measures for reducing the number of underemployed. See also indicators Nos. 37–38 and 44–45 in annex 2.

26. The Norwegian labour market is partially gendered. Almost 60 per cent of all women who contribute to the work force, work in health and social services, retail trades or education. From 2008 to 2009, the proportion of women working in health and social services and retail trades has been somewhat reduced. Men are rather more evenly distributed between the various sectors. See also the information given under the heading “Paragraphs 17 and 18”, above, and article 10, below, concerning the various measures adopted to prevent gender segregation in education and working life.

27. Generally speaking, a lower proportion of immigrant women are in employment than women otherwise in society. In 2009, 57 per cent of immigrant women were employed as against 68 per cent in the remainder of the female population. Women from a number of countries of origin stand out with a particularly low rate of employment. This applies particularly to women from Somalia, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Iraq, where only between 22 and 33 per cent of women are employed. There is a need to improve the access and participation of women with minority background in the labour market. Enhanced economic equality for women with minority background is a prioritized objective for the Government. For measures to increase immigrant employment rates reference is made to paragraphs 153–165 of Norway’s nineteenth and twentieth report to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD/C/NOR/19-20).

Paragraphs 27 and 28

28. We refer to paragraph 42 of the common core document, which contains statistics concerning the incidence of HIV/AIDS, and to indicator Nos. 18 and 19 in annex 2 for updated figures concerning the incidence of HIV/AIDS distributed between women and men, median age, place of infection and mode of infection. In June 2009, the Government presented a National HIV strategy “Aksept og Mestring” (Acceptance and Coping) (2009–2014), which addresses the perspective for women, in terms of both objectives and

measures. In 2009, the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training prepared new resource materials for teachers for use in sex education in primary and lower secondary schools, which also addresses women's autonomy and competence in sex situations.

Paragraphs 29 and 30

29. The Government's policy platform states that efforts to combat forced marriage and female genital mutilation will be continued and reinforced. Through the Action Plan against Forced Marriages (2008–2011) (see annex 16) and the Action Plan for Combating Female Genital Mutilation (2008–2011) (see annex 15), a study has been initiated to investigate possible procedures for systematic registration of cases of forced marriage and female genital mutilation. Protection of privacy will be a key consideration in work on this study. One of the objectives is to determine how registration may form the basis for statistics at the national level. Tasks include disseminating available knowledge, further developing information materials, developing competence and conducting research and development. A survey of competence needs is currently being conducted for personnel working on female genital mutilation issues. The survey is expected to be finalized by 2011.

Paragraphs 31 and 32

30. In cohabitations, women have the same rights as men to property that the cohabiting couple have jointly acquired. All rules regarding division of property are gender neutral. The Co-ownership Act and the Act of 4 July 1991 no. 45 relating to the right to the joint residence and household goods when a household community ceases to exist are of central importance when the cohabitation comes to an end. It follows from section 3 of the Act relating to the right to the joint residence and household goods when a household community ceases to exist that, when strong grounds so indicate, the one party may acquire rights to the joint home and contents despite the fact that the property or right belongs to the other party. If one of the parties has taken a greater responsibility for looking after children and the home while the other party has been free to take (increased) gainful employment, it also follows from case law that the one party in such situations shall have a right to compensation on the basis of enrichment and restitution principles. In Official Norwegian Report 2007:16 "Ny skiftelovgivning" (New Probate Legislation), amendments are proposed with the aim of ensuring that the parties receive sufficient guidance and assistance in dividing the property of the cohabitants. The Ministry of Justice is currently considering the proposals of the report.

31. Pursuant to current legislation, paternity may be determined on the basis of unilateral acknowledgement by a man if he is cohabiting with the child's mother. No statistics are kept of the number of cases of paternity determined in this manner, but experience indicates that this applies to a very small number of cases. A committee appointed by the Norwegian Government in 2008 submitted a report in 2009 proposing revocation of such determination of paternity. The Committee points out that regard for stability and security for the child is best safeguarded when the parents agree on the paternity. The Committee proposes that, when agreement cannot be attained, the matter be decided by a court judgment. The report has been circulated for comments, and the matter is now being considered by the Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion.

Paragraphs 33 and 34

32. Pursuant to Norwegian law, the lower age limit for contracting marriage is 18 years of age. The authorities may in accordance with an excepting provision permit marriage to be contracted by an applicant between 16 and 18 years of age when "strong grounds" exist. This provision was limited in 2007 as one of several measures introduced to prevent child

marriage and forced marriage. Few such permits are given each year, on average five per year during the period 2007–2009.

Paragraphs 35 and 36

33. For general statistics on Norway see annex 1, common core document – Norway, 2009. In order to ensure better statistical reporting to the Committee, the Government has prepared a separate attachment, annex 2, with statistics and figures mainly for the period 2007–2009, which are relevant for measuring the implementation the rights covered by the Convention and the implementation of the Beijing platform. We have also attached Statistics Norway’s latest statistical publications: annex 3, Men and Women, 2010 and annex 4, Gender Equality Barometer (Municipal Level), 2010. As regards persons with disabilities, the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud’s report for 2009, SaLDO, includes information on the situation for women and men with disabilities under education, in the labour market, in political life, in management and in the housing market. See annex 20, SaLDO – An Account of Equality and Discrimination in Norway. See also annex 2, indicator Nos. 31 and 42, for statistics on the situation in the labour market for women and men with disabilities. There are also two recent status reports (2007 and 2008) on social development for people with disabilities.² The reports give a picture of the situation for this group in some areas of society, but the figures in these reports are not gendered. As regards statistics concerning the Sami and the national minorities, we refer to annex 5, Sami Statistics, 2010 and to paragraph 254 of the common core document (2009), paragraphs 48–50 of Norway’s seventeenth and eighteenth report to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination and paragraph 6 of Norway’s nineteenth and twentieth report to the same Committee. Sámediggi (the Sami Parliament) states that in general there is a lack of data on Sami women and gender equality. There are statistical data disaggregated by immigrant background and by immigrants’ countries of origin. See also Norway’s nineteenth and twentieth report to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination and annex 6, which contains a list of statistical publications from Statistics Norway concerning immigrants in Norway (2008–2010). In certain areas, statistics at the individual level may not be made public on grounds of protection of privacy. In other areas, figures exist that do not satisfy statistical requirements. There are some areas where Norway lacks the necessary knowledge of the situation, and where the Government is making an effort to obtain new statistics and knowledge base for Norway’s ninth report to the Committee in some of these areas. This applies, for example, to knowledge and statistics associated with social developments for marginalized groups, such as people with disabilities and development and results in areas such as gender-related violence. Norway is making continuing efforts to prepare the knowledge base in areas covered by the Convention by means of new statistics and studies and by evaluating existing measures.

Paragraph 37

34. See annex 2 for statistics concerning the period 2007–2009 and annex 7 concerning Norway’s report on the national follow-up of the Beijing platform that was submitted to UNECE on 30 March 2009 and annex 8, Norway’s follow-up of Beijing + 15 as regards Norway’s development cooperation (2010). See also annex 10, Norway’s follow-up of

² “Statusrapport 07 — Samfunnsutviklingen for personer med nedsatt funksjonsevne” [Status Report 07 — Social Development for persons with disabilities], The National Centre for Documentation on Disability, 2007.

“Statusrapport 08 — Samfunnsutviklingen for personer med nedsatt funksjonsevne” [Status Report 08 — Social Development for persons with disabilities], The National Centre for Documentation on Disability, 2008.

Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and annex 11 concerning the national report of Norway on gender equality and the empowerment of women for the annual ministerial review of the Economic and Social Council submitted in May 2010.

Paragraph 38

35. Norway's national implementation of the Millennium Goals is implicit in reporting on the various articles of the Convention below. For further information on Norway's follow-up of the Millennium Goals at the international level, see annex 9.

Paragraph 39

36. Norway considered ratifying the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Their Families in 2002, but decided not to do so at that time. The grounds for this were that the wording of the Convention was considered to be so vague and imprecise on a number of points that it would be difficult to clarify the possible consequences if Norway were to ratify the Convention. Norway is also concerned that the Convention could undermine existing obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The duplication of existing rights, to some extent with variations, may be unfortunate, since this could lead to ambiguity. In 2006, Norway reconsidered the question of ratifying the Convention, and commissioned a report in connection with this to be used as a basis for clarifying Norway's position. Norway decided not to ratify the Convention shortly after the report was completed in 2007. Norway has already ratified all the key human rights instruments and the International Labour Organization's (ILO) core conventions on workers' rights. These also apply to foreign nationals resident in Norway. Norway participates actively in the United Nations and in various international forums where migrants' rights are on the agenda, for instance the Global Forum on Migration and Development. Norway gives high priority to efforts to improve labour standards, which are also crucial in the context of migrants' rights.

Paragraph 40

37. In autumn 2007, three regional conferences were held on the Convention and the last examination under the Convention and on the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life. A total of 37 municipalities and county authorities signed the Charter. In this way, chairmen of municipal councils have committed their municipalities to cooperating with the parties in the local community on promoting gender equality. A Nordic Sami Equality conference was held under the title "Makt og avmakt i et kjønnsperspektiv" (Power and Powerlessness in a Gender Perspective). The conference highlighted various issues from a gender perspective, related to indigenous communities in the Nordic countries.

38. Each year, a contact conference is held between central government authorities and the organizations representing civil society on the United Nations and gender equality and women's issues. The contact conference is part of the national preparations for Norway's participation in the Commission on the Status of Women. The organizations representing civil society are also involved in preparations for other international meetings on women's issues, such as Norway's participation in the Economic and Social Council of 2010 and the annual meetings of the Third Committee of the General Assembly. The Government has also made provisions for input from the social partners and the organizations representing civil society in connection with the preparation of Norway's eighth report to the Committee. Furthermore, the Government has also granted support for the preparation of a shadow report to the Government's eighth report to the Committee. In order to ensure greater transparency, an official website has been set up providing access to all relevant

background documents in connection with the Government's preparation of the report to CEDAW. In autumn 2010, the Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion is planning a separate commemoration of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in connection with Beijing + 15 and the centenary of International Women's Day. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs will hold a separate commemoration in 2010 in connection with the 10-year anniversary of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000).

Paragraph 41

39. Norway hereby submits its eighth periodic report on implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

III. Information relating to the articles in parts I, II, III and IV in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Article 2 (a)

Basic legislation

40. We refer to section 1.1.1 of Norway's seventh report to the Committee (CEDAW/C/NOR/7). See paragraphs 104–105 of the common core document for further details of the Human Rights Committee of the Storting. We also refer to Norway's response to comments 13 and 14, above, concerning the legal status of the Convention in Norwegian law.

Article 2 (b)

Anti-discrimination legislation

41. We refer to section 1.1.2 of Norway's seventh report to the Committee. Important milestones in the fight against discrimination in Norway were achieved with the Anti-Discrimination Act, and the establishment of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud in 2006. For further information, see Norway's common core document, paras. 140–146 and paras. 217–227 concerning the Ombud and the Tribunal, and paras. 184–216 concerning the national legal protection against discrimination.

42. In 2007, a law commission was appointed by the Government with the task of studying how to further strengthen the legal framework on discrimination. The commission submitted its proposal to the Cabinet in Official Norwegian Report 2009: 14 "Et helhetlig diskrimineringsvern" (Comprehensive legal protection against discrimination) (see annex 21). The proposal in the report includes a bill with a broad perspective, prohibiting discrimination in all areas of society on all grounds, such as gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation and age. The report was circulated for comments in 2009. The report is currently being considered by the Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion. The Institute for Public Law at the University of Oslo submitted its report on the evaluation of section 21 of the Gender Equality Act in December 2008. Section 21 enacts the principle of gender balance in committees, boards, councils, etc. appointed or elected by public bodies. The proposals in the report include applying the principle of gender balance when appointing delegations to visit foreign countries, stricter regulations for granting exemptions and more efficient sanctions for failing to fulfil the requirement concerning

gender balance. The report was circulated for comments in 2009, and the proposals are currently being considered by the Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion.

43. Another important milestone in the fight against discrimination was achieved by means of the Anti-discrimination and Accessibility Act, which entered into force on 1 January 2009. The objectives of the act are to promote equality and ensure equal opportunities for and rights to social participation for all persons regardless of disabilities and to prevent discrimination on the basis of disability. The act applies to all areas of society with the exception of family life and relationships of personal nature.

44. Since 1 January 2009, public authorities, employers and employee organizations have been legally obliged to make active efforts and to report on their efforts to promote equality as regards gender, disability, ethnicity and religion. Since 2003, the corresponding obligation has applied to the same group as regards gender. As the central Government employer, the Ministry of Government Administration, Reform and Church Affairs is responsible for ensuring that Government agencies meet their obligations to make active, targeted and systematic efforts to promote equality and prevent discrimination in their activities. See also paragraphs 205 and 251 of the common core document, annex 1.

45. Earlier in 2010, the Gender Equality Act and the Working Environment Act were amended in order to limit the practice by religious communities of discrimination on grounds of gender or sexual orientation in connection with appointments. The amendments entered into force in April 2010. At the same time, the Working Environment Act, the Gender Equality Act, the Anti-Discrimination Ombud Act and the Act on Anti-Discrimination and Accessibility were amended. It is now prohibited by law to ask about a woman's pregnancy during the process of hiring. The amendments entered into force in April 2010.

Article 2 (c)

National gender equality machinery

46. At the ministerial level, the Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion is responsible for promoting gender equality and preventing discrimination on grounds of gender, religion, functional ability, sexual orientation and age, and has a particular responsibility for coordination and initiatives. It follows from the sector responsibility principle that all ministries with subordinate agencies have responsibility for promoting gender equality and preventing discrimination in their own spheres of operation. Section 1a of the Gender Equality Act provides that public agencies shall make active, targeted and systematic efforts to promote gender equality in all social areas, including annual reports concerning gender equality in their activities. According to the Instructions for Official Studies and Reports, the consequences of a proposal for gender equality shall be considered when preparing public reports if regarded as appropriate. It follows from the master budget document that the ministries are to incorporate gender and gender equality perspectives in the budget proposition for the ministry where this is found relevant and appropriate. A consequence analysis of the budgetary work of the ministries during the period 2006–2009 was included in the report "På sporet av kjønnsperspektivet" (On the track of the Gender Perspective)³ The report concludes that there is a trend in the direction of clearer expression of the gender perspective in the budget propositions of most ministries. It further concludes

³ *På sporet av kjønnsperspektivet. Integrering av et kjønns- og likestillingsperspektiv i budsjettarbeidet* (On the Track of the Gender Perspective. Integration of a gender and gender equality perspective in budget work) DIFI Report 2009: 1. Norwegian Agency for Public Management and eGovernment (Difi).

that ministries have made the greatest progress as regards documenting and drawing attention to gender differences by means of gendered statistics. Some ministries still lack specific objectives and measures for gender equality.

47. Efforts to promote gender equality also include the situation of Sami men and women. In the budget for 2010, funds will be allocated to work on gender equality and anti-discrimination in Sami areas. These funds are to be applied to a post at Gáldu (the Resource Centre for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples). See also the reference to gender equality work directed towards the Sami in paragraph 248 of Norway's nineteenth and twentieth report to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

48. In 2009, in order to strengthen work on gender equality, a High Level Group of Senior Officials on Gender Equality was established with representatives from all ministries, coordinated by the Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion. The topics raised in the group of senior officials include gender distribution in management, gender budgeting and family-friendly working life. The Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion also administers support to NGOs in the gender equality field. Furthermore, in 2007, the Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion took charge of basic financing of the regional centres for equality and diversity. In August 2010, an evaluation of the pilot project for Regional Centres for Diversity and Equality was presented. The findings from the evaluation will be considered by the Ministry for Children, Equality and Inclusion. For further details of the Regional Centres for Equality and Diversity, see article 5 II A 6, paragraph 241, of Norway's nineteenth and twentieth report to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

49. The Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion has the responsibility for the following two directorates, which are all important for the management of the gender policies: (1) the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs, which was established in 2004, and the five regional offices together comprising Bufetat (the Agency for Children, Youth and Family Affairs), have the responsibility for integrated help and care services to children, youth and families; (2) the Directorate of Integration and Diversity, which was established on 1 January 2006, is responsible for settling refugees and supporting the municipalities in their implementation of the Act on an introduction programme and Norwegian language training for newly arrived immigrants (Introduction Act).

50. The Equality and Anti-discrimination Ombud, which was established in 2006, is an independent Government body with responsibility for promoting equality and combating discrimination regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion, functional ability, sexual orientation and age. The Ombud enforces statutory bans on discrimination, provides guidance and promotes equality and diversity. The Norwegian Equality Tribunal considers appeals against statements made by the Equality and Anti-discrimination Ombud. We refer also to paragraphs 217–227 of the common core document on the Equality and Anti-discrimination Ombud and the Equality Tribunal and to section 1.1.3 of Norway's seventh report to the present Committee. See also the reference to the Equality and Anti-discrimination Ombud under responses to comments 15 and 16, above.

51. The Norwegian State Council on Disability provides advice to public bodies and institutions, especially ministries and the Civil Service in general. The Council is responsible for advising public authorities on the formulation and implementation of policies relating to persons with disabilities in all areas of society.

52. The Contact Committee for Immigrants and the Authorities, which was appointed for the first time in 1984, is an advisory body appointed by the Norwegian government every 4 years. The committee has two functions: (1) to advise the Government in matters that affect immigrants and (2) to facilitate dialogue between immigrants and the authorities.

Article 2 (d)**Efforts by the public authorities to promote gender equality**

53. We refer to paragraphs 232–233 of the common core document on public authorities' work on promoting gender equality and to section 1.1.4 of Norway's seventh report to the Committee. During 2010, the Government has initiated different processes which all aim at providing a foundation for a future, modern, comprehensive and knowledge-based gender equality policy. First, in February 2010, the Government appointed a women's panel, which was assigned the task of providing input, stimulating awareness and setting the agenda in relation to current gender equality policy challenges. The panel is expected to present its report ultimo September 2010. Second, in the same month, the Government later appointed a public committee to examine Norwegian equality policy in relation to life course, ethnicity and class. The Committee has been given a time limit of two years to submit its final report. Third, in April 2010, the Government appointed a Social Inclusion Committee which will examine the potential and challenges inherent in a multicultural Norway, and propose principles and measures for work on social inclusion and integration. Among other things, the Social Inclusion Committee will discuss, assess and propose measures associated with strategies for increasing the low workforce participation of women of immigrant background in certain groups. In addition, the Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion appointed a committee in June 2009 to coordinate the 100-year anniversary for universal suffrage in Norway in 2013.

54. In 2008, the Equality and Anti-discrimination Ombud conducted controls of a total of 64 municipalities. Following these controls, equality reports in only 16 out of 64 municipalities were approved without comments.

55. See the reference to the research project on family life and equality among immigrants in article 5 II A 6, paragraphs 242–243, of Norway's nineteenth and twentieth report to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. See also the reference to gender equality of girls and women in immigrant communities in article 5 II A 6, paragraph 240, of the same report. For further information on the Plan of Action for Integration and Inclusion of the Immigrant Population, see paragraphs 66–67 of that report. Seventeen specific inclusion goals in the fiscal budget are referred to in paragraph 62 of that report.

Article 2 (e)**Measures to prevent discrimination by persons, organizations and businesses**

56. We refer to section 1.1.5 of Norway's seventh report to the Committee.

Article 2 (f)**Measure to abolish discriminatory laws and practices and****Article 2 (g)****Measures to abolish discriminatory provisions in the Penal Code**

57. We refer to the information under articles 3–16.

Article 3

Gender equality and human rights

58. The situation for children, including girls, in Norway is specifically described in Norway's fourth report to the Committee for the Rights of the Child of 2008. The proportion of children, including girls, who live in low-income families, is low in Norway, when viewed in an international context,⁴ but the proportion of children who live in families with continuing low income has increased during the period from 2000 to 2007. One reason for the increase in children in low-income groups during the 2000s is an increase in economically challenged immigrant children. See also indicator No. 1 in annex 2 concerning continuing low income for women and men. Research shows that children in poor families are at greater risk of being without regular contact with friends and participation in organized recreational activities than children in families with more sound and stable economy. However, country of origin appears to be an even more important background variable for participation in recreational activities than family economy.⁵ The Government wishes to enable all children and youth to have the potential to participate and develop in society regardless of the parents' economic and social situation. The Government provides support for holiday and recreation schemes for children of parents with a poor economic situation.

59. The Government also views it as important that more groups are ensured better access to information concerning their rights, for example immigrant women, persons with disabilities, children and old people. Providing minority women with information concerning their rights is important both for integration and for gender equality. The Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion is further examining how these efforts can be strengthened and how new information can be facilitated. A number of relevant measures in this context have already been implemented. All Government agencies are required to conduct user surveys, which increase the knowledge of users' information needs. The Ministry of Justice is in process of preparing information materials for relevant groups of the population with the aim of improving their genuine potential to issue complaints on the basis of the discrimination provisions of the Penal Code. A number of activity and reporting obligations result from the extension by employers' and employees' organizations of their training in discrimination law and labour rights. The Equality and Anti-discrimination Ombud also provides important information on protection against discrimination in the various areas of discrimination.

60. In 2008, the Survey of Living Conditions from Statistics Norway included matters concerning sexual orientation and gender identity for the first time. One of the few certain finds is that gays, lesbians and bisexuals more often have symptoms of weakened mental health than heterosexuals. There are also indications that gays, lesbians and bisexuals have weakened living conditions in other areas, but here the results are uncertain. For information on the Norwegian Government's Action Plan on Improving Quality of Life for Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals and Trans Persons, 2009–2012, see annex 19.

61. We refer to section 1.2 of Norway's seventh report to the Committee. Women's security in reception centres. In 2009, the Directorate of Immigration was granted Nkr 30

⁴ According to a new OECD study (2008), 12.4 per cent of all children under 18 years of age resident in OECD countries had low incomes in the middle of the 2000s. In Norway, the corresponding proportion was 4.6 per cent. The low-income limit is here defined as 50 per cent of the median income.

⁵ Tone Fløtten (ed.): *Barnefattigdom* [Child Poverty], Gyldendal Akademisk (2009).

million earmarked for measures to adapt reception centres for single women and persons with disabilities.

62. In the travaux préparatoires to the new Immigration Act, importance has been attached to the need for a specific gender perspective in refugee law assessments. The new Immigration Act, which entered into force on 1 January 2010, makes clear in section 29, that persecution may take the form of “acts of gender-specific [...] nature. This is a codification of previous practice. In October 2008, the Ministry issued guidelines concerning gender-related issues associated with assessment of refugees. These guidelines also concern issues that may be relevant in relation to lesbians, gays, bisexuals and trans persons.

Article 4.1

Special measure to promote gender equality

63. We refer to section 1.3.1 of Norway’s seventh report to the Committee. On women on boards, rules concerning gender balance on boards of all public wholly owned enterprises entered into force already on 1 January 2004, with a transitional period of two years. The rules concerning gender balance on the boards of privately owned public limited companies (ASA), entered into force on 1 January 2006, and require gender balance of at least 40–60 per cent of each gender on the boards of public limited companies. The rules do not apply to privately owned limited companies (AS). In 1993, there were 3 per cent of women on boards of public limited companies. In 2003, the proportion had risen to 7 per cent and in 2009 it had increased to over 40 per cent. All public limited companies thus meet the requirements of the Act. Enforced dissolution of the company is the sanction that may be used if the composition of the board fails to meet the requirements of the Act. New public limited companies registered after 1 January 2008 that fail to meet the requirements of the Act are refused registration. The requirement regarding 40–60 per cent gender balance on boards also applies to public wholly owned enterprises. The requirement regarding 40 per cent of women on boards was from 1 January 2010 also made to apply to limited companies where municipalities and county authorities together own at least two thirds of the shares of the company. In the case of companies founded and registered in the Register of Business Enterprises prior to 1 January 2010, there is a transitional period of two years until 1 January 2012. See also indicator No. 64 in annex 2, which shows the proportion of women who are chairpersons, vice-chairpersons and members of boards subject to the requirement regarding gender balance.

Article 4.2

Protection of the reproductive role of women

64. We refer to section 1.3.2 of Norway’s seventh report to the Committee. The most recent figures show that 79 per cent of women in Norway between 25 and 66 years of age participate in the workforce almost on an equal footing with men. At the same time, the Norwegian birth rate is high (at 1.98) when compared with the European Union (at 1.53) and other industrialized countries. Sound welfare schemes coupled with strong protection against discrimination, including a strengthened protection against discrimination for pregnant women, enables women to combine family and working life. Nevertheless, research⁶ indicates that Norwegian women lag behind men as regards pay and career

⁶ Hardoy and Schøne: 2007. Wage Gap between Women and Men: The Importance of having Children in Explaining the Gender Gap, The Institute for Social Research (ISF), Oslo, 2007.

development after giving birth to children. See the reference to equal pay under article 11.1 (d) below.

Article 5 (a) **Gender roles**

65. We refer to section 1.4.1 of Norway's seventh report to the Committee. See also the responses to comments 17 and 18 and article 10 below concerning work on gender roles. Work on changing stereotyped gender roles, including identifying traditional roles and attitudes that give rise to inequality, is a priority area of the Government's gender equality policy. In 2008, the Norwegian Government submitted a separate white paper, Report No. 8 (2008–2009) to the Storting "Om menn, mannsroller og likestilling" (On men, men's roles and gender equality). The objective is to encourage men to take a more active part in society's gender equality project, make them more family-oriented and less work-oriented, and provide more potential for a better life through increased contact with their children and fewer broken partnerships.

Article 5 (b) **Joint responsibilities for women and men, for children and families**

66. We refer to section 1.4.2 of Norway's seventh report to the Committee. Equal parenthood is a goal of Norwegian gender equality policy. Measures have therefore been implemented to strengthen the role of fathers as sound and active care persons for their children throughout their upbringing. The father's quota applies in cases where both parents have earned a right to parental benefit. From 1 July 2010, it is no longer a condition for the father's right to paid parental leave, that the mother must have been employed in at least a 50 per cent post during the qualifying period. From 1 July 2009, the father's quota has been extended to 10 weeks of a total leave period of 46/56 weeks (at 100/80 per cent covered earnings). Thus far, the father's compensation has increased in relation to the extension of the father's quota. Approximately one out of five fathers with a right to paid parental leave takes leave in excess of the father's quota. In autumn 2009, the Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion sent out a consultative paper with possible amendments to the Working Environment Act concerning a right to pay during care leave in connection with childbirth and adoption for fathers and during time off for nursing mothers as a result of which a larger share of employees will receive pay in connection with statutory time off for nursing mothers and father's care leave. Both proposals are justified by the desire for more equal parental care. Pursuant to the current rules, there is no entitlement to benefit in connection with care leave or time off for nursing mothers. The right to pay would be dependent on the agreement with the employer. The proposal is still being considered.

67. In 2007, the Government appointed the Children Act Committee to consider amendments to the Children Act in a perspective whereby both parents are regarded as equally important to the child. In March 2010, the Storting adopted amendments to the Children Act which included the obligation to notify between parents in the event of moving house within Norway, extension of the definition of normal right of access and introduction of a limited right of the courts to order divided residence of the children of

Egeland et al: 2008, Cathrine Egeland, Heidi Enehaug, Sigtune Halryno, Selma T. Lyng, Helge Svare: "Erfaringer med og konsekvenser av graviditet og uttak av foreldrepermisjon (Experience with and Consequences of Pregnancy and Taking Parental Leave), Work Research Institute (WRI), 2008.

parents who live apart. The amendments entered into force on 1 July 2010. As of 1 September 2010, a quota of ten weeks' care leave has been implemented for fathers who take part in the introduction programme for refugees.

Article 6

Violence, trafficking in women and prostitution

68. We refer to section 1.5 of Norway's seventh report to the Committee. On cooperation at local, regional, and national levels, a major area of focus in the handlingsplanen mot vold i nære relasjoner (2008–2011) "Vendepunkt" (Action Plan to Combat Domestic Violence (2008–2011) "Turning Point"), see annex 17, has been to ensure a firm foundation for the provision to persons subjected to domestic violence. At the national level, the Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies gathers and strengthens competence on violence, family violence and sexual abuse, refugees' health and forced migration, stress management and collective strain situations. In cooperation with Alternative to Violence, the Centre is carrying out a four-year research project to further develop treatment methods at Alternative to Violence and survey the effects of the treatment in relation to further violence. At the regional level, it is the regional resource centres for violence, traumatic stress and suicide prevention in each health region that provide guidance to municipalities and establish cooperation in the support services (the police, "Children's Houses", the Child Welfare Service, rape clinics, crisis centres, etc.). The municipal level is subject to the Act relating to municipal crisis centre provision (Crisis Centre Act), which entered into force on 1 January 2010. The Act requires municipalities to provide crisis centre facilities for women, men and children. See also the response to the Committee's comments 21–22, above. Statistics are collected annually concerning persons with disabilities who seek help at crisis centres in addition to registering accessibility for persons with disabilities at the centres. See also responses to comments 19 and 20 and to 21 and 22, above.

69. There has been a sharp rise in the number of reported cases of domestic violence from 2007 to 2009 (cf. section 219 of the Penal Code). In 2007, 948 cases, in 2008 1,457 cases and in 2009 cases 2,144 cases were reported, an increase of 55 per cent from 2007 to 2009. The increase in the number of cases reported must, in the view of the Norwegian authorities, be viewed in connection with the increased efforts of the police in combating domestic violence in recent years. We refer in this connection to the fact that the violence figures from Statistics Norway's survey of living conditions and crisis centre statistics have been relatively stable during recent years.

70. Regarding sexual abuse, the number of reported rapes pursuant to section 192, first and second paragraphs, of the Penal Code increased by 23 per cent from 2005 to 2009. In 2009, 945 reported cases were recorded. The increase in the number of reported cases may be an indication that more rapes are committed, but it may also reflect an increasing willingness to report crime, hence that there has been a reduction in the dark figures. The increased attention paid to domestic violence in recent years by the police, the support services and the media has helped to make this form of crime less taboo, thus increasing confidence that help is available for those who need it. The increased inclination to report such cases can probably be interpreted within such a context. The schemes for special family violence coordinators and family violence teams in police districts and the extended scheme for providing legal representatives for victims are probably further reasons for the increased frequency of reporting.

71. On protection, the number of women and children who have spent one or more nights at a crisis centre has remained relatively stable during recent years. In 2008, 3,250 women and children spent more than one night at a crisis centre. See also comments 21 and

22, above. A number of measures are to be implemented to strengthen the protection of persons exposed to violence, including a project involving electronic control of perpetrators in 2010, whereby the perpetrator is attached to a transmitter, and is prohibited from being present in certain areas. As a stage in preventive work and identification of risk factors for future violence, two pilot projects are to be initiated for trial of the risk assessment tool SARA-PV (Spousal Assault Risk Assessment Guide – Police Version). Preparations for the pilot projects are well on their way, and we aim to start the projects during 2011. The number of portable safety alarms has increased from 681 in 2005 to 1,803 in 2009. New and improved alarms with greater GPS sensitivity are expected to be made available in spring 2010.

72. The Government is in process of establishing nationwide treatment facilities for perpetrators. The foundation Alternative to Violence plays a key role in this work, and the Government plans to establish four new facilities of this kind.

73. Concerning measures for certain groups in order to prevent violence against women who do not have residence permits in Norway, From 2006, the Immigration Act allows the police in connection with cases concerning family establishment or visas to provide information concerning the reference person's conduct to the immigration authorities if it is probable that the applicant or the latter's child from a previous relationship will be mistreated or grossly abused by the reference person. The purpose is to prevent abuse and exploitation of women from poor countries who contract marriage with men who are resident in Norway. The amendment entered into force on 1 January 2010. Assumed victims of human trafficking may be granted a period of reflection or a residence permit (protection). The women receive necessary assistance for subsistence, help in obtaining legal assistance and contact with the police and health and social services. Many people also receive assistance for activities and vocational qualifications.

74. In order to create better assistance provision for children who have been subjected to abuse, the Government has established "Children's Houses" throughout Norway. Here, children who have been subjected to sexual abuse or violence or who have witnessed violence or domestic abuse are provided with comprehensive assistance, care and treatment. Section 43 of the Children Act clearly states that access shall not be granted if this is not in the best interests of the child, and the court may order supervision as a condition of access. This particularly applies where there are issues associated with violence and abuse.

75. See section 1.5 of Norway's seventh report to the Committee concerning the project Barn som lever med vold i familien (Children who Live with Domestic Violence) (2004–2006). The project was extended to the end of 2009. The Centre for Crisis Psychology has developed and tried out a school arrangement for detecting and reporting violence against children. In addition to this, guidance material has been prepared for crisis centres adapted to the needs of children. In June 2009, a national alarm telephone for children and youth was established in order to discover children exposed to various forms of violence, abuse or failure of care. Training of teachers and pre-school teachers will be strengthened within such topics as violence and failure of care. A guide has also been created on cooperation between day-care facilities and the Child Welfare Service to help day care centre employees to follow up children who may be exposed to violence, abuse or failure of care.

76. See also section 1.5 of Norway's seventh report to the Committee on the Strategi mot seksuelle og fysiske overgrep mot barn (2005–2009) (Strategic Plan to combat Sexual and Physical Abuse of Children (2005–2009)). In the summary, attention is drawn to coordination of measures to combat sexual and physical abuse with measures for children who witness violence in the home. In connection with the Council of Europe's development of models for prevention of violence against and abuse of children, a report was prepared: "Norwegian national and local policies on prevention of violence against children (Nova, 2008). See also section 1.5 of Norway's seventh report to the Committee on the plan of

measures Barn, unge og Internet (Children, youth and the Internet) and Safety, Awareness, Facts and Tools, which concern efforts to ensure safer use of the Internet for children and youth. Other measures in relation to children subjected to violence and abuse, sexual abuse and human trafficking are described in chapter VIII C, 3–4 of Norway's fourth report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

77. With regard to upgrading of skills in support services, including the police, since 2002, the police has employed family violence coordinators. From 2008, all police districts (27) are required to have at least one full-time post with such a function. In the largest police districts, special teams are to be established to work on domestic violence and sexual abuse. These coordinators and teams are responsible for ensuring that victims of domestic violence receive respect, knowledge and understanding in meetings with the police.

78. On information on trade in sex, during the years from 2007 to 2010, the Government has carried out a three-year information campaign directed at the population in general, sex purchasers and potential sex purchasers. The objective is to help reduce the demand. With regard to criminalization of the purchase of sex, see also the text concerning the statutory amendment in the concluding comments 21 and 22, above. From 1 January 2009, the purchase of sexual activity or a sexual act from adults is prohibited. This provision applies to obtaining sexual activity in return for payment, obtaining sexual activity or a sexual act on such payment being agreed or made by another person or causing the prostitute to carry out with herself or himself acts corresponding to sexual activity against payment. The sentencing framework is a fine or imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months, with a higher sentence for a term not exceeding one year if the sexual act is carried out in a particularly offensive manner and no penalty may be imposed pursuant to other provisions. By means of the same Act, the maximum sentence for the purchase of sexual activity or a sexual act with persons under 18 years of age pursuant to section 203 of the Penal Code is increased from imprisonment not exceeding two years to imprisonment not exceeding three years. See also Norway's fifth report on implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights under the response to questions 12 (a) and (b).

79. With regard to the comprehensive offer of accommodation, Norway offers safe accommodation in emergency situations to possible victims of human trafficking at the country's crisis centres by means of a special procurement and coordination unit in Oslo (ROSA). In 2009, in cooperation between the Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion and other ministries and directorates, a special offer of accommodation with comprehensive and close follow-up was established for women who are in a particularly difficult life situation, for example pregnant women and new mothers.

80. Concerning the rights of victims, a brochure has been prepared in nine languages and in Braille concerning rights and assistance for women subjected to domestic violence or human trafficking. The Ministry of Justice has also prepared an information brochure for victims of crime in 2010. Through amendments to the Criminal Procedure Act, in force as of 1 July 2008, the rights of victims in the criminal procedure have been strengthened, in particular for victims of sexual abuse. More victims are given free legal counsel to assist them during the police investigation and trial. Imposing on the police and prosecuting authorities a duty to report regularly to the victims about the progress and development of the case also strengthens the victims' right to information. During trial, victims are granted some procedural rights equal to that of the defendant – like the right to examine witnesses in court and the right to comment on evidence presented in court.

81. The Rape Committee, which was appointed by the Ministry of Justice, submitted its report on 24 January 2008. A unit consisting of special investigators at the National Bureau of Crime Investigation and a number of skill-updating measures implemented for the police and prosecuting authority, as well as a nationally available electronic storyboard prepared for investigation of rape cases, are all part of the Government's follow up of the

committee's report. In the new Penal Code, which has not yet entered into force, the minimum sentence for rape has been increased from two to three years. The Government also wishes a considerable increase in the severity of sentences within the sentencing framework.

82. In June 2009, the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion circulated for comments a proposal for amendments to the Introduction Act and Regulations pursuant to the Act. One of the proposals is to give the right and obligation to participate in the introduction programme to persons who have been granted residence in Norway following divorce on grounds of abuse in the marriage, difficulties in returning to their home country owing to the divorce, or because their marriage has been ruled invalid on grounds of force. The proposal is currently being considered.

Article 7 (a) **Elections and elected bodies**

83. The Cabinet now (since 2005) is 50 per cent women and 50 per cent men. In the Parliament, 40 per cent of the representatives are women. In Sámediggi (the Sami Parliament), 46 per cent are women. See also annex 12, Sámediggi's Action Plan for Equality (2009–2013). At county level there are 45 per cent women in the elected positions. At the municipal level, there are women in 38 per cent of the elected positions. See also indicator No. 61 in annex 2, with statistics on women's participation in political bodies and section 2.1.1 of Norway's seventh report to the Committee. On representation of the population with immigrant background in municipal councils, a survey conducted by Statistics Norway shows that, out of the 62,500 candidates eligible for election to the Norwegian municipality councils in 2007, close to 1,800 had an immigrant background, constituting 2.8 per cent of the total. Of these candidates, 1,026 had non-western immigrant background. Nearly half of them were women, a higher share of women than among candidates in general. A total of 223 candidates with immigrant background ended up being elected in the municipality councils in 2007, including 140 with non-western background. This was an increase of 48 representatives compared with the 2003 election. The share of women was high (46 per cent), higher than the number of women elected among all candidates (37 per cent).

Article 7 (b) **Public positions**

84. We refer to section 2.1.2 of Norway's seventh report to the Committee. Regarding recruitment of more women as senior managers/Chief Municipal Executives, the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities has carried out a project to increase the proportion of women employed as senior managers/Chief Municipal Executives. During the period 2002–2006, the proportion of women increased from 12–18 per cent, while the proportion of newly employed female Chief Municipal Executives increased from 23 to 36 per cent during the period 2003–2007. The Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities promotes a target of equal distribution of women and men in Chief Municipal Executive posts by 2015. The Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities has conducted two surveys in recent years which show that it is only in Chief Municipal Executive posts that there is still an excessive predominance of men. Altogether, 45 per cent of top municipal posts are held by women, and 61 per cent of all managers under the Chief Municipal Executives are women.

85. In cooperation with the political parties, the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities has carried out a research and development project "Women in

political positions of power – a matter of course” (Eastern Norway Research Foundation 2009) to increase the proportion of women employed in municipal councils by the municipal elections of 2011 to at least 40 per cent. Three guidance booklets have already been issued by the project. The result of the project shows that the proportion of women has increased in all areas from the election of 2003 to that of 2007. See also article 11, below. Generally speaking, the employment level of both immigrant women and immigrant men in central and local government is lower than in the population as a whole. Among employed immigrants in 2009, respectively, 28 per cent of women and 8 per cent of men worked in the municipal sector as against 33 per cent of women and 12 per cent of men in the population as a whole.

86. As regards the film industry, the Government aims that, by the end of 2010, women will hold at least 40% of key posts in the Norwegian film sector. The objective has been attained for documentaries and has almost been attained for short films. As regards full-length films, the figures are still too low, and the Ministry of Culture and the Norwegian Film Institute will review measures for changing this.

Article 7 (c)

Non-governmental organizations

87. We refer to section 2.1.3 of Norway’s seventh report to the Committee. Annual grants are made for operation of family and equality organizations and for measures in this policy area. Project topics that are given particular priority include measures for strengthening gender equality efforts for women of minority background, men’s roles, interaction between women and men in gender equality work, implementation of action plans from the United Nations World Conferences on Women and other international plans and programmes.

88. The men’s association Dievddut in Kautokeino works on consciousness-raising projects among Sami men. The two Sami women’s organisations Sáráhká and Sámi NissonForum (the Sami Women’s Network) have long worked to promote gender equality and relevant issues associated with women’s situation in the Sami community.

89. In 2009, the Directorate of Integration and Diversity entered into binding cooperation agreements with six large NGOs, the Association of NGOs in Norway, Norwegian People’s Aid, the Norwegian Red Cross, Norwegian Save the Children, the Norwegian Women’s Public Health Association and the Norwegian Football Federation on developing and strengthening activities for girls and women in the local community, and on recruiting more members and elected officials of minority background to NGOs.

Article 8

Representation at the international level

90. We refer to section 2.2 of Norway’s seventh report to the Committee. Of the 32 Norwegian junior experts who were recruited to positions in various United Nations agencies in 2009, as many as 24 were women. Section 21 of the Gender Equality Act requires at least 40 per cent representation for each gender on all official committees, boards, councils, etc., and this rule also applies to the appointment of official delegations to international forums. A Strategy of Gender Equality (2007–2011) expresses superior aims in promoting gender balance between men and women in the Foreign Service. The Strategy is supplemented by annual action plans. Areas such as recruitment, development of skills and expertise and gender balance are given high priority. In particular, the organisation is to seek gender balance in high level positions where women are underrepresented.

Article 9 (1) and (2)
Equal rights to a nationality

91. We refer to section 2.3 of Norway's seventh report to the Committee. Paragraphs 137–138 of Norway's nineteenth and twentieth report to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, article 9, paragraph 2.3, of Norway's seventh report to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and paragraph 107 of Norway's national report to the universal periodic review.

Article 10 (a)–(h)
Equal rights in the field of education

92. We refer to section 2.4 of Norway's seventh report to the Committee. See also the reference to the Action plan for Gender Equality in Kindergarten and Basic Education 2008–2010 under comments 17 and 18, above and indicators Nos. 2–13 in annex 2, concerning statistics on women's participation in education.

93. Regarding gender-segregated choices in the education system, boys predominate in applications for technical course programmes. Girls predominate in course programmes for design and handicrafts, health and social care studies and music, dance and drama. In higher education there has been a marked trend during the last 30 years for women to increasingly opt for traditionally male-dominated course programmes, such as medicine, economy and management, and to a certain extent science and technology programmes. There has been little change in the pattern of men's educational choices. See also comments 25 and 26, above. In an equalization context, traditional gender choices are one of the greatest education policy challenges. An example of measures implemented in order to influence stereotyped gender choices is ENT3R, where students from science programmes function as mentors and role models for younger pupils. The project is directed towards both girls and boys, but aims to recruit more girls. The scheme is the Ministry of Education and Research's continuation of the success stories SEIRE at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology and TENK at the University of Oslo. A two-year project on girls and science subjects has also been implemented. Topics of the project include the effect of various mentor schemes, the masculine/feminine "image" of the various subjects and dissemination of measures regarded as sound.

94. The Ministry of Education and Research has prepared a booklet on gender equality in pedagogical work in day-care facilities which puts forward proposals for methods and strategies for promoting gender equality in the daily work of day-care facilities. Efforts to combat sexual harassment and bullying play an important part in creating a sound, equitable learning environment. The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training has prepared a new guide, which has been called "Undervisning om seksualitet. Et ressurshäfte for lærere i grunnsopplæringen" (Teaching about sex. A resource booklet for teachers in primary and secondary education). The resource booklet is intended to help in improving sex education in primary and lower secondary schools. In 2010, in association with the resource booklet for teachers, booklets for pupils and parents will be prepared.

95. Women are better represented in higher education both in the population as a whole and among immigrants and Norwegians born of immigrant parents. The difference between women and men is greatest in the age group 19–24 years. In 2007 only 21 per cent immigrant women and 16 per cent immigrant men in the age group 19–24 years were taking education. The average among immigrants in the age group 19–24 years taking

education in 2007 was approximately 18 per cent compared to almost 30 per cent for the rest of the population. However, Norwegian born women of immigrant parents had the highest representation in higher education in 2007 with 40 per cent.⁷ Figures from the introduction programme for refugees show considerable differences in the proportions of women and men taking up employment or education after finishing the programme. In 2009, in order to give immigrant women opportunities to qualify for working life, Nkr 12.6 million was divided between 11 New Chance projects targeting women who stay at home. In 2005–2007, 42 per cent of the women who took part subsequently found employment or educational opportunities. In 2008, this has fallen to 41 per cent.⁸ For further information on Norwegian language training and Social studies for immigrants, we refer to Norway's common core document, paragraph 266, Norway's report to the Human Rights Council for the universal periodic review (2009), paragraph 98, and to Norway's nineteenth and twentieth report to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

96. Measures for preventing education and workforce drop-out. The Directorate of Labour and Welfare financed two measures, respectively in 2008 and 2009/2010. One of these was designed to prevent drop-out and follow up young people after leaving the upper secondary school (NAV Ung 16–24 (NAV Young 16–24)). The other involved cooperation with industry on finding employment for immigrants with higher education (Mangfoldsløft (Increasing Workforce Diversity)).

97. In the higher education and research sector, in 2008, 61 per cent of students were women. Although there are clear differences between women's and men's choice of course programmes, more women have recently shown interest in mathematics, science and technology programmes. Recent figures show that 31 per cent of students of these programmes are now women, an increase of 2.3 per cent since 2005. The proportion of women in doctoral programmes has also increased, and in 2008 this stood at 45 per cent. In medicine and health programmes and in arts programmes, women are in the majority, while the proportion of women in technological programmes is only 21 per cent. The education institutions are responsible for ensuring that regard is paid to the gender equality perspective both in the course literature and in the teaching.

98. Regarding higher education in the Sami population, traditional Sami industries still have high status in the Sami community, and many boys remain in the primary industries. Only a small proportion of Sami men in the interior of Finnmark take higher education, as opposed to the women. In the municipalities of Karasjok and Kautokeino, approximately 30 per cent of women had gone through higher education (2006), among the highest percentage in the country.

99. The Universities and Colleges Act provides that all universities and colleges shall have action plans for gender equality, partly with specific targets and resources allocated to implementation of the measures. The white paper, Report No. 30 (2008–2009) to the Storting, *Klima for forskning* (The Climate for Research), announces the incentive scheme to reward universities and colleges that increase the proportion of women in higher academic posts in mathematics, science and technology subjects during the course of the year. In addition to this, training measures will be considered to safeguard and further develop the competence of women in male-dominated areas so that they can qualify for more senior posts.

100. In Norway, women are still underrepresented in academic posts, particularly at higher levels. In 2007, 18 per cent of professors were women. In science subjects, the

⁷ Daugstad, Gunnlaug (2008): *Innvandring og innvandrere 2008* (Immigration and immigrants 2008) SSB SA 103.

⁸ (IMDi Report 4-2008).

proportion of women professors was 10 per cent and in technology subjects, only 6 per cent. In research institutes too, there are few women in senior posts. See also indicator No. 3, which shows the proportion of women and men in different posts at different levels of academe. The responsibility for implementing measures to strengthen gender equality, and particularly to strengthen women's academic careers, lies with universities and colleges. The education institutions are required to have action plans for gender equality, partly with specific targets and resources allocated to implementation of such measures. To date, no systematized knowledge of the effect of the measures is available, but a number of education institutions report positive experiences. The universities' gender equality advisers have formed a network (LUN-nettverket), which seeks to improve gender equality at Norwegian universities. The Research Council of Norway is also involved in promoting gender equality in research, and has made active efforts to increase the proportion of women at Centres of Excellence. This has resulted in a considerable increase in the proportion of women at the doctoral and post-doctoral levels. At the professor/researcher level, the increase was more moderate. The Committee for Integration Measures – Women in Research has existed since 2004. A new committee was appointed in spring 2010, and the name was changed to the Committee for Gender Balance in Research. The committee is to promote gender equality in the university and college sector, and cooperates with the education institutions and with the Research Council of Norway. Its mandate has recently been extended to include the research institute sector.

Article 11.1 (a)
The right to work

101. We refer to section 2.5.1 of Norway's seventh report to the Committee. See indicators Nos. 31–45 and 59–65 in annex 2 concerning women's participation in the workforce. See also article 5 II A 6, paragraphs 234–235, 237 and 240, on women with a minority background in Norway's nineteenth and twentieth report to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Regarding cooperation with the social partners, in autumn 2008, the Government initiated cooperation with the eight main federations on both sides of industry on objectives and measures for promoting gender equality and preventing ethnic discrimination in working life. The joint working group has prepared proposals for cooperation during the planning period 2009–2012, which the Council for Working Life and Pensions Policy endorsed in February 2009.

Article 11.1 (b)
The right to the same employment opportunities

102. We refer to section 2.5.2 of Norway's seventh report to the Committee. See also the information on comments 25 and 26 above. Women work more part-time than men. From 2007 to 2009, the proportion of women who work part time fell from 42.5 per cent to 41.3 per cent. Women now work more full-time than previously. Young Norwegian-born women of immigrant parents participate more in the workforce than their mothers, but their employment levels are still somewhat lower than those of women without immigrant background. See also responses to the Committee's concluding comments 25 and 26, above. See paragraphs 186–189 of Norway's nineteenth and twentieth report to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination for further details of urban district development in the Oslo districts of Groruddalen and Søndre Nordstrand.

Article 11.1 (c)**The right to free choice of profession and employment, the right to promotion, job security and all benefits and conditions of service and the right to receive vocational training and retraining**

103. We refer to section 2.5.3 of Norway's seventh report to the Committee. See also the response to comments 25 and 26 above. With regard to the use of "shift work" and "rota work" in Norwegian working life, in autumn 2007, the Government appointed a Shift Work/Rota Work Committee, which submitted its report to the Minister of Labour and Social Inclusion in October 2008. Based on the Committee's proposal, the Government put forward a proposal for new regulation of working hours for workers involved in shift work and rota work, which was adopted by the Storting and entered into force on 1 January 2010. The proposal involves a gradual reduction in working hours related to the number of inconvenient working hours for workers. It was estimated that over 30,000 employees would receive a reduction in statutory working hours. Most of these work in female-dominated occupations, particularly as nurses and nursing auxiliaries. However, it is a condition for practical enforcement of the statutory amendment. This has now been done for the largest groups of employees affected by the amendment.

Article 11.1 (d)**The right to equal remuneration, including benefits, and to equal treatment in respect of work of equal value**

104. We refer to section 2.5.4 of Norway's seventh report to the Committee. See the information given in response to comments 25 and 26 above, and indicators Nos. 33–36 statistics on women's pay in annex 2. In 2008, a new provision was included in the Basic Collective Agreement, stating that employees taking parental leave and other paid leave were to be given the opportunity for wage growth through local negotiations. The same provision also states that local pay policy must be so designed that women and men are treated equally when considering pay and promotion. This is an objective which must be realised through measures in local pay policy of the individual municipality, county authority or undertaking. Subject to the Basic Collective Agreement, the local parties are obliged to discuss equal pay each year on the basis of statistics showing wage growth, distributed, among other ways, by gender. The Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities assist municipalities in obtaining such pay data for their own employees. For Government employees in posts covered by the Basic Collective Agreement, a joint committee was appointed during the period 2008–2009 to examine the pay system, including equal pay issues. During the settlement of the Basic Collective Agreement for 2008–2010, the central Civil Service parties agreed to give highest priority to equal pay challenges in the local wage formation in the collective agreement area concerned. This agreement was made in connection with the report of the Equal Pay Commission, Official Norwegian Report 2008:6 Kjønn og lønn (Gender and Pay). In addition, employees taking leave with pay are to be included in the negotiations, and assessed in relation to pay. Another new element of the Basic Collective Agreement for 2008–2009 is that undertakings are given independent responsibility for correcting gender-related pay differences. Where the documented wage differences cannot be explained in relation to factors other than gender, the employer shall, in consultation with elected officials, correct the wage.

105. The Basic Collective Agreement for the Civil Service for 2010–2012 reflects a general profile on women and equal pay. The same applies to the municipal sector through a separate collective agreement. This entails, among other things that women are to be

given a greater proportion of the allocation for local negotiations than would be indicated by the distribution of the number of FTEs between women and men. Particular emphasis shall be placed on assessing the relationship between women's and men's grade code assignments on the basis of qualifications, tasks and responsibilities.

106. In the collective wage settlement in 2010 in the public and private sector, a pay increase designed to benefit low-paid workers involving a larger increase for women than for men, was agreed upon. In competitive industries and other areas in the private sector, a general low- and equal-pay increase was granted to be used to reduce pay differences between men and women in individual companies. Agreement was also reached on a joint statement on gender equality. In the case of State employees, priority was given to positions that employ a great many women, and special priority was given to female-dominated occupations that require higher education.

Article 11.1 (e)
The right to social security

107. We refer to section 2.5.5 of Norway's seventh report to the Committee. We also refer to paragraphs 46–59 of the common core document for further details of schemes under the National Insurance Act. From 1 January 2007, pregnancy benefit shall entail a right to holiday pay in the same way as sick pay.

Article 11.1 (f)
The right to protection of health and to safety in working conditions

108. Both the Working Environment Act and the Gender Equality Act have provisions prohibiting sexual harassment. According to the Gender Equality Act, the employer is responsible for preventing sexual harassment and for seeking to preclude the occurrence of harassment in the workplace. Any employee who has been subjected to sexual harassment may demand compensation and redress regardless of whether the employer is responsible for the sexual harassment or not. The prohibition against sexual harassment is enforced by the courts of law. So far there have been very few court cases where sexual harassment has been alleged by the victims. In a survey conducted by Statistics Norway in 2009, 3 per cent of all employed persons state that they have been subjected to harassment in the form of undesired sexual attention, comments and the like. This proportion has remained relatively stable during the years the survey has been carried out. Women are more exposed than men; particularly young women, where altogether 12 per cent state that they have been subjected to undesired sexual attention, comments or the like twice a month or more often. This is at the same level as in 2006. Nurses are a particularly exposed group, both for threats and violence. Two out of every ten nurses stated in 2009 that they had been subjected to violence during the last twelve months. Sales and service occupations are also particularly exposed; one of ten persons states that they were subjected to violence during the last twelve months.

Article 11.2 (a)
Prohibit dismissal on the grounds of pregnancy or of parental leave and discrimination in dismissals on the basis of marital status

109. See section 2.5.6 of Norway's seventh report to the Committee and article 2 (b), above.

Article 11.2 (b)**Parental leave with pay or with comparable social benefits**

110. We refer to section 2.5.7 of Norway's seventh report to the Committee. During the period from 2005 to 2009, the birth rate rose from 1.83 to 1.98. In 2009, 79 per cent of women between 25 and 66 years of age were in employment, according to figures taken from the Labour Force Survey. The parental leave scheme is a condition for women's participation in the workforce on an equal footing with men. From 1 July 2008, a right to parental benefit on the basis of 100 per cent of the income base was introduced, limited to six times the basic amount of the National Insurance Scheme for self-employed persons. Previously, the right to parental benefit was limited to 65 per cent of the income base for self-employed persons.

111. Paid parental leave and other parental benefits also contribute to a more equal sharing of domestic and family tasks between mothers and fathers. In 2009, the Government extended paid parental leave from 44 to 46 weeks with 100 per cent pay and from 54 to 56 weeks with 80 per cent pay. For parents adopting a child the paid parental leave was increased from 41 to 43 weeks with 100 per cent pay and from 51 to 53 weeks with 80 per cent pay. The father's quota of 10 weeks is included in these weeks. See also article 5 (b) concerning measures for more equal parenthood. In 2008, the Work Research Institute published a report (No. 2, 2008) on experiences with and consequences of pregnancy and use of parental leave in the Norwegian labour market. The report examines the reasons why Norwegian mothers withdraw from high commitment.

Article 11.2 (c)**Supporting social services to enable parents to combine family obligations with work responsibilities**

112. We refer to section 2.5.8 of Norway's seventh report to the Committee. Day-care facilities play a crucial role in enabling parents to combine family obligations with participation in working life. In 2003, a broad political accord was reached on framework conditions for the pre-school sector, and recent years have seen a considerable development of day-care facilities. A statutory right to a place in a kindergarten was introduced in 2009 for all children from 1 to 5 years of age. From 2007 to 2009, the number of children in kindergarten increased by 20,359, and coverage at the end of 2009 was 88.5 per cent. For the age group 3–5, coverage was 96.2 per cent. The proportion of minority-language 1–5 year-olds in kindergarten is rising, and was 70.6 per cent in 2009. Norway introduced a maximum limit for kindergarten fees paid by parents in 2004. From 1 January 2010, the maximum fee is Nkr 2 330 per month. Families with more than one child in kindergarten in a municipality are to be granted a sibling rebate. The municipalities are moreover required to give fee reductions to families with the lowest ability to pay. It is up to the individual municipality to find sound solutions for the obligation to offer this type of fee reduction. A number of municipalities have chosen to implement income-related payment. A majority of the municipalities offer free places or other types of rebate scheme. See also the statistics on children in kindergarten in indicator Nos. 47–48 in annex 2.

113. Trials of free core time in kindergarten involving 17–20 hours of free kindergarten time per week are offered to all four and five-year-olds in urban districts with a high proportion of persons of immigrant background in Oslo and Drammen. In September 2009, altogether 91 per cent (4,400) of four and five-year-olds had taken advantage of this scheme. In 2010, there will be trials of free core time for three-year-olds. See also paragraphs 66–67 and 186–189 of Norway's nineteenth and twentieth report to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

Article 11.2 (d)
Rights during pregnancy

114. We refer to section 2.5.9 of Norway's seventh report to the Committee.

Article 11 (3)
Evaluation of the legislation

115. Regarding Norwegian protective legislation for pregnant women and nursing mothers, the National Institute of Occupational Health (STAMI) conducts research into working environment and work-associated health problems. STAMI is involved in approximately 60 research projects each year, and has expertise in fields including medicine, physiology, chemistry, biology and psychology.

Article 12
Health

116. We refer to section 2.6 of Norway's seventh report to the Committee. The primary objective for the Norwegian health service is that users and patients shall receive an equivalent provision regardless of individual economy, social status, age, gender and ethnic background. In Norway, it is a public responsibility to provide necessary health and care services to the whole population. Health and care services are primarily to be provided in the context of the local community, and enable users to live independent lives, where each individual is able to participate in the community on the basis of his or her own abilities. Although most of the population enjoy good health and sound living conditions, there are challenges associated with social health disparities, i.e. health disparities associated with education, occupation and income categories of the population. Life expectancy in Norway is among the highest in the world and is still increasing. The life expectancy of men was 71 years in 1970 and over 78.2 years in 2007. Women have increased their life expectancy from just over 77 years to 82.7 years during the same period. The Ministry of Health and Care Services gives priority to women's health as a separate area of focus.

117. The Women's Health Strategy (2003–2013) gives central place to the gender perspective in the health and care sector, in research, policy shaping, disease prevention and services. A strategic focus on research into women's health has been established under the auspices of the Research Council of Norway. In 2010, over NKr 7 million has been invested. Research into women's health covers a very wide range of themes, including everything from mental health to musculoskeletal disorders, cancer, violence against women and reproductive health. The gender perspective is laid down in the Research Council's new programmes. Gender perspectives and consciousness-raising concerning gender differences in clinical research are included in the letter of instruction to the regional health enterprises.

118. In a recent report Sami respondents reported inferior health conditions in comparison to the Norwegian majority population. The most unsatisfactory conditions were reported by Sami females living outside the defined Sami area (with greater integration and assimilation) (p 0.05). Females typically reported less favourable health conditions than did males. Health inequalities varied by age and were more apparent in persons aged in their mid-50s or above. Across ethnic groups, respondents with the highest education and

household income were healthier than others.⁹ The Action Plan on Nutrition (2007–2011) Recipe for a healthier diet, was launched in January 2007 as a cooperation between 12 ministries. The main goals of the action plan are to change the diet in line with the recommendations of the health authorities and to reduce social inequalities in health. Several measures in the plan are directed to infants and young children, and also pregnant and lactating women are important target groups. The diet among women is in general better than among men in Norway. However, the gender perspective is also considered when more activities are planned.

119. For further information on efforts to combat female genital mutilation and the Action Plan for Combating Female Genital Mutilation 2008–2011, see article 12, paragraph 2.6, of Norway's seventh report to the Committee, paragraphs 52–60 of Norway's sixth report to the Human Rights Committee and paragraphs 101–102 of Norway's nineteenth and twentieth report to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Circular I-5/2009 – Prevention of female genital mutilation provides information on how the municipal health service can offer genital examinations of girls and women with a background from areas in countries where the incidence of female genital mutilation is 30 per cent or more according to the WHO. An interview and genital examination is offered to women from such countries of origin within one year of their arrival in Norway and to girls from such countries and to Norwegian-born girls with parents from such countries when starting school (5–6 years of age), in the fifth grade of the primary school and in the lower secondary school. The provision to school pupils was tried in some municipalities in 2009. This provision is planned to be implemented in all municipalities by the end of 2010.

Article 13 (a) **The right to family benefits**

120. Reference is made to Norway's sixth report to the Committee. We refer to Norway's previous reports to the Committee. The National Insurance Act, which regulates the right to national insurance benefits in connection with retirement, sickness, disability, childbirth and adoption, provides in general the same rights to women and men. Parents are entitled to 46 weeks leave with full pay in connection with childbirth (43 weeks for parents who are adopting). However, nine of these weeks are reserved for the mother for health reasons (this does not apply to adoptive parents) and ten weeks are reserved for the father. The remaining period can be divided between the parents as they wish.

Article 13 (b) **The right to bank loans, mortgages and other forms of financial credit**

121. We refer to Norway's previous reports to the Committee.

Article 13 (c) **The right to participate in leisure activities, sports and cultural life**

122. We refer to section 2.7.3 of Norway's seventh report to the Committee. In January 2010, the proportion of female chairpersons in the culture sector was 50 per cent. By way

⁹ Hansen K.L., Melhus M., Lund E., 2010: Ethnicity, self-reported health, discrimination and socio-economic status: a study of Sami and non-Sami Norwegian populations. Centre of Sami Health Research, Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Tromsø, 2010.

of comparison, the proportion of female chairpersons in 2005 was 38 per cent. A total of 410 board members at the start of 2010 were distributed between 55 per cent women and 45 per cent men.

123. The artist grants and guaranteed income programme give creative and performing artists the opportunity to actively pursue their artistic careers, and enable individual artists to contribute to a diverse and creative artistic community. A larger proportion of women than men have received grants and guaranteed incomes during the years from 2006 to 2010. Provisional figures for 2010 show that approximately 52 per cent of new grants and guaranteed incomes this year will be paid to women. See also figures associated with women and media under indicator No. 71 in annex 2.

124. The grant scheme for voluntary child and youth organizations was described in Norway's seventh report to the Committee. Organizations receiving support are required to be at the national level and to be democratically structured. In 2005–2006, a public committee reviewed Government support to voluntary child and youth organizations. On this basis, new regulations were drafted, which entered into force in November 2007. The regulations are intended to ensure full participation for children and youth from all social groups.

Article 14

Women in rural areas

125. We refer to section 2.8 of Norway's seventh report to the Committee. The Reindeer Husbandry Administration aims to safeguard gender equality in the national, regional and local development work of the Reindeer Husbandry Administration and its governing bodies. Annually, Nkr 1 million is allocated over the Reindeer Husbandry Agreement to measures focused on women. Like other acts, the Reindeer Herding Act is a gender-neutral act, which makes no formal distinction between women and men. The Siidaandel (reindeer herding unit, usually a family group or individual reindeer owner) forms the basis for most rights and obligations in the reindeer herding industry. A woman with her own Siidaandel has the same rights and obligations as a man. There are few women in reindeer husbandry with their own Siidaandels. The total accounts for the reindeer herding industry for 2008 show that 75 (13 per cent) out of a total of 553 Siidaandels are held by women. The figures for Siidaandels show that there has been a clear gender distribution for a number of years.

126. The following are measures for abolishing discrimination of women in rural districts, so that women may participate in and benefit from regional development, and participate in designing and implementing development plans at all stages.

127. In 2008, the Government submitted the Action Plan to Increase Entrepreneurship among Women, see annex 13, which contains a summary of the action plan. The primary objective of the plan is to improve the framework conditions for women as entrepreneurs, build a stronger culture for entrepreneurship among women and ensure that the proportion of women among new entrepreneurs is at least 40 per cent by 2013. The goal is that 40 per cent of industrial funding shall be handled by women by 2013. Reports for 2008 show that the proportion of women receiving support from Innovation Norway has increased. Innovation Norway, the Research Council of Norway and SIVA (the Industrial Development Corporation of Norway) take the Action Plan to Increase Entrepreneurship among Women as their starting point.

128. With regard to developments in the agricultural sector, the proportion of women farmers has increased from 7.3 per cent in 1979 to 14.3 per cent in 2009. The proportion of women in organic farming is 16 per cent. The Government's focus on new agricultural industries has resulted in new jobs for women. Women constitute 60 per cent of employees

on the 800 farms that provide green care services to the health, education and social care sectors. One out of three forest properties is operated in combination with agriculture. One out of four forest owners is a woman, and approximately 15–16 per cent of forest owners with positive income from forestry are women. Women in agriculture have currently longer education and greater income from employment outside the farm than men. In the Sami agriculture, 25 per cent of the shares are held by women.

129. Industry is dependent on innovation and use of a diversity of resources. It is an express goal of agricultural policy that women and men shall have equal opportunities to engage in commercial activity in agriculture and associated industries. In the “Strategy for Gender Equality in the Agricultural Sector” from 2007, the representatives from the agricultural sector and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food have jointly developed a strategy to increase the female participation in the agriculture sector. The aim is to reach a female participation of 40 per cent in agriculture and related businesses. The measures listed in the strategy involve several actors in the sector, ranging from authority bodies to the single farmer and the farmers unions. Key areas of this strategy are as follows: (1) Increase the number of female land owners and increase the number of establishments, (2) increase the number of female participants in agriculture and in related businesses, and (3) strengthen female influence and power in the agricultural sector. From 1 July 2008, the Cooperatives Act requires 40 per cent gender balance for cooperative companies. According to the Act, the companies are allowed a transition period of five years. However, figures from 2009 indicate that many companies already meet the requirement regarding gender balance. With effect from 1 July 2009, new rules have been introduced in the Allodial Rights Act providing full gender equality between women and men with regard to allodial rights. Cohabitants and spouses will now also be treated equally.

130. Of Innovation Norway’s allocations to rural development, approximately 40 per cent of grants and 37 per cent of loans with interest support went to women in 2008, while the corresponding figures were respectively 29 per cent and 22 per cent in 2005.

131. Fishery and aquaculture is one of Norway’s largest export industries, and is expected to play an even bigger role in the Norwegian economy in future. It is important for the fishery and aquaculture industry to make a conscious effort to increase the proportion of women in the industry, so that it can share in women’s knowledge and expertise. The proportion of women in the fishery and aquaculture industry varies considerably from approximately 40 per cent in the fish processing industry to around 2 per cent of those who have fishing as their main occupation. Approximately 17 per cent of employees in the aquaculture industry are women. The Ministry of Fisheries and Coastal Affairs has financed a three-year project “Sett Sjøbein” (Get your Sea-Legs) to strengthen recruitment to the marine sector. In cooperation with the trade associations, the authorities have prepared an Action Plan to Increase the proportion of women in the Marine sector. The Action Plan includes all parts of the fishery and aquaculture sectors, and contains proposals for measures to increase the proportion of women in the industry in general, in government boards, councils and committees and in the boards of the Norwegian Fishermen’s Sales Organization.

Article 15

Gender equality in the legal system

132. We refer to articles 1–16 and to Norway’s previous reports to the Committee.

Article 16
Eliminate discrimination of women in all matters relating to marriage and family affairs

133. We refer to sections 2.10.1 and 2.10.2 of Norway's seventh report to the Committee. In 2008, the Marriage Act was amended to give lesbians and gays the right to contract marriage in the same way as heterosexuals. Furthermore, the Act relating to the application of biotechnology in medicine was amended in such a way that lesbian cohabitants and spouses were given the right to be assessed for assisted fertilization on a par with heterosexual couples. Pursuant to the Children Act, the biological mother's female cohabitant/spouse receives the status of co-mother if she has given her consent to the fertilization and the fertilization has been carried out at an approved health institution in Norway or abroad or the sperm donor's identity is known.

134. In connection with family immigration, the family member who resides in Norway (the reference person) must have a secure income at least equivalent to pay grade 8 of the government pay scale (Nkr 217 600 on 1 May 2009). According to the new rules, a reference person must document a minimum income both for the previous year and for the year to come. This and other tightened requirements of the immigration legislation regarding secure means of support are intended to prevent forced marriages, while promoting integration. For further details of efforts to combat forced marriages and of the Action Plan against Forced Marriages (2008–2011), see article 16, paragraph 2.10.1, of Norway's seventh report to the Committee, paragraphs 227–233 of Norway's sixth report to the Human Rights Committee and paragraphs 103 and 143–144 of Norway's nineteenth and twentieth report to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. See also The Family Protocol, which is a bilateral agreement between Norway and Pakistan applying from 2006, in article 16 (b), paragraph 2.10.1, of Norway's seventh report to the present Committee. The agreement defines the framework for an advisory body to consider family-related issues, including forced marriage. See also paragraphs 196–199 of Norway's seventeenth and eighteenth report to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and paragraphs 143–144 of Norway's nineteenth and twentieth report to that same committee.

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The Act on Prohibition of Discrimination based on Ethnicity, religion etc. (the Anti-Discrimination Act)