

# Norwegian report on UNESCO's Recommendation of 1974 on Education for International Understanding, Cooperation and Peace and Education Relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms

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## **Q1 - Information on the legislative, judicial, administrative and other measures taken by the State at the national level**

### *A. Specific legal framework*

Describe the specific legal framework governing the protection of the rights guaranteed by the Recommendation in the specific country.

#### **The Norwegian Human Rights Act of 1999**

The Norwegian Human Rights Act of 1999 guarantees the freedom of religion and thoughts. The Act prohibits discrimination and secures the right of everyone to education. The education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity, and shall strengthen the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. Education shall enable all persons to participate effectively in a free society, promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups, and further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

The Norwegian Human Rights Act incorporates the following conventions and protocols:

- Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms,
- Protocol to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of 4 November 1950,
- Protocol no. 4 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, Securing Certain Rights and Freedoms other than those already included in the Convention and in the First Protocol Thereto,
- Protocol no. 6 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, Concerning the Abolition of the Death Penalty,
- Protocol no. 7 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms,
- Protocol No. 13 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, concerning the Abolition of the Death Penalty in All Circumstances,
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,
- Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,
- Second optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Aiming at the Abolition of the Death Penalty, and
- Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The Act of Human Rights is supposed to secure all the rights adopted in the conventions mentioned above and is given priority to other legislation in Norway.

#### **Legislation at Pre-school level**

*Act no. 64 of June 2005 relating to Kindergartens*

The Kindergarten Act is the legislative framework for education and care institutions for children under school age. Section 2 Content of kindergartens paragraph 2, 3 and 4 states:

“Kindergartens shall assist homes with the care and upbringing of their children, and thereby lay a sound foundation for the children’s development, life-long learning and active participation in a democratic society.

Care, upbringing and learning in kindergartens shall promote human dignity, equality, intellectual freedom, tolerance, health and appreciation of sustainable development.

Kindergartens shall take account of children’s age, level of functioning, gender, and social, ethnic and cultural background, including the language and culture of Sami children.”

Further, Section 3 Children’s right to participation states:

“Children in kindergartens shall have the right to express their views on the day-to day activities of the kindergarten.

Children shall regularly be given the opportunity to take active part in planning and assessing the activities of the kindergarten.

The children’s views shall be given due weight according to their age and maturity.“

### **Legislation for primary and secondary education and training**

#### *The Education Act of 1998*

The purpose and scope of education in Norway is embedded in Chapter 1 of the Education Act of 1998. Section 1-1 states the objectives of education and training.

Since the first objectives for public schools were decided in 1848, the objectives clauses for education in Norway have been amended primarily by adding new features, i.e. without changing the core principle about “upbringing in accordance with basic Christian values”.

However, in 2008 new objectives for Norwegian primary and secondary education and training, including training establishments, were adopted. These new objectives mark a clear cut with the above mentioned tradition. They are based on the view that the Norwegian society has both a cultural tradition and a cultural diversity, that Norway’s education policy is to follow human rights conventions, and that overall objectives is to be harmonised with human rights obligations.

The new formulation of objectives came into force in January 2009.

Below please find an authorized translation:

”Chapter 1. The purpose, scope and adapted education, etc.

#### Section 1-1. *The objectives of education and training*

Education and training in schools and training establishments shall, in collaboration and agreement with the home, open doors to the world and give the pupils and apprentices historical and cultural insight and anchorage.

Education and training shall be based on fundamental values in Christian and humanist heritage and traditions, such as respect for human dignity and nature, on intellectual freedom, charity, forgiveness, equality and solidarity, values that also appear in different religions and beliefs and are rooted in human rights.

Education and training shall help increase the knowledge and understanding of the national cultural heritage and our common international cultural traditions.

Education and training are to provide insight into cultural diversity and respect the individual's convictions. They are to promote democracy, equality and scientific thinking.

The pupils and apprentices are to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes so that they can master their lives and can take part in working life and society. They are to have the opportunity to be creative, committed and inquisitive.

The pupils and apprentices are to learn to think critically and act ethically and with environmental awareness. They are to have joint responsibility and the right to participate.

Schools and training establishments are to meet the pupils and apprentices with trust, respect and demands, and give them challenges that promote formation and the desire to learn. All forms of discrimination are to be combated.”

The overall objectives have both a functional and a symbolic role. They provide guidelines for other legislation and steering documents while at the same time expressing society's norms and values. The objectives are to function as a starting point for practice. They apply to all children and young people attending schools and training establishments. The objectives obligate all employees, and in addition affect parents, guardians of children and youth and other stakeholders in primary and secondary education and training.

The new objective for Norwegian primary and secondary education aims to express a set of values that can be supported regardless of cultural, religious or national affiliation.

The Education Act § 1-2 states that primary, lower secondary and upper secondary schools shall further the equal status and equal rights of all human beings, intellectual freedom and tolerance, ecological understanding and international co-responsibility.

Please see Annex 2 for additional legal references.

#### *Teaching in the subject Religion, Philosophies of Life and Ethics*

The European Court of Human Rights passed a judgment on the Norwegian Government on 29 June 2007, which stated that there has been a violation of Article 2 of Protocol No. 1 of The European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, due to the education in the compulsory subject Christianity, Religion and Philosophy (the KRL-subject).

The Norwegian Government decided to implement the measures necessary to eliminate any doubt that the regulations of the KRL-subject are in accordance with the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

Significant amendments to the legal framework were undertaken in 2005 following the recommendation of the United Nations Human Rights Committee of 3 November 2004. In 2008 Section 2-4 of the Education Act was totally redrafted. The name of the subject was changed to “Religion, Philosophies of Life and Ethics”. The new wording of section 2-4 underlines the fact that the subject must be taught in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner to ensure that different religions and philosophies of life are dealt with in a qualitatively equivalent way. A new Exemption Scheme in Section 2-3a of the Education Act was also adopted.

Following the communication from the UN Human Rights Committee, the curriculum was totally revised in 2005 in connection with the school reform known as the “Knowledge Promotion Reform”. Further changes in the curriculum were made in 2008.

#### *B. Protection of rights in the constitution*

Indicate whether the rights set forth in the Recommendation are protected by the constitution, by a basic legislative text or by any other text

The freedom of religion is guaranteed in The Norwegian Constitution art. 2.  
The freedom of thought is guaranteed in The Norwegian Constitution art. 100.

#### *C. Incorporation of the Recommendation into national legislation*

Indicate whether the Recommendation has been incorporated into national legislation.

The 1974 Recommendation is not specifically incorporated into national legislation. However, the intentions and substance of the Recommendation is integrated in legislation, mission statements and preambles at various levels. See text under Q1, letters A, B and D.

#### *D. Reference to legal, administrative or other authorities*

Make reference to the legal, administrative or other authorities competent and the scope of their competence in relation to the rights guaranteed by the Recommendation.

The following statement, taken from the political platform (“*The Soria Moria declaration*”) of the current Norwegian government (in power from autumn 2005 to autumn 2009), provides a foundation for work carried out at national level in the field of education.

*“The Government intends to work against racism and for a tolerant, multi-cultural society. Everyone should have the same rights, responsibilities and opportunities, regardless of ethnic background, gender, religion, sexual orientation or functional ability. Diversity makes Norway a richer society (pp. 72-73). We intend to invest in people by giving them the opportunity to develop and learn in kindergartens, in primary and secondary schools, in higher education, and further and continuing education and through research (p. 4).”*

In 2001, a Royal Decree established the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights (NCHR) as Norway's National Institution for Human Rights. As a national institution, the NCHR contributes to a greater consciousness concerning and better fulfillment of the internationally agreed human rights in Norway. It is stated in the Royal Decree that the NCHR's mandate encompasses human rights education and training. The NCHR to a very large degree takes into account these elements in its activities, already at the overall planning stage. The statutes of the Centre state that its purpose is “to contribute to the realisation of internationally adopted human rights. This will take place through

research and reporting, through education, advisory services, information and documentation.” NCHR also includes a national Forum for human rights education. For further information, please see Annex 3, NCHR’s response issued in December 2008 to a questionnaire requested by the Secretariat of the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human rights.

In addition to NCHR, a number of institutions and Non-Governmental / Civil Society Organizations are engaged in Human Rights education and related fields in Norway. (Please see list of web pages in Annex 1 for further information.)

## **Q2 - Information on the implementation of the Recommendation**

### **1. Process of the development and implementation of national policies**

Reference: The Recommendation 1974 encourages Member States to develop and apply national policies (7) and this is the main objective of the first phase of the WPHRE.

*A: Developing the national policy related to human rights education*

#### a) Establishing a committee or an entity to develop a national policy

Please describe if any specific entity was created to develop a national policy, what mandates and functions were attributed to the entity, and what individuals and institutions were the members of the entity.

*Introductory note:*

*All information given below relates to policy, themes, initiatives and activities relevant to the 1974 recommendation. However, Norway has not developed a strategy or policy document related specifically to the implementation and/or follow-up of the 1974 Recommendation.*

*Furthermore, no decision has been taken on the national implementation of the World Programme for Human Rights Education. Norwegian policy and activities generally have been developed independently of the WPHRE. The main reason for this is that themes and activities embedded in the programme is perceived to be well integrated into the Norwegian education system. In addition, the number of national action plans and programmes for the education sector in Norway is perceived by the sector itself as quite high. Thus, it has not been deemed desirable to introduce yet another programme or plan at this stage.*

A Working group for Human Rights Education was established under the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ Human Rights Committee in the early 1980s. The mandate of the Working Group was to strengthen consultation with Non-Governmental Organizations and Civil Society regarding human rights education. The United Nations Association of Norway was asked to coordinate the working group. In the course of the 1990s, the mandate of the working group was adjusted several times, and in 1998 all organisations represented in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ Human Rights Committee were offered to join the working group.

The working group played an important role as a coordinator of a variety of activities in connection with the celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Furthermore, the working group participated in the organising of a national Human Rights Education Conference in November 2003. Finally, the working group participated actively in the process which led to the introduction of human rights as an elective subject at upper secondary school level. Working group members took part in the development of a curriculum for this subject. The working group was also active in national consultative rounds related to the introduction of framework plans.

In 2004, the working group had expanded to cover a broad range of interests and areas of work, in most stakeholders' view a range too broad to provide a fruitful forum for focused discussion. In order to assess the situation, consultations were held between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the working group, as well as with other stakeholders (relevant ministries and committees). In the consultations, some organisations represented in the working group were in favour of extending the group's mandate.

Following these consultations and discussions, the Working Group on Human Rights Education was dissolved in 2005. It was concluded that other forms of cooperation could prove more fruitful for the stakeholders involved. Notably, consultations could be directed more specifically towards the individual organizations' core interests and capacity. There is presently no national entity charged with the task of developing a national policy on Human Rights education.

In 2004, a Forum for Human Rights Education was established within the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights at the University of Oslo.

#### b) Analysis of the current situation of human rights education in the school system

Describe how the analysis of the current situation of human rights education in the school system has been carried out in the country. The following questions can be considered in this part:

- Were there any specific studies carried out in this context?
- Were there any existing studies that have been included in the analysis process?
- Were there any consultations with experts, teachers, educators, and other stakeholders (youth, NGOs, etc.) at the national level?

#### **Pre-school level**

*The Framework Plan for the Content and Tasks of Kindergartens* entered into force in 2006. The ministry has commissioned a survey to monitor how the framework plan is implemented, used and experienced in the kindergarten sector. This work is led by a Norwegian University College.

An evaluation report on the Framework Plan was issued in 2009 (in Norwegian only; "Alle teller mer – En evaluering av hvordan Rammeplan for barnehagens innhold og oppgaver blir innført, brukt og erfart"). According to the report, about 50 per cent of the head teachers state that they have worked extensively concerning children's participation, while the majority of parents mean that children should have more influence. These answers might indicate that there is an offset between theory and practice.

### **Primary and secondary level**

No studies have to date focused on Norway's compliance with the 1974 recommendation. However, in 2003, the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training commissioned a survey of Human Rights Education in a sample of Norwegian schools from the Centre for Peace-building and Conflict Resolution (CCM). The survey showed that the vast majority of schools provide teaching in human rights. This teaching is most often found in the subjects of social studies, in the subject Religion, Philosophies of Life and Ethics and in history.

There is substantial teaching on the theme of human rights in connection with Norwegian schools' celebration of the UN Day (24<sup>th</sup> October), as well as during an International Week organised annually at secondary education level. Furthermore, schools working in an international project, or in collaboration with schools abroad, have an integrated focus on human rights in their teaching. The material used is often prepared by Non-Governmental or Civil Society Organisations. However, the survey also showed that there is a need for new materials, as well as for in-service training for teachers in human rights.

Another study, also from 2003, was commissioned by the above mentioned Working Group for Human Rights Education established under the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Human Rights Group from the 1980s to 2005. This study, carried out in 170 Norwegian primary and secondary schools, concluded that school teachers generally felt a need for capacity development in human rights related subjects. They also reported a need for more pedagogical and methodological teaching aids.

To demonstrate the level of knowledge among Norwegian students in the fields of democracy and citizenship, the results from the international CIVED-study (Civic Education Study) from 1999 are often cited in Norway. The content domains of CIVED covered democracy and citizenship, national identity, social cohesion and diversity. The subjects of the study were pupils in Year 8 (13 and 14 year olds) and pupils in upper secondary education. The results from the CIVED study were good for both groups, and in particular among Norwegian 18 year olds. CIVED gave an impression of Norwegian pupils as well prepared to assume their role as citizens in a democratic society. They were knowledgeable, had democratic skills and attitudes, and had a generally accepted understanding of what is good and not good for democracy. Nine out of ten 18 years olds said they would vote in Norway's Parliamentary elections. Youth in Norway seem to have a relatively strong trust in authorities and in public institutions, but little trust in political parties. According to CIVED, willingness related to active political commitment was weaker than for young people in other countries.

The follow-up of the CIVED study, the ICCS (International Civic and Citizenship Education Study) will provide indications as to how human rights and similar themes are worked on in the Norwegian school ten years after CIVED. Since Norway has gone through the implementation of a major school reform since then, the results from ICCS will be of interest.

This reform, the Knowledge Promotion Reform (implemented from 2006) led to major changes in the content of the school (new curricula), structure and organisation of the compulsory school and upper secondary education. A total of 150 Norwegian schools with pupils in Years 8 and 9 are participating in the ICCS study in the spring of 2009.



Both international and national results from this study will be published in 2010. A separate questionnaire on Norwegian pupils' knowledge of the Holocaust and racism is included in the Norwegian part of the study.

### **Teacher training**

In the National Curriculum Regulations relating to General Teacher Education, Pre-School Teacher Education and Practical and Didactical Education, it is confirmed that the students must be familiar with international human rights and children's rights that apply across national borders.

#### c) Setting priorities and developing a national implementation strategy

Describe what priorities were set for the national policy – e.g. what priorities were for particular human rights, social groups or individuals, and educational levels in which human rights education is incorporated.

### **Preschool level**

Norwegian legislation concerning children's right to participation in the kindergartens was new in 2005. This right is further described in the above mentioned *Framework Plan for the Content and Tasks of Kindergartens*. After the new legislation entered into force, the Ministry of Education and Research in 2007 established a *Strategy for improving staff's competence in the kindergarten sector 2007 to 2010*. One of the main priorities in the strategy is to improve competence on children's participation. The ministry has also published a *guiding leaflet* on this topic.

### **Primary and secondary school level**

(Re. social groups or individuals:)

#### *The Sámi indigenous population*

The curriculum for the Knowledge Promotion encompasses the 10 year compulsory school and upper secondary education and training as a whole. A separate curriculum has been designed for the Sámi Knowledge Promotion, to be used in Sámi administrative districts.

The Education Act § 6-4 states that "Regulations concerning syllabuses pursuant to sections 2-3 and 3-4 shall require the provision of instruction concerning the Sámi peoples and language, culture and civic life in conjunction with other subjects."

This regulation has been included in the new curriculum Knowledge Promotion of 2006. All pupils in Norway are to receive tuition in the Sami culture, people and languages. This provision applies to almost all subjects.

#### *Bilingual and multilingual education*

Norway has a strong rights-based approach to language support. The newly arrived immigrant students in primary and lower and secondary schools have the right to special teaching in Norwegian until they have sufficient proficiency in the language to join regular classes. If necessary, they also have the right to tuition in their mother tongue and bilingual teaching in specific subjects.

### *Tuition in Norwegian and Social studies for adult immigrants*

The goal of the tuition is for immigrants to learn enough Norwegian to enable them to participate in the employment market and in society at large. Newly arrived immigrants have a right and/or a duty to take 300 hours of tuition in Norwegian and social studies. This mandatory tuition must be completed during their first three years in Norway.

In addition to 250 hours of tuition in Norwegian language (where elements of social study topics are integrated), course participants are offered 50 hours of Social studies in a language they understand.

The topics included in Social studies are highly relevant to the 1974 Recommendation. (Please see Annex 2 for a breakdown in sub-themes.)

### *Non-formal education – confirmation tuition for youth*

Non-formal courses preparing youth for religious or non-religious confirmation are arranged by churches and humanistic organisations in Norway for youth around 15 years of age. In some schools, courses are held during school hours, but in general they are held outside of school time and premises. In confirmation courses both of a religious and a humanistic nature, themes related to tolerance, respect, human rights, co-operation and non-discrimination are thoroughly represented.

#### d) Procedures and activities for developing the policy

Please describe briefly the current status of the preparation of the policy.

Not applicable / nothing to report, ref. introductory remarks above.

### *B: Contents of the national policy related to human rights education*

#### a) Formal components of the policy

Describe the overall status of the implementation of the policy. The following questions can be considered in this part: Is there a timetable for implementation? Which institution is responsible for the implementation and with which partners (e.g. teacher training institutions, national curriculum development institutions, etc.)? Is a specific budget allocated to the implementation of the policy? Does a systemic mechanism of monitoring for the implementation exist?

Not applicable / nothing to report, ref. introductory remarks above.

#### b) Target groups

Which groups are targeted in the national policy? Please choose one or more categories below.

- Preschool, early childhood
- Primary school
- Secondary school
- Higher education
- Education for justice and security professionals
- Public employees in general

- o Media
- o Teachers
- o Educational community
- o Civil society, non-formal education
- o Ministry of education staff and users of their services
- o Other (please describe)

Not applicable / nothing to report, ref. introductory remarks above.

c) Themes integrated in the [general] national policy

Describe briefly the themes and questions related to human rights that are integrated in the policy (e.g. universality and indivisibility of human rights, values such as peace, democracy, non-discrimination, equality, justice, non-violence, tolerance and respect for human dignity, gender equality, and recognition of ethnic and cultural diversity). Does the policy intend to explicitly promote intercultural education? Has bilingual and multilingual education been institutionalized?

**Pre-school level**

*The Framework Plan for the Content and Tasks of Kindergartens*, established by the Ministry of Education and Research 1 March 2006, entered into force 1 August 2006 and is a regulation to *the Kindergarten Act*. The framework plan provides guidelines on the values, content and tasks of kindergartens.

All kindergartens shall base their activities on the values established in the Kindergarten Act, and on international conventions to which Norway is a signatory, including *the ILO Convention no. 169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples* and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Framework Plan underlines the childrens' right to participation, experiences of participation in a democratic society, the special rights of Sámi (indigenous) children, gender equality, democracy, cultural diversity as a resource, the reflection of and respect for diversity etc.

Furthermore, the plan states that "The mother tongue is important to a sense of identity and achievement in a number of areas" (page 18) and "The population of Norway is linguistically, culturally and religiously diverse, which enriches and strengthens the communities in the kindergartens. Kindergartens shall therefore facilitate dialogue and interaction between different groups, on an equal footing.

Children who belong to the Sámi population, to national minorities or to ethnic minority cultures must be supported in the development of their double cultural affiliations. Children's encounters with different cultures and traditions form the basis for respectful interaction between different ethnic groups. Being conscious of their own cultural heritage, whilst participating in the cultures of others, helps children to put themselves in the position of others." (page 20).

The ministry has also produced guiding leaflets concerning children's participation, gender equality, men in kindergartens, cultural and linguistic diversity and Sámi language and culture.

## **Primary and secondary level**

The Norwegian Core Curriculum and the Quality Framework (parts 1 and 2 of the curriculum) integrate competences and knowledge on human rights and active pupil participation in compliance with article 12 paragraph 1 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Human rights are also integrated in the compulsory subject curricula for primary and secondary education. In the social studies subjects, competences in human rights are specified from the end of years 7, 10 and 11. Competences in human rights are also found in the knowledge of religion, ethics and philosophies of life subject. A specialised subject (140 hours), entitled Human rights and politics, is offered as an elective for pupils in year 12 of the general education course. (Please see list of web pages in Annex 1.)

The central education authorities set the subject curricula. Norway does not have an accreditation scheme for textbooks, but human rights and tolerance related issues are generally included in textbooks as well as in teachers' guides to textbooks.

### *Pupil Councils work*

Education for democracy and human rights in Norway shall take place through the practicing of necessary skills. *Student/Pupil Council work* has the status of a *school subject* and aims to provide students with a wide range skills required for an active participation in society. Education in Student Council work comprises all pupils. Through pupils' participation in the Council and other decision-making processes, the subject shall contribute to pupils' abilities to express their independent opinions, as well as their ability and willingness to cooperate.

The subject shall thus promote the development of an inclusive learning environment devoid of bullying, and where pupils may feel secure, confident and included. Furthermore, the education shall contribute to pupils' independence, capacity of empathy and participation while also encouraging reflection and a critical perspective. Participation in the Student Council and other cooperative bodies in the school community aims to satisfy this goal.

The main subject area *independence and cooperation* focuses on developing pupils' ability to express their own opinions and to function in various roles and groups. This implies mastering tasks that require an understanding of other people's views and attitudes, to show respect, to manage conflicts and to practice equal rights. The main subject area also includes the planning and conducting of meetings, as well as additional/ supplementary work within a meeting context.

Competences in human rights are also found in the optional subjects of Sociology and Law for upper secondary level.

The work on curriculum development in 2005-2007 involved a range of stakeholders, such as universities and university colleges, student organisations/unions, teacher organisations/unions, county administrations, schools and teachers. No specific studies were carried out during the development process, but a large-scale public hearing was held on the curricula.

## 2. Examples of action for the promotion of HRE

Give a few examples of actions undertaken in the following areas of action.  
Please focus on major initiatives that are considered successful and innovative.

### Learning and training methods and contents

• (Reference: the Recommendation 1974, §10-19, §38-40):  
Teaching and learning practices and tools should reflect human rights values. For example, materials and textbooks should be consistent with principles of human rights education, and teaching methodologies should be democratic and participatory. Please give a few examples of programmes/projects/activities related to the development of the contents and methods for learning and training

### **Pre-school level**

See Q2 B c) concerning guiding leaflets for kindergartens.

### **Primary school, secondary school and higher levels**

#### *The Pupils Survey - Elevundersøkelsen*

Pupils' participation is to be regarded a central aspect of daily life in Norwegian schools. The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training introduced an annual, Internet-based *Pupils Survey for 2001*. The survey has later been revised.

The aim of the Pupils Survey is to grant pupils in compulsory school (primary and lower secondary) and in upper secondary education the opportunity to express opinions on their education and well-being in school. The survey is obligatory for grades 7 and 10 in primary schools, and for pupils in grade 1 of upper secondary education and training. The survey is voluntary for other years from 5<sup>th</sup> grade upwards. Results from the Pupils Survey are published on a website (see list of webpages in annex).

The results from the Pupils Survey are utilised by school owners (municipalities and county municipalities) and by the national education administration, as an aid to analysing and developing the learning environment. A major focus over the last years has been the fight against bullying and harassment in school. The local school management is advised to use the results of the surveys as a starting point for discussions with pupils' councils, parents associations, teachers and other school employees.

An index on pupil participation is constructed by several questions<sup>1</sup> and can be consulted at the website Skoleporten (see annex).

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<sup>1</sup> Sample of questions from the pupils' user survey:

In how many subjects are you allowed to take part in ...

a. making work plans (week plan, period plan, year plan) for the subjects?  
b. choosing between different types of assignments in the subjects?  
c. choosing work methods in the subjects?

55. Have the teachers explained how the pupils can take part in deciding how they are to work with the subjects?

56. Do the teachers encourage the pupils to take part in deciding how they are to work with the subjects?

57. To which extent do the teachers encourage the pupils to take part in Pupils' Council work and other work as representatives of the pupils?

58. In your opinion how well does the Pupils' Council at your school work?

59. Does the school listen to suggestions from the pupils?

*Knowledge of the Holocaust and work against racism*

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training is responsible for schools' commemoration of the *International Holocaust Day* on 27 January, and for awarding the so-called *Benjamin Prize*. The prize was established after the racist killing of a 15 year old boy in an Oslo suburban area in January 2001. The killing led to a mass demonstration against racism in Oslo City. Since 2002, the prize is annually awarded to one school for its work against racism.

The Directorate also offers information about teaching resources and, in cooperation with a number of Non-Governmental and Civil Society Organisations (NGOs/SCOs), proposes content materials in the work to combat racism and discrimination. Resources are available at a special website (please see list of web pages in Annex 1).

*Materials on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*

In cooperation with the Norwegian Ombudsman for Children, a teaching aid based on the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child was developed in 2005. This initiative is based on experience from the project "Life under 18", Norway's report to the UN on national follow-up of the Convention. The materials include pupil booklets and a teacher's guidebook for Years 5 to 7 and Years 8 to 10. The teaching resource was pilot-tested in approximately 100 schools in 2005/2006.

*Digital teaching and learning resources*

The website Skolenettet.no (please see list of web pages in Annex 1) has a number of resources related to the schools' work with global issues and international understanding, human rights, racism and tolerance. The digital resources were developed by various NGOs/SCOs, and have been made available to schools through the website.

Work in cooperation with UNESCO Associated Schools (ASPs)

• (Reference: §23)

Please describe how UNESCO ASPNet schools in the country have contributed to the promotion of human rights education and implementation of national policies in a concrete manner

Around 40 Norwegian schools participate in UNESCO's ASP network. The intention is to integrate UNESCO's perspectives, work and ideology as part of the daily work in the ASP schools.

From 2005 to 2008, a school in Norway (Gamlebyen school in Oslo) together with schools in Turkey and Denmark cooperated on a project called "Good deeds for peace". This was a proactive film project, uniting the participating schools in filmmaking. The aim was to promote intercultural dialogue as a contribution to peace and cooperation between young people. The students also acquired skills in handling the international language of film.

The films from the project were exchanged between the participating schools. They were also distributed to other interested schools, institutions or individuals and were shown at the yearly Norwegian ASPnet seminar in 2009.

In 2007 and 2008, the Norwegian ASPnet organised school competitions related to specific themes, using international years or decades as a starting point.

In 2007, the schools competition was organised around the UN Decade for Education for Sustainable Development. The aim was to train pupils in the process of decision making related to sustainability and democracy development. An upper secondary school, having set up a debate on sustainability within the context of a simulated UN meeting, was awarded the first prize.

In 2008, the competition was related to the *International Year of Cultural Diversity*, and to the Norwegian year to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the birth of the Norwegian poet *Henrik Wergeland* (1808-1845). Wergeland, a famous Norwegian poet, had opinions and views controversial in his time. He was an active participant in national debates and became famous for his fight to eliminate the Norwegian Constitution's paragraph 2, restricting Jews' rights to enter the country. (Jews were granted the right to enter into Norway only in 1851, six years after Wergeland's death). Wergeland was also an outspoken proponent of the right of religious freedom. The context for the schools competition was visual arts presentations of the theme. One lower secondary school and one upper secondary school won prizes.

#### Out-of-school education

• (Reference: §30-31)  
Please describe what actions for vulnerable groups have been undertaken.

Please see text under Question 2 above.

No specific education relevant for the 1974 Recommendation is established for out-of-school pupils in Norway. However, there is a Counselling Service/Career Guidance in lower secondary schools. Though not working primarily from a rights based perspective, the service aims to enable pupils to make good choices regarding their own future education, and thus aims to reduce or minimize drop-out from upper secondary education and training.

#### Training of teachers and other educational personnel

• (Reference: §33-37)  
Please describe what actions such as methodologies and training policies and modules, have been taken to strengthen the training of teachers and other educational personnel for them to demonstrate and transmit human rights values.

Human rights education is a compulsory component in the National Curriculum Regulations for Teacher Education. Within the limits defined in the curriculum regulations, each institution prepares a local curriculum. Modules and methodologies on human rights education will vary from institution to institution.

In General Teacher Education in Oslo University College, one of the topics in Social Studies is human rights and multicultural understanding. The students work on projects

involving institutions and organizations in Oslo. They are also involved in research work in the institution.

#### *Continuing education*

Further/continuing education for teachers in the human rights field was offered in the 2005/2006 school year by *Vestfold University College* (a regional univ. college). The course focused on human rights, genocide and Holocaust education.

In-service training courses in human rights for teachers in Norway are provided by *The Norwegian Centre for Human Rights* (NCHR) at the University of Oslo.

*The United Nations Association of Norway* on a regular basis offers regional training and courses on human rights related topics for teachers. Since Human rights constitute one of the main pillars in the UN Association of Norway's work directed at teachers and pupils/students, the Association has contributed to the promotion of human rights education in Norway in a variety of ways at the regional as well as the nation level. The Association offers both printed teaching resources and Internet resources on human rights. In 2008, a number of interactive maps, statistics, surveys on international human rights treaties, and thematic pages on human rights were launched (please see list of web pages in Annex 1).

In the period 2001 – 2008, the Association's regional offices visited a great number of its member schools (UN Schools) and other schools to give lectures on human rights and human rights related topics. Moreover, in cooperation with Amnesty Norway, the Norwegian Helsinki Committee and the Egil Rafto Foundation, the UN Association of Norway organised a series of five human rights courses for upper secondary teachers in the period 2004 – 2005. The organisers received financial support of the Freedom of Expression Foundation Oslo and the Ministry of foreign Affairs.

The UN Association also arranged a national course on human rights teaching in 2008 in collaboration with the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights. A second course will take place in November 2009.

Finally, in connection with the celebration of the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the UN Association of Norway devoted issue no. 2/2008 of the UN Magazine to human rights. This magazine was sent to all of the organisation's 800 member schools throughout the country, together with a poster which also celebrated the Universal Declaration of Human Rights Anniversary.

#### Research

• (Reference: §41-42):

Please describe how research results are linked with the policy formulation and its national implementation. Which partners have been mobilized for this purpose (e.g. UNESCO Chairs, universities, research institutions, teacher-training institutions, adult education training centres, ASPs and NGOs including UNESCO Clubs and associations).



### **Pre-school level**

The Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research has not initiated research specifically on Human Rights Education. However, the Norwegian Research Council's program "Practice related research and development in kindergarten, primary school and teacher training", financed by the ministry, has projects that cover this field, e.g. "The multicultural kindergarten in rural areas", "The kindergarten, an inclusive community" and "Children's participation in a relational perspective, focus on the youngest children in kindergartens". The project leaders are working at universities or university colleges. The projects are ongoing, i.e. final reports are not ready in April 2009.

### **Primary and secondary school level**

Please see studies mentioned under Question 1, A, b) above.

### **Courses without specified level**

In the period 1997 to 2007, The Norwegian Helsinki Committee has offered education and training courses for immigrants and refugees (from Bosnia, Kosovo and Iraq, in addition to one joint project for Norwegian and immigrant youth.

### **Higher level**

#### *The Norwegian Center for Studies of Holocaust and Religious Minorities*

The Norwegian Center for Studies of Holocaust and Religious Minorities was established in 2006. The center has two main fields of interest: the Holocaust and other genocides on the one hand, and the conditions of religious minorities in modern societies on the other. Within these two fields of interest the Center will contribute to new research, education and information activities, exhibitions and conferences. Moreover, it is to be a meeting-place for people who want to participate in the enduring controversy concerning all kinds of religious, racist and ethnically motivated repression. The Center has carried out research and activities related to human rights and various topics connected to genocide.

#### *Buskerud University College*

Buskerud University College offers courses in both Norwegian and English on subjects related to Human Rights and human dignity, multicultural understanding and conflict management (please see list of web pages in Annex 1).

### International cooperation

- (Reference: §43-45):  
Please give a few examples of exchange of experiences, meetings, and joint ventures that have been carried out with partners from other countries and regions.

#### *The European Wergeland centre*

In cooperation with the Council of Europe (CoE), Norway established a centre on education for intercultural understanding, human rights and democratic citizenship in 2008. The Centre, named after the Norwegian poet Henrik Wergeland, began its work in

February 2009. The Wergeland Centre shall function as a European resource centre on education for intercultural understanding, human rights and democratic citizenship for the member states of the CoE. It will build on and promote work performed by the CoE and Norway.

The main task of the Wergeland Centre is to promote democratic culture and social belonging through its work with education. The Centre will carry out research with a practical focus on its areas of work and shall provide in-service training for teachers and teacher trainers. Furthermore, the Centre is mandated to disseminate information, serve as a platform and create a network for relevant actors within the field. The working language of the Centre is English. The target groups of the Centre are teachers, teacher trainers, multipliers, scientists, practitioners, decision makers and other relevant actors (please see list of web pages in Annex 1).

*Cooperation between the University of Oslo and the Oslo Centre for Peace and Human Rights*

*The Master's Programme in Peace and Conflict Studies* at the University of Oslo uses English as the language of instruction. This results in a fairly high number of students with an international background. Students are introduced to multiple approaches to the study of peace and conflict.

*The Oslo Center for Peace and Human Rights*

The Oslo Center for Peace and Human Rights was established in 2006 as an independent, non-profit foundation. In 2007 the Oslo Center and the Master's Programme in Peace and Conflict Studies established a partnership, allowing master grade students to work with international projects at the Centre.

*The Norwegian Helsinki Committee*

The Norwegian Helsinki Committee has been engaged in the establishment of an international project called "Build Bridges Not Walls", in cooperation with a Norwegian municipality, involving Norway, USA and Bosnia and Hercegovina.

**Q3 - Methods introduced to draw the attention of various authorities in the country to the Recommendation and to counter possible obstacles**

A. Assessment of effectiveness and difficulties in implementation

Assessment of the effectiveness of the methods introduced to engage various authorities in the country and the methods that have overcome barriers. It should highlight the difficulties encountered in implementing the key provisions of the Recommendation.
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As indicated above, the 1974 Recommendation is generally not referred to as a key document in the Norwegian education sector, and the World Programme for Human Rights Education has not been implemented. Nevertheless, the overall view is that the methods used in Norway, to engage authorities in work related to these themes, function fairly well.

The basic values advocated in the 1974 Recommendation are embedded in the relevant Norwegian legislation and other normative instruments, as well as in the curricula at the

appropriate levels. The mandate of the Directorate of Education and Training is fairly clear regarding these values. The Directorate also seems to be perceptive towards emerging issues and sudden emergencies happening at national or international level, and when such emergencies occur, acts relatively quickly in order to provide teaching aids and support for schools and other institutions.

The numerous resources provided by the Directorate to the education sector are complemented and supplemented by Norwegian NGOs and SCOs, who sometimes also challenge the government level and helps to highlight new perspectives and to put them on the Directorate's agenda.

#### B. Main issues that need to be resolved

Describe briefly the main issues that need to be resolved in order to promote the implementation of the key provisions of the Recommendation in the country.

According to the view of Norwegian educational authorities, the key and overall provisions in the 1974 Recommendation have been satisfactory implemented in Norway.

#### C. Measures taken to raise awareness of the basic principles of the Recommendation

Describe the measures taken to raise awareness of the basic principles of the Recommendation.  
Specify activities undertaken or supported by the National Commission for promoting the Recommendation and fostering debates on critical issues related to the rights enshrined in the Instrument.

As indicated above, measures have been taken at national level in Norway to raise awareness of the basic principles embedded in the Recommendation, through the integration of its principles and main aspects in Norwegian legislation and other legal instruments, as well as in national curricula.

Relevant themes and issues are duly mentioned and dealt with in schools' textbooks and also in learning materials and teaching aids offered to teachers and schools by the civil sector (NGOs and others).

### **Q4 - Conclusion**

According to the experiences of your country in the area of human rights education:

- Major lessons learned
- Difficulties and obstacles met
- Suggestions for further development and improvement

#### Major lessons learned

In order to secure a firm base for the basic principles of the 1974 Recommendation in the national education system, it is vital that the main principles are embedded in the national legislation and in national normative documents. Furthermore, in order to secure a steady

and solid follow-up of the overall development, and in order to facilitate innovation, renewal and maintenance of the necessary capacity at various levels in the education system, adequate resources need to be allocated.

During the dialogue with Civil Society Organisations regarding this report, two SCOs have called for a more systematic approach to Human Rights education in Norway, encompassing the diverse aspects of formal and non-formal education and training at the different levels. Please see Annex 4, the comments from the Norwegian Helsinki Committee, and Annex 5, the comments from Save the Children Norway, for further information.

#### Difficulties and obstacles met

The Norwegian education system's curricula at various levels of education and training comprises of a vast range of subjects and interdisciplinary themes. Also, the curriculum reform of 2006 emphasises basic knowledge and skills to a greater extent than in previous curricula and syllabi. The demands and strains put on teachers to secure that each pupil and student is provided with the necessary information, motivation and follow-up at all times, can be perceived as high at school level.

Thus, the time resources allocated to core subjects, themes and special projects can at times seem scarce, especially at secondary level and in higher education institutions. This is reported as a general challenge for teachers in their everyday life in schools.

In view of the relatively high drop-out rate from Norwegian vocational training at upper secondary level, there is a generally acknowledged need to adjust the level of theoretic knowledge in vocational training. Though the syllabus for social science in vocational training is the same as in the Programme for General Studies, human rights education in vocational training could draw more on examples taken from working life, in order to facilitate a more practically oriented tuition.

There are at times reports of school owners and local authorities not granting sufficient permissions for teachers to participate in in-service training. This has been reported as an obstacle to capacity building at local level in human rights education.

Finally, it is always a challenge to balance out the *mainstreaming* of prioritized issues versus the *visibility* of such issues. As e.g. human rights education issues are increasingly embedded and integrated in the established school system, the visibility of themes and issues related to such education may be seen as insufficient by devoted professionals, groups or activists in the same field.

#### Suggestions for further development and improvement

With reference to the above mentioned challenges, Norway will continue to make efforts to balance out the mainstreaming and the visibility of human rights education issues and related issues in the 1974 Recommendation. In this regard, suggestions made by some Norwegian civil society organisations invited to comment on the Norwegian Draft report regarding a more systematic approach to Human Rights education, will also be considered.

## Annex 1

### Resources - Links to web pages referred to in the report

#### 1. National guiding documents, curricula, programmes etc.

Buskerud University College, course in Multiculturalism - Multicultural Understanding, and course in Human rights, human dignity and cultural diversity:

[http://www.hibu.no/english/courses/political\\_science/multicultu/](http://www.hibu.no/english/courses/political_science/multicultu/)

Buskerud University College, Master grade course in Human Rights, multicultural understanding and conflict management (Norwegian only):

<http://www.hibu.no/studietilbud/statsvitenskap/menneskerettigheter/>

Curricula, syllabi, guidelines and other guiding documents where Norwegian terms for Human Rights (menneskerettigheter) and Peace (fred) are mentioned (in Norwegian only):

[http://www.utdanningsdirektoratet.no/templates/udir/TM\\_Søk.aspx?id=197&quicksearchquery=%menneskerettigheter%fred%](http://www.utdanningsdirektoratet.no/templates/udir/TM_Søk.aspx?id=197&quicksearchquery=%menneskerettigheter%fred%)

Core curriculum for primary and secondary and adult education (1993, still valid):

[http://www.utdanningsdirektoratet.no/upload/larerplaner/generell\\_del/Core\\_Curriculum\\_English.pdf](http://www.utdanningsdirektoratet.no/upload/larerplaner/generell_del/Core_Curriculum_English.pdf)

*Human rights and politics*, a specialised subject (140 hours), is offered as an elective for pupils in year 12 of the general education course:

[http://www.udir.no/upload/larerplaner/Fastsatte\\_lareplaner\\_for\\_Kunnskapsloftet/english/Languages/Politics\\_the%20individual\\_and\\_society.rtf](http://www.udir.no/upload/larerplaner/Fastsatte_lareplaner_for_Kunnskapsloftet/english/Languages/Politics_the%20individual_and_society.rtf)

State authority documents relating to diverse subjects relevant for Human Rights issues (in Norwegian or English):

[http://www.utdanningsdirektoratet.no/templates/udir/TM\\_Søk.aspx?id=197&quicksearchquery=Human%20rights](http://www.utdanningsdirektoratet.no/templates/udir/TM_Søk.aspx?id=197&quicksearchquery=Human%20rights)

The Directorate for Education and Training's website for democracy and co-citizenship:

<http://Skolenettet.no/demokrati>

The Directorate for Education and Training's website for teaching resources and materials to combat racism and discrimination:

<http://skolenettet.no/lom>

The Directorate for Education and Training's website "The School Portal":

<http://skoleporten.utdanningsdirektoratet.no/english/Sider/default.aspx>

The pupils' "Work Environment Act" in Norway:

[http://www.udir.no/Brosjyrer/\\_english/The-pupils-working-environment-act-in-Norway/](http://www.udir.no/Brosjyrer/_english/The-pupils-working-environment-act-in-Norway/)

The Pupils' User Survey – some published results (in Norwegian only):

<http://www.udir.no/Tema/Brukerundersokelser/>

The Quality Framework related to the National Curriculum for Knowledge Promotion in Primary and Secondary Education and Training:  
[http://www.undanningsdirektoratet.no/upload/larerplaner/Fastsatte\\_lareplaner\\_for\\_Kunnska\\_psoeftet/prinsipper\\_lk06\\_Eng.pdf](http://www.undanningsdirektoratet.no/upload/larerplaner/Fastsatte_lareplaner_for_Kunnska_psoeftet/prinsipper_lk06_Eng.pdf)

The UN Association of Norway's interactive world maps, teacher resources on human rights (Norwegian only):  
<http://www.globalis.no/>

*Virvel Vår Verden* (Norwegian only), an interactive website with a multicultural and human rights oriented knowledge base that aims to stimulate the user's desire to learn, read and discover:  
<http://virvel.net/>

## **2. Web pages of institutions, institutes, Non-Governmental Organisations, Civil Society Org.s etc.**

Human Rights education info from state authorities:

[http://www.statped.no/moduler/templates/Module\\_Overview.aspx?id=20171&epslanguage=NN](http://www.statped.no/moduler/templates/Module_Overview.aspx?id=20171&epslanguage=NN)

Information on activities of the Norwegian Centre's National Forum for Human Rights Education (Norwegian only):  
<http://www.humanrights.uio.no/studier/nasjonalt-forum/>

Save the Children, Resources for children, teachers and parents on child rights and international understanding (Norwegian only):  
[http://www.reddbarna.no/abc\\_dev/index.html](http://www.reddbarna.no/abc_dev/index.html)

Save the Children Norway, information on programme work and international and national news on child right issues (Norwegian only):  
<http://www.reddbarna.no/default.asp>

The European Wergeland Centre, a resource centre on education for intercultural understanding, human rights and democratic citizenship, established by Norway in cooperation with the Council of Europe in 2008:  
<http://www.theewc.org/>

The Norwegian Center for Studies of Holocaust and Religious Minorities:  
<http://www.hlsenteret.no/English>

The Norwegian Centre for Human Rights:  
<http://www.humanrights.uio.no/english/>

The Norwegian Red Cross, International Humanitarian Law:  
[http://www.rodekors.no/Vart\\_arbeid/internasjonalt\\_humanitar\\_rett/](http://www.rodekors.no/Vart_arbeid/internasjonalt_humanitar_rett/)  
Information in English: <http://www.rodekors.no/English/English/>

Teacher resources related to Democratic citizenship from Norwegian state authorities (mostly in Norwegian):

[http://www.skolenettet.no/moduler/templates/Module\\_Overview.aspx?id=22351&epslanguage=NO](http://www.skolenettet.no/moduler/templates/Module_Overview.aspx?id=22351&epslanguage=NO)

The University of Oslo's Master's Programme on Peace and conflict Studies:

<http://www.uio.no/studier/program/peace-master/om/kort-om-programmet.xml>

## Annex 2

### Legal references and additional information

#### 1. Legal references

##### **The new objectives statement from the Norwegian Education Act, adopted by the Storting (Parliament) in 2008:**

[§ 1-1 *Formålet med opplæringa*

*Opplæringa i skole og lærebedrift skal opne dører mot verda og framtida og gi elevane og lærlingane historisk og kulturell innsikt. Ho skal byggje på respekt for menneskeverdet og på åndsfridom, nestekjærleik, likeverd og solidaritet, slik desse grunnleggjande verdiane kjem til uttrykk i kristen og humanistisk tradisjon og i ulike religionar og livssyn og slik dei er forankra i menneskerettane. Opplæringa skal fremje demokrati, likestilling og vitskapleg tenkjemåte.*

*Elevane og lærlingane skal utvikle kunnskap, dugleik og holdningar for å kunne meistre liva sine og for å kunne delta i arbeid og fellesskap i samfunnet. Dei skal få utfalde skaparglede, engasjement og utforskartrøng. Elevane og lærlingane skal lære å tenkje kritisk og handle etisk og miljøbevisst. Dei skal ha medansvar og rett til medverknad.*

*Skolen og lærebedrifta skal møte elevane og lærlingane med tillit, respekt og krav og gi dei utfordringar som fremjar danning og lærelyst. Alle former for diskriminering skal motarbeidast.*

*Skolen skal samarbeide med heimen.]*

##### **The principles of equal opportunity and access for all**

The current Norwegian education system is based upon the principles of equal opportunity and access for all. These principles are implemented in the legislation regarding the Norwegian education system, namely the Act relating to Primary and Secondary Education (Education Act) of 1998.

Already in the parliamentary process leading up to the ratification of the convention on discrimination in education it is stated in the proposition to the parliament, St.prp.nr.35(1961-1962) that the measures proposed in the convention were implemented in the legislative framework regarding education.

This position has in recent years been further strengthened by new legislation and the implementation of several international conventions. As recent as in 1999, the Human Rights Act effectively led to domestication of the European convention on human rights (ECHR), the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. These international conventions, together with the UNESCO Convention on Discrimination in Education and the Anti-Discrimination act form the legislative framework regarding human rights and anti-discrimination in education in Norwegian legislation. The legislative framework on human rights is based upon Norway's implementation of international conventions in a way that makes them parallel to Norwegian legislation.



Furthermore, the anti-discrimination legislation in Norway has recently been supplemented by the anti-discrimination act from January 2006. The act is seen as a valuable addition to Norway's commitment in the work against discrimination in society in general and in education in particular.

The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud is responsible for overseeing that the regulations in the anti-discrimination act have the intended effect. A person who believes that he or she has been subjected to discrimination may submit the matter to the Ombud, who will request information from both parties, carry out an objective assessment of the case and issue an opinion as to whether discrimination has taken place. The Ombud's opinion may be brought before the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Tribunal. (The Ombud has the authority to make binding administrative decisions (urgent decisions) in cases where it would cause inconvenience to wait for the decision of the Tribunal.)

The ombud can be looked upon both as an institution to whom individuals can turn, and as an institution that oversees the regulations in its own right.

According to Norwegian law everybody has equal right and duty to attend education. If children between the age of 6-16 do not attend school, which happens quite seldom, the municipality and/or the schools are obliged to find out why and to urge them to attend. If a pupil is absent from compulsory instruction, his or her parents or those who are in loco parentis may be liable to fines if the absence is a result of deliberate or negligent actions by them. Public prosecution is not instituted unless so decided by the municipality. (Ed. Act Ch 2, Sec 2-1)

### **The Norwegian anti-discrimination act of 2006**

The Norwegian anti-discrimination act of 2006 ( 2005-06-03 no 33) outlaws all direct and indirect discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity, national origin, heritage, colour of skin, language, religion and philosophical convictions. The types of discrimination described in article 1 of the convention are:

- (a) Of depriving any person or group of persons of access to education of any type or at any level;
- (b) Of limiting any person or group of persons to education of an inferior standard;
- (c) Subject to the provisions of Article 2 of this Convention, of establishing or maintaining separate educational systems or institutions for persons or groups of persons; or
- (d) Of inflicting on any person or group of persons conditions which are incompatible with the dignity of man.

The anti-discrimination act clearly outlaws the examples of discrimination mentioned in article 1.

## **Independent Schools Act**

Section 2-3 of the Independent Schools Act states that the activities of independent schools must be in accordance with curricula approved by the Ministry. If a school wishes to have a curriculum that is different from the official curriculum, it must nevertheless ensure that pupils receive an education of equal quality. All curricula that deviate from the official curriculum, regardless of whether the school has a religious/ethical or some other purpose, are assessed on the basis of the requirement of an equally good education. In this connection, the authorities focus on how issues relating to gender equality are dealt with. Reference is made to Section 1-1, second sentence, (d), which states that tuition in independent schools must aim *to prepare the pupil for a responsible life in a free society in a spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality between the sexes and friendship between all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons belonging to indigenous groups.*

The boards of governors of independent schools have a duty to ensure that the school is run in accordance with Norwegian law, including the Gender Equality Act, cf. section 5-2 of the Independent Schools Act. Pursuant to section 7-2 of the Independent Schools Act, the Ministry is responsible for the inspection of schools. If any situation is discovered that is in contradiction to the Independent Schools Act, the regulations associated with the Independent Schools Act or the conditions for approval, the Ministry may order and/or make an administrative decision to impose other, stricter sanctions.

## **The Act relating to Primary and Secondary Education (the Education Act)**

Through the Act relating to Primary and Secondary Education (the Education Act) all young people have the right to attend primary and secondary education. The act precludes all types of discrimination implicitly in that it gives access for all young people regardless of their race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, economic condition or birth. More information on the legal framework is provided in the section on general indicators above.

### **Primary and Lower secondary level**

Admission to education on the primary and lower secondary level is regulated in the Education Act section 2-1 which states that:

“Children and young people are obliged to attend primary and lower secondary education, and have the right to a public primary and lower secondary education in accordance with this Act and regulations pursuant to the Act. The obligation may be met by means of the publicly maintained primary and lower secondary schools or by means of other equivalent education.

The right to primary and lower secondary education applies when it is probable that a child will reside in Norway for a period of more than three months. The obligation to attend primary and lower secondary education commences as soon as residence has lasted for longer than three months. The Ministry may in special cases exempt pupils from this obligation.”

All residents in Norway have the right to primary education when it is likely that they will reside in Norway for a period of more than three months. After the initial three months the obligation to attend primary and lower secondary education is applicable.

For asylum seekers this implies that they, while the application is being processed by the immigrant authorities, have a right and an obligation to attend primary education.

Reports submitted by schools in a survey from 2004 on underage asylum seekers who are in Norway without their family indicate that this group does not always get the education they are entitled to according to Norwegian law. There are several possible explanations for this and it is an area that needs to be further addressed.

Primary education is furthermore free of charge. This is stated in the Education Act section 2-15:

Pupils have a right to free public primary and lower secondary education. The municipality may not require pupils or their parents to cover the costs in connection with primary and lower secondary education, for example costs associated with teaching materials, transport during school hours, stays at school camps, excursions or other outings that are part of primary and lower secondary education.

By legally guaranteeing that the primary and lower secondary education is free of charge, access to education on this level is made attainable even for victims of social exclusion, poverty and for asylum seekers who often have limited monetary resources when they arrive.

### **Upper secondary education and training**

The right to education on the upper secondary level is regulated in section 3-1 of the Education Act which states that:

“Young people who have completed the primary and lower secondary school or equivalent instruction have, on application, the right to three years’ full-time upper secondary education. In subjects where the syllabus requires a period of instruction longer than three years, such young people have the right to instruction in accordance with the period of instruction laid down in the curriculum and the subject syllabuses. Young people who have reached the age of 15 years shall make their own applications for entrance to the upper secondary school.”

All young people who have completed the primary and lower secondary school have a right to attend upper secondary school. Admittance to the different schools are based on academic achievement. Race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, economic condition and birth are not factors in the application process.

In the consideration of the fourth Norwegian report of 2005 on the implementation of the convention on economic, social and cultural rights, the committee on economic, social and cultural rights pinpointed asylum seekers’ right to upper secondary education as a subject of concern. The concern is directed at this subject because the regulations

for the admittance of asylum seekers to upper secondary education are different than the regulations that apply for primary and lower secondary schools.

In the regulations to the Education Act section 6-9, the criteria for having the legal right to attend upper secondary education is having a residence permit. The counties themselves can, however, grant admittance for underage asylum seekers to their respective upper secondary schools. (see section 6-9 second paragraph.) The extent of this practice is, however, not fully known. The reception centres for asylum seekers in collaboration with The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration regularly report statistically and factually on the situation for the asylum seekers. In addition, each asylum seeker has an individual plan concerning his or her future as regards, inter alia, education, training, future job prospects. It is the responsibility of the municipalities to follow up the reports from these centres/The Directorate of Immigration.

The free of charge principle in upper secondary education is regulated in section 3-1 of the Education act in the ninth paragraph. It states:

Courses provided at publicly-maintained upper secondary schools or training establishments are free of charge. The county authority may require pupils, apprentices and trainees to provide teaching materials and equipment for their own use that are normally needed for the course they are attending. The county authority may require pupils to contribute to the cost of copying such materials. The Ministry issues further regulations.

Pupils cannot be charged with tuition fees in upper secondary education and training. They must, however, purchase their own books and teaching materials. The expenses are therefore limited to these costs only.

The legislation cited above, and especially section 2-1 and 3-1 of the Education Act, are vital parts of achieving education for all. In this respect the free of charge principle in section 2-15 and 3-1 of the Education Act is also an important part of reaching this goal.

#### Additional information on bilingual and multilingual education

Mother tongue instruction may be provided at a school other than that normally attended by the pupil. When mother tongue instruction and subject teaching in both the mother tongue and Norwegian cannot be provided by its own teaching personnel, the municipality shall as far as possible provide for other instruction adapted to the pupils' requirements.

Both Section 9 a of the Education Act and the Quality Framework in the national *Curriculum for Knowledge Promotion in Primary and Secondary Education and Training* state that all pupils in primary and secondary schools have a right to a good physical and psycho-social environment that promotes health, well-being and learning. All members of school staff are obliged to ensure that pupils are not subjected to harassment through offensive words and actions such as bullying, violence, racism and discrimination. School owners (municipalities and county councils) are obliged to ensure the adoption of regulations at each primary, lower secondary or upper secondary school, cf Sections 2- 9 and 3-7 of the Education Act. The educational principles emphasise that schools are responsible for

developing their pupils' social competence by making it possible for them, when working with the different subjects and elsewhere in the school organisation, to practice various types of interaction and dealing with problems and conflicts. (Please see list of web pages in Annex 1.)

#### Additional information on the 50 hours of tuition in social studies for adult immigrants

In addition to 250 hours of tuition in Norwegian language (where elements of social study topics are integrated), course participants are offered 50 hours of social studies in a language they understand. The topics included in the tuition are the following (broken down for the most relevant topic):

1. *Immigrant in Norway* (introduction)
2. *Democracy, welfare and values:*
  - Democracy
  - Citizenship, the state and government's structure and mandate
  - Human rights
  - Freedom of speech
  - Criminal proceedings and prosecution in Norway
  - Welfare arrangements
  - The Christian and humanistic cultural heritage of Norway
3. *Health*
4. *School, education and qualification*
5. *Work, working life and labour market*
6. *Children and family*
7. *Population structure and natural conditions*

## **2. Additional information on the gender perspective**

### **Education and training of women and men**

Boys and girls make different choices, and the educational system in Norway is highly gender-segregated, especially in secondary schools and colleges.

However, in education at university level there are currently signs of a descending gender segregation. Firstly, the proportion of women students has increased, from 48 per cent in 1980 to more than 60 per cent in 2008. The choice of subjects has also changed. An increasing number of girls are studying law (50 per cent), economic and administrative subjects (50 per cent), medicine (60 per cent), and scientific and technical subjects.

No parallel trends exist towards an increased stream of male students into the traditionally female-dominated education. At the same time that more women have gone into higher education, the educational choices among men have changed little.

The distribution of boys and girls in occupational education programmes in secondary education follows a stronger traditional gender pattern with small signs for change. Building and industrial technology, electrical studies, engineering and industrial production are typical "boy subjects" with over 90 per cent boys. In programmes for nursing, social service and for design and craft there are only about 10 per cent boys. Boys and girls also choose along traditional gender lines when they apply to higher

education at colleges. Men dominate in the fields of science and technology, women in educational sciences, healthcare and social studies.

Another characteristic of schools is that boys from elementary and secondary schools generally have lower academic scores compared to girls. Numbers show that boys on average lay half a grade below girls at the completion of elementary school. This difference between sexes was also considerable twenty years ago.

A change in educational choices made by individuals is necessary in order to improve the gender divided labour market. The challenges ahead will be to continue efforts to counteract gender-traditional choices of study in upper secondary education and also to pursue projects aimed at increasing girls' interest in scientific subjects and technology.

Policy:

Action Plan for Equality in Early Childhood Education and Primary Education (2008-2010)

In the spring of 2008, The Ministry of Education and Research laid out *Action Plan for Equality in Early Childhood Education and Primary Education*. The action-plan proposes a number of suggestions in order to improve the balance between genders, both in the educational choices that children and teenagers make, as well as the gender balance of employees within the sector. The objective is to change the traditional understanding concerning education and job choices, and this would be directed towards both genders whether they are pupils, students or jobseekers.

### **3. Additional information on action for the promotion of Human Rights Education**

#### **The strategic plan *Equal Education in Practice!***

The strategic plan *Equal Education in Practice!* has been in effect since 2004. A revised edition was published in February 2007. One of the measures in the plan is to incorporate questions concerning prejudice, discrimination and racism into the Pupil Survey. This is now accomplished.

#### **The Directorate's website for democracy and co-citizenship**

The Directorate has developed a website for democracy and co-citizenship (please see list of web pages in Annex 1). Under the topic pages for teachers/leaders, teaching resources, information on education for democratic citizenship and information on meetings and conferences can be found. Norway also participates in the Council of Europe's project *Education for democratic citizenship (EDC)*.

#### **Manifesto against Bullying**

All pupils are entitled to a good physical and psycho-social learning environment that promotes good health, well-being and learning. No pupils should be exposed to insulting language or actions, such as bullying, violence, discrimination and exclusion. This is the fundamental idea behind the "Manifesto against Bullying" and two school programmes (the Olweus programme and the Zero programme) developed to assist schools in fighting bullying and harassment.

Manifesto against bullying was first signed in 2002 between Norwegian education authorities, the Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS), the National

Parents' Committee for Primary and Lower Secondary Education and the Union of Education, Norway. The Government wishes to continue its cooperation on the Manifesto with central national partners.

For some years, schools have also been given access to the school-wide models PALS (Norwegian abbreviation for Positive behaviour, supportive learning environment and interaction in school) and LP (Norwegian abbreviation for Learning environment and educational analysis) to contribute to creating good learning environments and prevention of and problem behaviour. Through the Directorate, Norway is leading an OECD network focused on bullying.

### **Values in the day-to-day life at school**

From 2002 to 2005 the Directorate was responsible for a programme called “Verdier i skolehverdagen” (Values in everyday-life at school). Approximately 250 schools and several municipalities implemented various value projects in a collaboration project between five counties. Many of the projects focused on human rights, discrimination, tolerance and racism within the context of the learning environment.