



# Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

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## Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

### Concluding observations on the initial report of Norway\*

#### I. Introduction

1. The Committee considered the initial report of Norway (CRPD/C/NOR/1 and Corr.1) at its 455th and 456th meetings (see CRPD/C/SR.455 and 456), held on 25 and 26 March 2019. It adopted the present concluding observations at its 471st meeting, held on 4 April 2019.
2. The Committee welcomes the initial report of Norway, which was prepared in accordance with the Committee's reporting guidelines, and thanks the State party for its written replies (CRPD/C/NOR/Q/1/Add.1) to the list of issues prepared by the Committee (CRPD/C/NOR/Q/1).
3. The Committee appreciates the constructive dialogue held during the consideration of the report and commends the State party for the strength of its high-level delegation, which included representatives of the relevant government ministries and departments.

#### II. Positive aspects

4. The Committee welcomes the progress achieved by the State party in implementing the Convention. In particular, it appreciates the adoption of the following legislative, policy and administrative measures:
  - (a) The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act in January 2018;
  - (b) The action plan for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons on safety, diversity and openness (2017–2020), which features a programme aimed at incorporating issues relating to disability, sexuality and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons into the online information service run by the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs;
  - (c) The strategy to prevent hate speech (2016–2020), aimed at combating hate speech based on disability, among other issues;
  - (d) The 2018 National Inclusion Initiative, which includes persons with disabilities as a target group;
  - (e) The Patients' and Users' Rights Act, in 2015, establishing in law the right to user-controlled personal assistance.

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\* Adopted by the Committee at its twenty-first session (11 March–5 April 2019).



### III. Principal areas of concern and recommendations

#### A. General principles and obligations (arts. 1–4)

5. The Committee is concerned about:

- (a) The fact that the Convention has not been incorporated into national law and there is no comprehensive strategy or action plan for the implementation of the Convention, with timelines and budgets, developed in consultation with organizations of persons with disabilities;
- (b) The interpretative declarations made on articles 12, 14 and 25 of the Convention;
- (c) The fact that the State party has not yet ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention;
- (d) The slow progress in replacing the medical model of disability with the human rights model of disability;
- (e) The differences between the services offered by the different municipalities to persons with disabilities;
- (f) The lack of sustainable financial support for organizations of persons with disabilities.

6. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

- (a) **Incorporate the Convention into national law, revise its legislation in line with the Convention and develop a comprehensive strategy and action plan with transparent and sustainable financial resources for the implementation of the Convention, with clear timelines, in close, meaningful and fully accessible consultation with organizations of persons with disabilities;**
- (b) **Consider withdrawing its interpretative declarations on articles 12, 14 and 25 of the Convention;**
- (c) **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention;**
- (d) **Adopt the human rights model of disability in all regulations relating to the assessment of disability, in accordance with the criteria and principles provided in articles 1 to 3 of the Convention;**
- (e) **Take all measures necessary to reduce the differences between the services offered by the different municipalities to persons with disabilities through national regulations, standards and guidelines;**
- (f) **Provide sustainable financial support for organizations of persons with disabilities.**

#### B. Specific rights (arts. 5–30)

##### **Equality and non-discrimination (art. 5)**

7. The Committee is concerned that:

- (a) There is a lack of effective legislation and mechanisms to address multiple and intersectional forms of discrimination against persons with disabilities, especially against persons with disabilities belonging to ethnic minorities;
- (b) There is poor access to legal aid in discrimination cases;
- (c) The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Tribunal has limited powers to grant restitution and compensation;
- (d) Persons with disabilities with a Sami background and children with disabilities from families with an immigrant background have poor access to public services due to communication problems, cultural differences and poor knowledge of the welfare system;

(e) There is no specific research on the living conditions of persons with disabilities belonging to national minorities, including Roma and Tater or Romani communities.

**8. The Committee, in line with its general comment No. 6 (2018) on equality and non-discrimination, recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Adopt the legal and other measures necessary to provide for explicit protection from multiple and intersectional forms of discrimination based on age, disability, national origin, sex, gender, ethnicity and migratory status, and for effective sanctions against perpetrators;**

(b) **Take effective measures to provide legal aid in all discrimination cases and increase the resources of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud to enable it to assist persons with disabilities in filing complaints to the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Tribunal, including in cases of multiple and intersectional discrimination;**

(c) **Amend the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act to expand the range of remedies available to complainants in disability-related discrimination cases before the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Tribunal;**

(d) **Carry out awareness-raising campaigns and provide training to inform indigenous persons with disabilities, persons with disabilities from ethnic minorities and immigrants with disabilities of their rights and how to access them;**

(e) **Conduct a study on the living conditions of persons with disabilities belonging to minorities, such as the Roma and Tater or Romani communities, in order to design and adopt appropriate legislative, administrative and practical steps to address inequality and discrimination.**

#### **Women with disabilities (art. 6)**

9. The Committee is concerned that:

(a) Women with disabilities face multiple and intersectional forms of discrimination and that there is a lack of measures to prevent and combat different forms of discrimination;

(b) Women with disabilities are less likely to be in full-time employment than men with disabilities;

(c) A gender perspective is not included in disability studies and the rights of women and girls with disabilities are missing from gender equality and disability agendas.

**10. In line with its general comment No. 3 (2016) on women and girls with disabilities and in view of targets 5.1, 5.2 and 5.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee recommends that the State party strengthen measures to address multiple and intersectional forms of discrimination against women and girls with disabilities and that it, in particular:**

(a) **Implement effective legal, policy and practical measures to address multiple and intersectional forms of discrimination;**

(b) **Take specific measures to promote full-time employment opportunities in the public and private sectors for women with disabilities, including by improving their access to education, skills development and lifelong learning, with the active involvement of employers;**

(c) **Mainstream a gender perspective into disability studies and include the rights of women and girls with disabilities in gender equality and disability agendas.**

#### **Children with disabilities (art. 7)**

11. The Committee is concerned about:

(a) The insufficient recognition of the principle of the best interests of the child in the Education Act, beyond the chapter on the school environment and bullying, and in the Patients' and Users' Rights Act;

- (b) The institutionalization of children with disabilities;
- (c) The unequal access to treatment, care and other opportunities for children with disabilities with migrant or refugee parents, children with disabilities with a Sami background, and children with disabilities belonging to national minorities, including the Roma and Tater or Romani communities;
- (d) The lack of accessible mechanisms to ensure that children with disabilities enjoy their right to be heard, to have their views taken into account on matters affecting them, particularly in education, beyond the issue of the school environment and bullying, and to participate in decision-making processes affecting their lives, with respect for their evolving capacities; and the lack of accessible complaint mechanisms for children with disabilities.

**12. The Committee recommends that the State party:**

- (a) Incorporate the principle of the best interests of the child into all legislation and judicial and administrative decision-making procedures affecting children, including the Education Act, beyond its chapter on the school environment and bullying, and the Patients' and Users' Rights Act;**
- (b) Take measures to guarantee the right of children with disabilities to be cared for by their parents, in alternative care within the wider family or within the community in a family setting;**
- (c) Take all children with disabilities into account in legislation, policies and measures under the principle of equal opportunity and community inclusion, paying particular attention to children with disabilities with migrant or refugee parents, children with disabilities with a Sami background and children with disabilities belonging to national minorities, including the Roma and Tater or Romani communities;**
- (d) Promote comprehensive strategies and accessible mechanisms for the full and effective participation of children with disabilities in decision-making processes affecting their lives, guaranteeing their right to have their views taken into account on matters affecting them, particularly in education, beyond the issue of the school environment and bullying, respecting their evolving capacities and ensuring that they have access to accessible and child-friendly complaint mechanisms.**

**Awareness-raising (art. 8)**

13. The Committee is concerned about the persistence of negative stereotypes, prejudices and language concerning persons with disabilities. It is also concerned about the lack of comprehensive and innovative awareness-raising programmes on the rights of persons with disabilities.

**14. The Committee recommends that the State party, in collaboration with organizations of persons with disabilities, develop and implement innovative public awareness-raising and education programmes for the media, public officials, judges and lawyers, the police, social workers and the general public, with the aim of raising awareness and promoting the human rights model of disability and addressing negative stereotypes, prejudices and language concerning persons with disabilities in society, including on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity.**

**Accessibility (art. 9)**

15. The Committee is concerned that:

- (a) The Planning and Building Act does not establish deadlines or a budget for implementing the universal design principle for existing buildings and modes of transport, and that the action plan for universal design for 2015–2019 also lacks clear deadlines for implementation;
- (b) The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act does not contain any specific provisions on access to goods, services and information and does not cover workplaces that are not accessed by the general public;

(c) There is no law governing universal access to goods and services, including information and communication services, for persons with disabilities who cannot use self-service options, and the regulations on the universal design of information and communications technology (ICT) are limited to enterprises aimed at the general public;

(d) There are no specific and effective measures or sanctions in relation to the implementation of all legislation that provides for access to the built environment and information and communication services, including ICT systems.

**16. In the light of article 9 of the Convention and the Committee's general comment No. 2 (2014) on accessibility, the Committee recommends that the State party, in its efforts to meet Sustainable Development Goal 9 and targets 11.2 and 11.7:**

(a) **Remove all existing barriers preventing access to buildings and services open to the public, such as transportation and information and communication services, including by promoting the universal design of goods and services, and the use of Braille, captioning, sign language interpretation, and Easy Read and other alternative formats and modes of communication to facilitate full accessibility for persons with disabilities;**

(b) **Introduce regulations to set deadlines and concrete measures with earmarked funding for the universal design of existing buildings, prioritizing primary and secondary schools, and modes of transport in the action plan for universal design 2015–2019;**

(c) **Take legislative and practical measures to guarantee access to goods and services, including information and communication services, for persons with disabilities who cannot use self-service options, and ensure that the implementation of the universal design principle also applies to workplaces that are not accessed by the general public;**

(d) **Revise the regulations on the universal design of ICT by introducing a requirement for all enterprises that serve the general public to provide individualized services to persons with disabilities when necessary, so as to ensure the accessibility of information and communication services, including ICT;**

(e) **Take specific and effective measures and establish sanctions relating to the implementation of all legislation that provide for access to the built environment and information and communication services, including ICT systems.**

#### **Situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies (art. 11)**

17. The Committee is concerned about the disproportionate impact of situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies on persons with disabilities, and about the lack of comprehensive disaster risk reduction policies that include persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in their planning, implementation and monitoring processes.

**18. The Committee recommends that the State party, in accordance with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, through active consultations with the representative organizations of persons with disabilities:**

(a) **Develop an emergency information and warning system that is fully available, free and accessible throughout the State party for all persons with disabilities regardless of the type of impairment;**

(b) **Adopt a comprehensive disaster risk reduction strategy that guarantees accessibility for and the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all situations of risk.**

#### **Equal recognition before the law (art. 12)**

19. The Committee is concerned that:

(a) The substituted decision-making regime has not been yet replaced with a supported decision-making regime, including for persons with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities;

- (b) County governors lack sufficient knowledge of the human rights model of disability and respect for the full legal capacity of persons with disabilities, and do not systematically carry out supervision of the persons still appointed as guardians;
- (c) Persons who receive support lack training to help them to decide when they need less support or when they no longer require support in the exercise of their legal capacity;
- (d) There is a lack of effective safeguards for persons with disabilities in the exercise of their legal capacity and a lack of knowledge about the scope of support for decision-making.

**20. Recalling its general comment No. 1 (2014) on equal recognition before the law, and given that the Guardianship Act is under revision, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

- (a) Consider systemic change by replacing guardianship and all other forms of substituted decision-making with supported decision-making for all persons with disabilities, regardless of their support requirements;**
- (b) Repeal the Guardianship Act, which allows for the deprivation of legal capacity based on impairment, ensure that no person is placed under guardianship and increase training on the recognition of the full legal capacity of all persons with disabilities;**
- (c) Establish a legal procedure aimed at restoring the full legal capacity of all persons with disabilities, and, in the adoption of a supported decision-making regime, ensure respect for the autonomy, will and preferences of the person concerned;**
- (d) Create appropriate and effective safeguards for the exercise of legal capacity that are monitored and supervised at the county level to ensure respect for the rights, will and preferences of persons with disabilities and to protect them from undue influence;**
- (e) Conduct capacity-building activities for public officials on the right of persons with disabilities to equal recognition before the law and on supported decision-making arrangements, and for persons receiving support to help them to decide when they need less support or when they no longer require support in the exercise of their legal capacity.**

#### **Access to justice (art. 13)**

21. The Committee is concerned about:

- (a) The lack of procedural and age-appropriate accommodation in the justice and law enforcement sectors, especially for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing and persons with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities;
- (b) The current legal aid system, which does not provide access to free legal aid for persons with disabilities, particularly for those still living in institutions, and the fact that education, health-care services and non-discrimination are not prioritized in the Legal Aid Act.

**22. The Committee recommends that the State party:**

- (a) Ensure procedural and age-appropriate accommodation in the justice and law enforcement sectors;**
- (b) Revise its current legal aid scheme, ensuring the provision of free legal aid for persons with disabilities, including for those still living in institutions, and ensure that education, health-care services and non-discrimination are prioritized in the Legal Aid Act;**
- (c) Adhere to article 13 of the Convention in the implementation of target 16.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals.**

#### **Liberty and security of the person (art. 14)**

23. The Committee is concerned about:

- (a) Legal provisions, including in the Mental Health Act, the Patients' and Users' Rights Act and the Health and Care Services Act, that allow for the deprivation of liberty and non-consensual treatment and restraint of persons with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities;
- (b) The use of coercive methods, such as restraints, isolation, segregation, involuntary treatment and other intrusive methods, for persons with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities.

**24. The Committee recommends that the State party:**

- (a) **In line with the Committee's guidelines on article 14 (2015), repeal all legal provisions allowing for involuntary deprivation of liberty based on perceived or actual impairment and the forced treatment of persons with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities, and provide effective remedies for persons with disabilities who have been deprived of their liberty on the basis of actual or perceived impairment;**
- (b) **End the use of coercive methods, such as restraints, isolation, segregation, involuntary treatment and other intrusive methods, for persons with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities, particularly those in detention and older persons, especially those with dementia and in nursing homes, by, inter alia, training staff, prioritizing community-based and peer-led support initiatives, and strengthening procedural guarantees and control;**
- (c) **Be guided by its obligations under article 14 of the Convention and the Committee's guidelines on article 14 throughout the regional discussions concerning the draft additional protocol to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Dignity of the Human Being with regard to the Application of Biology and Medicine, entitled "The protection of human rights and dignity of persons with mental disorder with regard to involuntary placement and involuntary treatment".**

**Freedom from torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (art. 15)**

25. The Committee notes that the State party is assessing the use of electroconvulsive treatment. It is concerned that:

- (a) The involuntary administration of electroconvulsive treatment is permitted;
- (b) Persons with disabilities do not receive sufficient and accessible information to inform their decisions or on the options for lodging complaints in cases of forced treatment, and they fear retribution if they do so.

**26. The Committee recommends that the State party:**

- (a) **Prohibit the forced administration of intrusive and irreversible treatments such as electroconvulsive therapy;**
- (b) **Establish clear and effective procedural guarantees for persons with disabilities, including provisions in law for supported decision-making and effective complaint mechanisms, and ensure that persons with disabilities have effective access to legal advice, including free legal aid, and to obligatory and accessible information on their rights.**

**Freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse (art. 16)**

27. The Committee is concerned about:

- (a) The lack of training for families, caregivers, health-care personnel and law enforcement officers on recognizing all forms of exploitation, violence and abuse against persons with disabilities;
- (b) Cases of abuse, exploitation and violence, including sexual violence, against persons with disabilities, particularly women and girls with disabilities, which are often unreported and for which no reparation is therefore provided, and the lack of specific measures to protect women and girls with disabilities, especially those with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities, from gender-based violence;

(c) The high number of persons with disabilities who are subjected to bullying, hate speech and hate crimes, whose cases are often neither identified nor investigated as hate crimes.

28. **The Committee recommends that the State party take measures to:**

(a) **Provide regular training for families, caregivers, health-care personnel and law enforcement officers on recognizing all forms of exploitation, violence and abuse;**

(b) **Conduct investigations into all allegations of violence and abuse, including sexual abuse, of persons with disabilities, especially gender-based violence against women and girls with disabilities, particularly those with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities; ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice and impose appropriate sanctions; and ensure that victims have access to immediate protection and support services and information, including mainstream services and shelter facilities, and complaint mechanisms and reparation, without discrimination, including individualized support to prevent the denial of reasonable accommodation;**

(c) **Take all measures necessary to prevent persons with disabilities from being subjected to bullying, hate speech and hate crimes, and ensure that the law enforcement and judicial systems identify, investigate and sanction hate crimes against persons with disabilities.**

#### **Protecting the integrity of the person (art. 17)**

29. The Committee is concerned that persons with disabilities, including women and children, reportedly continue to be subjected to involuntary medical treatment, including forced abortion and sterilization.

30. **The Committee recommends that the State party adopt effective measures to ensure respect for the right of persons with disabilities, particularly women and children, to provide informed and prior consent to medical treatment, including abortion and sterilization, regardless of the severity and type of impairment, and provide efficient support mechanisms for decision-making.**

#### **Living independently and being included in the community (art. 19)**

31. The Committee is concerned about:

(a) The lack of an action plan for the deinstitutionalization of persons with disabilities with clear timelines and a budget, and the emphasis on the resettlement of persons with disabilities in shared housing rather than in fully independent living arrangements;

(b) The insufficient efforts to provide resources for the development of support services, particularly user-controlled personal assistance services, in municipalities;

(c) The current regulatory framework allowing for coercive health-care and drug rehabilitation measures;

(d) The fact that persons who are deaf or hard of hearing do not always receive interpreting services outside of office hours.

32. **With reference to the Committee's general comment No. 5 (2017) on living independently and being included in the community, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Develop, implement and provide adequate human, financial and technical resources for an effective deinstitutionalization plan, particularly for implementing the transformation to independent living arrangements, with a clear time frame and benchmarks, involving persons with disabilities through their representative organizations at all stages;**

(b) **Adopt the measures necessary to ensure that persons with disabilities have a legal entitlement to a sufficient personal budget for independent living, which takes into account the additional costs related to disability and, at the same time, redirect**



resources from institutions to community-based services, while increasing the availability of personal assistance;

(c) **Adopt legal and practical measures to end coercive measures in health and care services, which should guide the assessment of the State party's multidisciplinary committee on coercion due in June 2019;**

(d) **Provide adequate human and financial resources to provide persons who are deaf or hard of hearing with interpreting services when needed, including outside of office hours.**

#### **Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information (art. 21)**

33. The Committee is concerned about:

(a) The insufficient provision of assistive technologies and information in accessible formats, such as Easy Read, plain language, captioning, sign language, Braille, and audio descriptions, particularly in official interactions;

(b) The lack of accessibility of most live broadcast television and mass media;

(c) The provision of the Broadcasting Act that requires only commercial television broadcasters with more than five per cent of viewers to caption their broadcasts for a limited time, from 6 to 11 p.m.

34. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Increase the provision of assistive technologies and information in accessible formats that are appropriate for persons with disabilities, including accessible websites, sign language, captioning, Braille, Easy Read and plain language, in relation to all public services;**

(b) **Increase the accessibility of mass media, particularly in live broadcasting;**

(c) **Strengthen the provisions of the Broadcasting Act to ensure that all broadcasters provide captioning at all times.**

#### **Respect for home and the family (art. 23)**

35. The Committee is concerned that:

(a) The State party does not provide adequate support for parents with disabilities to bring up their children and exercise their parental responsibilities;

(b) Children may be removed from their parents and placed in care homes or taken by child welfare services on the basis of their own or their parents' disabilities.

36. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Ensure that accessible and inclusive community support and safeguard mechanisms are available for parents with disabilities to support them in the exercise of their parental responsibilities;**

(b) **Take measures to ensure that the removal of children from their parents on the basis of their parents' or their own disabilities is prohibited explicitly in the law.**

#### **Education (art. 24)**

37. The Committee is concerned about:

(a) The lack of effective legal mechanisms, including anti-discrimination provisions, to ensure that persons with disabilities can access inclusive education without discrimination, and the fact that reasonable accommodation is denied in public and private schools;

(b) The lack of standards to outline the process for the provision of individualized support in education institutions, including the provision of assistants and support staff;

(c) The fact that many children with disabilities do not receive an adequate standard of education and have low learning outcomes, and that a large proportion of special education services are provided by unskilled assistants and teachers without the appropriate training;

(d) The lack of accessible complaint mechanisms for children with disabilities and the lack of sanctions for non-compliance with the required standards;

(e) That fact that many students with disabilities do not receive adequate training in basic skills, such as social development and communication skills, which would strengthen their learning capacities in a suitable environment.

**38. In line with the Committee's general comment No. 4 (2016) on the right to inclusive education, and targets 4.5 and 4.8 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

**(a) Strengthen anti-discrimination provisions to explicitly cover disability-based discrimination in education and to provide an accessible and effective complaint mechanism;**

**(b) Adopt national standards for the provision of effective individualized support measures in mainstream education, and allocate sufficient financial and human resources to ensure that persons with disabilities receive the support required to facilitate inclusive education;**

**(c) Ensure that all teachers have the appropriate skills for individualized instruction and ensure that individualized support measures do not entail costs for parents of children with disabilities;**

**(d) Introduce legislation based on the human rights model of disability that fully complies with article 24 of the Convention in order to ensure quality inclusive education for all children;**

**(e) Take measures to guarantee that students with disabilities receive training in the skills necessary to enhance their learning capability, in an environment adapted to suit their specific requirements within an inclusive education system.**

#### **Health (art. 25)**

39. The Committee is concerned about the lack of:

(a) Awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities among medical professionals, and that health-care services and facilities remain largely inaccessible and unavailable to persons with disabilities, including persons with disabilities still living in institutions;

(b) Accessibility of information on medical services and facilities, particularly relating to sexual and reproductive health and rights, for women with disabilities.

**40. The Committee recommends that the State party adhere to article 25 of the Convention in its efforts to achieve targets 3.7 and 3.8 of the Sustainable Development Goals, and in particular:**

**(a) Strengthen measures to ensure the accessibility of health-care services and facilities in the community, including for persons with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities and those that require extensive support, and provide information in accessible formats;**

**(b) Raise awareness about the rights of persons with disabilities among medical professionals;**

**(c) Take measures to provide persons with disabilities, especially women, with information in accessible formats on accessible health-care services and facilities, including in the area of sexual and reproductive health and rights.**

#### **Work and employment (art. 27)**

41. The Committee is concerned that the efforts to promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the open labour market have been limited and have had little impact, and that

intersectional inequalities remain. It is also concerned about the persistence of discrimination based on disability, including the denial of reasonable accommodation.

**42. The Committee recommends that the State party, in close consultation with organizations of persons with disabilities, adopt measures to increase the level of employment of persons with disabilities in the open labour market, in line with the Convention and in view of target 8.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals, and that it ensure productive employment and decent work for all, including persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value. The Committee also recommends that the State party:**

- (a) Combat stereotypes and prejudices against persons with disabilities in the labour market and adopt regulations to address disability-based discrimination, including the denial of reasonable accommodation;**
- (b) Establish a requirement for universal design in the workplace for employers in the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act, and prepare and implement a strategy on accessibility through universal design of the physical environment and universal ICT in the workplace;**
- (c) Make active, targeted and systematic efforts to promote the employment of persons with disabilities in the private and public labour markets;**
- (d) Give a clear mandate and sufficient resources to the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration to improve employment opportunities for persons with disabilities who are interested in entering the labour market;**
- (e) Consider extending the target for five per cent of new employees in the public sector to be persons with disabilities to the private sector.**

#### **Adequate standard of living and social protection (art. 28)**

43. The Committee is concerned that current financial support schemes are not sufficient to guarantee an adequate standard of living for persons with disabilities and to cover additional disability-related costs.

**44. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that social protection policies and programmes ensure the necessary income levels by taking into account the additional costs faced by persons with disabilities.**

#### **Participation in political and public life (art. 29)**

45. The Committee is concerned that voting procedures, facilities and materials are not accessible. It is also concerned about the low level of representation and participation of persons with disabilities in elections and their low representation in elected and appointed bodies.

**46. The Committee recommends that the State party, in consultation with organizations of persons with disabilities:**

- (a) Ensure that electoral procedures, facilities and materials are inclusive of and accessible to all persons with disabilities, including by providing materials in sign language, Braille and Easy Read formats and considering the introduction of accessible electronic voting;**
- (b) Promote the participation of persons with disabilities, including women with disabilities, in political life and public decision-making with measurable targets and indicators.**

#### **Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport (art. 30)**

47. The Committee is concerned that persons with disabilities, particularly children, face barriers to participating in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport on an equal basis with others. It is also concerned that the State party has not yet ratified the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled.

48. **The Committee recommends that the State party take all steps necessary to secure and promote inclusive and accessible facilities for recreational, leisure and sporting activities, including at World Heritage Sites of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, providing equal access and ensuring the participation of persons with disabilities, particularly children. It also encourages the State party to promptly ratify the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled.**

### **C. Specific obligations (arts. 31–33)**

#### **Statistics and data collection (art. 31)**

49. The Committee is concerned about the lack of consistent statistics on persons with disabilities and the lack of human rights indicators in the available data, which makes it difficult for the State party to develop appropriate policies. The Committee is also concerned about the limited extent to which disability-related indicators are effectively applied in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

50. **In view of target 17.18 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

- (a) **Rely on the methodology of the Washington Group on Disability Statistics to collect, analyse and disseminate data on its population disaggregated by sex, age, ethnic origin, type of impairment, socioeconomic status, employment, barriers encountered and place of residence, and data on cases of discrimination or violence against persons with disabilities;**
- (b) **Develop evidence-based policies to respond to the situation of persons with disabilities, in consultation with their representative organizations.**

#### **International cooperation (art. 32)**

51. The Committee notes that in 2018, the State party introduced the marker system of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in relation to its international cooperation activities. However, the Committee is concerned about the lack of information on the effective involvement of organizations of persons with disabilities as development cooperation partners.

52. **The Committee recommends that the State party adopt measures to ensure the full and effective participation and inclusion of and consultation with persons with disabilities through their representative organizations in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and projects developed as part of international cooperation efforts, in line with the Committee’s general comment No. 7 (2018) on the participation of persons with disabilities, including children with disabilities, through their representative organizations, in the implementation and monitoring of the Convention.**

## **IV. Follow-up**

#### **Dissemination of information**

53. The Committee emphasizes the importance of all the recommendations contained in the present concluding observations. With regard to urgent measures that must be taken, the Committee would like to draw the State party’s attention to the recommendations contained in paragraphs 6, on the national implementation of the Convention, and 20, on equal recognition before the law.

54. The Committee requests the State party to implement the recommendations contained in the present concluding observations. It recommends that the State party transmit the concluding observations for consideration and action to members of the Government and parliament, officials in relevant ministries, the judiciary and members of relevant professional groups, such as education, medical and legal professionals, as

well as to local authorities, the private sector and the media, using modern social communication strategies.

55. The Committee strongly encourages the State party to involve civil society organizations, in particular organizations of persons with disabilities, in the preparation of its periodic report.

56. The Committee requests the State party to disseminate the present concluding observations widely, including to non-governmental organizations and representative organizations of persons with disabilities, and to persons with disabilities themselves and members of their families, in national and minority languages, including sign language, and in accessible formats, and to make them available on the government website on human rights.

#### Next periodic report

57. The Committee requests the State party to submit its combined second and third periodic reports by 3 July 2023 and to include in them information on the implementation of the recommendations made in the present concluding observations. The Committee also requests the State party to consider submitting the above-mentioned reports under the Committee's simplified reporting procedure, according to which the Committee prepares a list of issues at least one year prior to the due date set for the report of a State party. The replies of a State party to such a list of issues constitute its report.

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