

White Paper no. 12

(2020–2021)

Report to the Storting (White Paper)

National minorities in Norway

A comprehensive policy

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1. Introduction

A national minority is an ethnic, religious and/or linguistic minority with long-standing ties to the country. Kvens/Norwegian Finns, Jews, Forest Finns, Roma and Romani/Tater people have national minority status in Norway.

A White Paper on national minorities has been presented previously, White Paper no. 15 (2000–2001) *National minorities in Norway – About state policies in respect of Jews, Kvens, Roma, Romani and Forest Finns*. This White Paper was a follow-up Norway's ratification of the Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (the Framework Convention) in 1999. The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (the Minority Language Charter) came into force for Norway in 1998. Kven, Romanes (the language of the Roma) and Romani (the language of the Romani/Tater people) are recognised as minority languages in Norway under the Minority Language Charter. White Paper no. 15 (2000–2001) was the first comprehensive review of policy in respect of national minorities. It also presented the principles that would form the basis for policy in this respect.

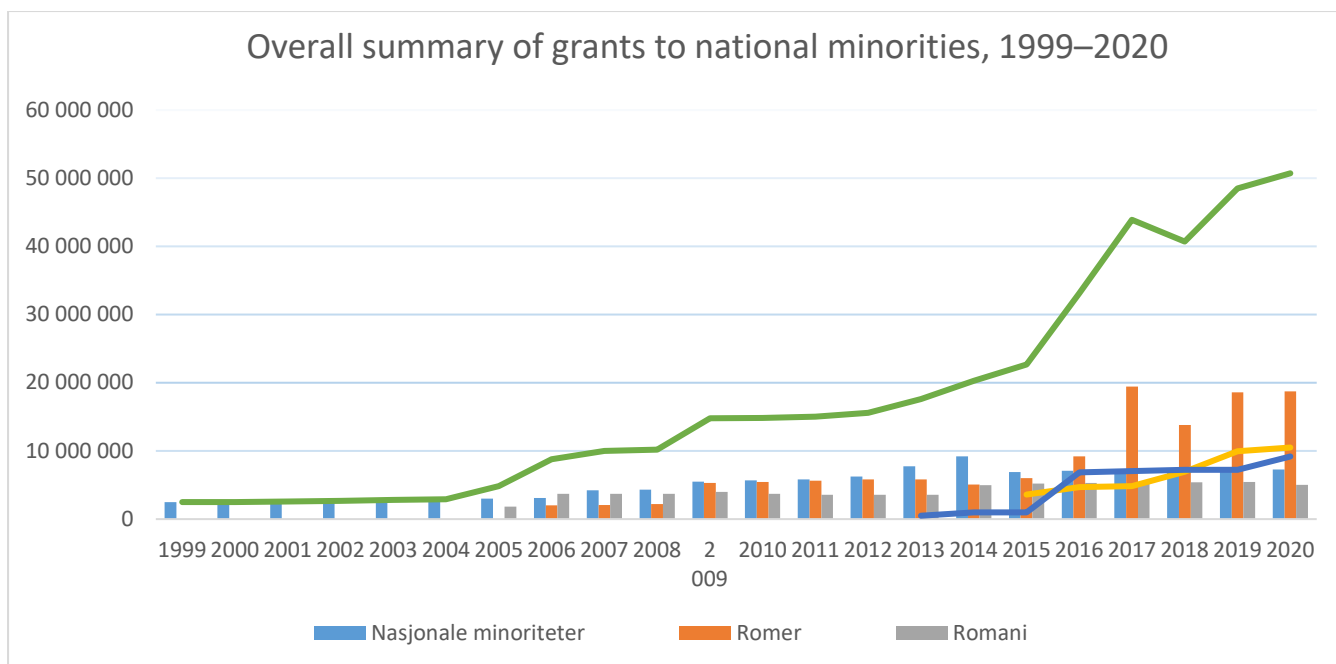
International protection of minorities is based on the non-discrimination principle and the principle of equal treatment. This means that states are obliged to make efforts to ensure that national minorities are placed on a par with the majority population, both formally and in practice. The formal rights of national minorities are largely in place in Norway at present. One challenge, however, is presented by the fact that these rights are not always followed up in practice.

The purpose of this White Paper is to describe developments in policy in respect of national minorities over the past two decades and to outline how the Government can help to reinforce the languages, culture and situation of national minorities in Norwegian society going forward.

The main objectives and principles of policy in respect of national minorities are rooted in the Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and other international conventions, and are applicable in general. (See Chapter 4 for a more detailed description of the objectives.) The three main objectives are as follows:

1. National minorities participate actively in society and can express and develop their language and culture.
2. National minorities participate in public decision-making processes
3. National minorities receive fair and equivalent services.

That said, there has been positive development over the past two decades. Grants relating to the policy area have increased significantly over the period. The ministries have gained experience in both developing and managing policy instruments, such as grant schemes, compensation schemes and meeting places for discussions between national minorities and central authorities. National minorities are also organised to a greater extent and largely put forward their cases, both in public in general and public and with the authorities. This is in line with the policy's objectives.



Grants to national minorities during the period

The total allocation of grant items to national minorities in the budget for the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation has increased significantly over the two decades; from NOK 2,5 million in 1999 to NOK 50,7 million in 2020.

Annual funding is also provided for measures via the budgets of other ministries. Inter alia, the Ministry of Education and Research provides funding for teaching in Kven and Finnish and funding for Kven language initiatives in preschools. The Ministry of Culture provides annual operating aid to The Kven Institute and the Kven newspaper Ruijan Kaiku. The Museum for Forest Finn Culture in Norway also receives annual funding from the Ministry of Culture.

In 1998, the Government made a decision to establish a centre for dissemination of the culture and history of the Romani/Tater people. This centre was sited at Glomdalsmuseet in Elverum. The Ministry of Culture provides annual funding to Glomdalsmuseet, and these funds also help to run the Romani department at the museum. In 2004, funding was allocated to construction of an administration building at Kventunet, now known as The Kven Institute. In 2019, a commitment of funding was issued for the redevelopment of the NRK building in Vadsø. This building will be controlled by the Varanger Museum and serve as a national centre for Kven/Norwegian-Finnish culture. Furthermore, various grants have been awarded by other ministries to individual projects relating to national minorities, and via other government grant schemes.

The Government also wishes to help promote the culture of national minorities in the community in line with its objective of facilitating increased diversity in cultural expressions and cultural offerings. Romano Kher – Romsk kultur- og ressurscenter [the Roma Culture and Resource Centre] opened in Oslo in 2018. With the Government's award of NOK 106 million in funding to the recently constructed Finnskogens Hus in Grue in the national budget for 2021, there are now museum buildings or culture centres for all five of the national minorities. Museums and culture and resource centres are crucial venues for dissemination

of culture and history and help to reinforce the identities of minorities. There are also meeting places that helps to build bridges between different groups in the population.

We know more about national minorities now than we did twenty years ago, but there is still more to learn about the impact of many policy instruments on policy. It has been important for the Government to map measures and instruments in connection with this White Paper initiative and obtain recommendations for potential elements that could be improved in order to attain the policy objectives. The latest review is the 2020 report from the Telemark Research Institute, entitled *Kulturell berikelse – politisk besvær. Gjennomgang av politikken overfor nasjonale minoriteter 2000–2019*, which has been compiled on behalf of the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation. This report has focused primarily on how representatives of minorities perceive measures and instruments. Some of the recommendations in the Telemark Research Institute's report are discussed in Chapter 4. The Ministry has also obtained information from other research and study communities and received suggestions for the White Paper from the minorities themselves.

1.1 Political basis for policy in respect of national minorities

National minorities in Norway have been subjected to Norwegianisation and assimilation or exclusion policies throughout history. The aim of the policy of the Norwegian State from the latter half of the 19th century and throughout parts of the 20th century was to make minorities and their way of life as similar as possible to the majority population (assimilation) or exclude them from society (exclusion). The Norwegian State applied various instruments in order to achieve this, and the policy varied and had different consequences for the five minority groups.

Attempts were mainly made to assimilate the Romani/Tater people, Forest Finns and Kvens/Norwegian Finns, while the Jews and Roma were subjected to an exclusion policy. The assimilation policy involved enforced placement of children in institutions, boarding schools and foster homes in a number of cases, and also enforced sterilisation of a number of women in the case of the Romani/Tater people. Moreover, it was common practice to refuse children the opportunity to speak their own language at school.

The aim of the exclusion policy before World War II was to deny Jews and Roma entry to Norway during various periods. This exclusion policy had fatal consequences during World War II, when about a third of all Norwegian Jews and many Norwegian Roma were murdered in Nazi concentration camps.

After World War II, this policy was gradually replaced with notions of equality, as well as facilitation and safeguarding of diversity in Norwegian society. However, changing attitudes takes a long time, and the impact of historical policy towards the national minorities is still affecting some of these groups in different ways. The authorities came to terms with past policies in the 1990s. Since then, individual and collective schemes providing compensation for injustices have been put into place, and the Norwegian State has also made official apologies to a number of the national minorities. The last apology was issued to the Norwegian Roma on 8 April 2015 by Prime Minister Erna Solberg. The Prime Minister apologised on behalf of the Government for the racist exclusion policy that was implemented against Norwegian Roma before and after World War II and the serious impact of this policy

during the Holocaust. A public committee was appointed in 2011 to review earlier policy in respect of the Romani/Tater people. The committee presented its report, Official Norwegian Report (NOU) 2015: 7 *Assimilation and Resistance. Norwegian policies towards Tater/Romani people from 1850 to the present* to the Minister for Local Government and Modernisation in 2015. This report shows that the Romani/Tater people suffered significant harm as a result of the Norwegian State's harsh assimilation policy and that various aspects of previous policies in respect of the group are still of significance to both individuals and the ethnic group as a whole. The Government's final follow-up of the Official Norwegian Report (NOU) can be found in Chapter 6 of the White Paper.

Societal development over the past two decades has been characterised by globalisation and increased migration, centralisation, digitalisation and rapid changes in production, economy and society. Nowadays, Norwegian society is multicultural, multireligious and ethnically diverse to an even greater extent than it was two decades ago. Despite major changes, Norway is still a society with minor differences: people trust one another and feel very secure. The Government will reinforce the important communities and build society from the ground up by distributing power and giving individuals, families and local communities the opportunity to control their own day-to-day lives and shape their own futures. One of the core values of a liberal society such as Norway is that the majority also takes into account the interests of the minority.

One consequence of globalisation is that linguistic and cultural influences from other parts of the world leave their mark on the population of Norway in many different ways. The Norwegian language is under pressure from English, for instance, and the languages and culture of national minorities may be particularly susceptible to influence as the groups are fairly small and few people use these languages. National minorities have had few linguistic rights under Norwegian law to date beyond the rights resulting from international conventions and agreements to which Norway is affiliated. In the spring of 2020, the Government submitted draft legislation for a new Language Act in which it was proposed that languages recognised as national minority languages in Norway be given legally established status. If the act is passed, public bodies will be made responsible for promoting and safeguarding the languages of the national minorities; Kven, Romani and Romanes, cf. 1999. Prop. 108 L (2019–2020) Act on Languages. According to the draft legislation, it will also be stated that Kven, Romani and Romanes are equivalent to Norwegian as linguistic and cultural forms of expression. For the Kven language, for example, which has been subject to Norwegianisation, statutory status may make it easier to bring about a systematised initiative for the language going forward.

The Government will ensure that national minorities in Norway are allowed continue developing their language, culture and society and participate in wider society. While the Government wishes to reinforce diversity and safeguard the interests of national minorities, it is important not to treat national minorities as a single homogeneous group. The five national minorities differ widely from one another, and there is also diversity within each minority. Some of the minorities are represented via a number of organisations that are involved with various issues. The Government takes this into account in both its communication with minorities and development of policy.

How an individual perceives and shapes their personal identity is a private matter and not something that the Norwegian State should regulate. However, one objective for the Government is that nobody should be afraid to raise the profile of their background as a national minority for fear of being stigmatised. The Government is implementing an active initiative to combat racism and discrimination, and the Action plan against racism and discrimination on grounds of ethnicity and religion (2020–2023) was presented in December 2019. The Government has also presented its Strategy against hate speech (2016–2020) and Action plan against antisemitism (2016–2020). The Centre for Studies of Holocaust and Religious Minorities (the HL Centre) mapped attitudes among the population in Norway in 2012 and 2017. Among other things, this survey shows that the percentage of the population that is distinctly prejudiced against Jews is slightly lower in 2017 than was the case in 2012.¹ The same surveys show that negative attitudes towards Roma are very widespread and stable in the population. There are no corresponding surveys of attitudes in the population towards the other three national minorities. Working broadly to combat racism, antisemitism, discrimination and hate speech is also an important policy initiative in respect of national minorities.

Relatively little is known as yet about national minorities in the population, and minorities themselves state that often encounter ignorance, both from individuals and within government administration. In a survey conducted by IPSOS in November 2020, no fewer than nine out of ten respondents say that they are aware Norway has national minorities. When asked which groups there are, it appears that people know relatively little about the five national minorities. Most respondents mention Sámi when asked what the national minority in Norway is. Chapter 4.4 refers to the survey in greater detail.

The UN Sustainable Development Goals are a universal plan to eradicate poverty, combat inequality and stop climate change by 2030. *Leave no one behind* is a key principle of the Sustainable Development Goals. The Government has decided that the Sustainable Development Goals provide the main political direction for addressing the greatest national and global challenges of our time. There are 17 Sustainable Development Goals in total, with underlying targets in a number of areas. Target 16.7 on ensuring responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels is particularly relevant in the policy in respect of national minorities. Target 4.1 on ensuring that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes is also relevant. How the Government is following up these Sustainable Development Goals is discussed in greater detail in Chapters 4.2 and 4.3.1.

1.2 Scope

This White Paper relates to policy in respect of the five national minorities in Norway. The policy relates mainly to participation in society and the protection and reinforcement of culture, cultural identity and language. This White Paper outlines the international legal framework for the policy, describes the current situation for national minorities, presents the development of policy over the past two decades and reviews key measures and

¹ Antisemittisme i Norge? Hoffmann, Kopperud and Moe 2012; Holdninger til jøder og muslimer i Norge 2017, Hoffmann and Moe 2017.

instruments in this regard. The White Paper also presents the direction of the policy going forward.

The White Paper does not relate to Sámi, although the Sámi are also covered by the scope of the Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, cf. Proposition no. 80 (1997–98) *On consent for ratification of the Council of Europe's Framework Convention of 1 February 1995 on the Protection of National Minorities*. The Government explains its Sámi policy in other documents to the Storting – Norwegian Parliament – including annual white papers. This means that policy in respect of national minorities and the Sámi, who are indigenous peoples in Norway, coincides in many respects with the Norwegian State paving the way for these groups to secure and develop their language, culture and participation in society. The Norwegian State's obligations to the Sámi population also follow from *ILO Convention no. 169, the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention*.

2. Legal framework for policy in respect of national minorities

The policy in respect of national minorities is based on the principle of equality and non-discrimination, and is rooted in Article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), the Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML).

The rights of national minorities are essentially formulated as rights held by individuals, together with others in their group. That said, it is clear that the rights of minorities can generally only be fulfilled by means of measures aimed at the group in its entirety; in terms of education, media and protection and further development of the language and culture of national minorities, for instance.

2.1 International legal framework

2.1.1 Relevant UN conventions

Article 27 of the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights is a key provision in the international protection of minorities. This article specifies that in states where ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, people belonging to such minorities, together with other members of their group, must not be deprived of the right to cultivate their own culture, profess and practise their own religion or use their own language. The UN Human Rights Committee has assumed that the provision also means that requirements for positive measures may be defined by the authorities in order to comply with the obligations.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child has a similar provision in Article 30 concerning children who belong to an ethnic, religious or linguistic minority or an indigenous people. Both the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child have been included in the Human Rights Act and are applicable in Norwegian law.

The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination prohibits discrimination on grounds of race, skin colour, descent or national or ethnic origin. The aim of the Convention is to ensure that nobody should be treated differently or have fewer rights than others on account of their race, skin colour and/or ethnic origin.

2.1.2 The Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

Norway ratified the Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (Framework Convention) in 1999. With that, the Norwegian State has committed to facilitate the preservation and further development of national minorities' unique features, languages and culture. The principles of formal and genuine equality between national minorities and the majority population are key. Another important principle in the Framework Convention is that minorities must be ensured effective participation in cultural, social and economic life and in public affairs, particularly with regard to matters that affect them.

2.1.2.1 Who are deemed to be national minorities

When Norway ratified the Framework Convention in 1999, it was decided that for Norway's part, the Convention would apply to Kvens/Norwegian Finns, Forest Finns, Jews, Romani/Tater people and Roma.

The term “national minority” is not defined in the Framework Convention. The negotiations on the Framework Convention failed to arrive at a definition that all Council of Europe Member States agreed on. That said, there is broad agreement that a national minority is a minority group with long-standing links to the territory of the state in question.

Nor does the Framework Convention clarify what is meant by long-term affiliation. The proposal for consent for Norwegian ratification of the Framework Convention suggests that the group must be able to refer to a minimum of a century of association with Norway (cf. Proposition no. 80 (1997–98) *On consent for ratification of the Council of Europe’s Framework Convention of 1 February 1995 on the Protection of National Minorities*). The five national minorities in Norway have links with the country dating back to around the mid-19th century and earlier.

The requirement for long-term affiliation with the country that most clearly sets national minorities apart from other minorities. Immigrants in recent times will not be deemed national minorities initially.

2.1.2.2 The principle of self-identification

The principle of self-identification is key to minority law. Article 3 of the Framework Convention grants both a right to be treated as belonging to a national minority and a right *not* to be treated as belonging to a national minority, if so preferred. People who belong to a national minority should not have to choose between preserving their minority identity or being part of the majority culture. Both options must be available. Nor does the fact that an individual may belong to a minority prevent that person also identifying with another minority, or the majority.

The five national minority groups are relatively small. There is no summary of how many people define themselves as national minorities in Norway, as Norway does not keep public records of ethnic affiliation. The Government has no plans to introduce a system recording ethnic affiliation as this would be a significant intervention in personal concerns involving major challenges in respect of privacy. The Government’s position is in line with the views of a number of the national minority groups.

Individuals among the national minorities relate in different ways to their minority identity at present. There are examples of people who keep their background and identity concealed, while others are not particularly concerned about their background. There are people who belong to a national minority as one of a number of important identities, while others work actively to promote and reinforce their minority’s identity, language and culture in wider society. Little is known about why some people do not define themselves as belonging to one of the national minorities, even though they could have done so initially. However, the Norwegianisation policy of the past, which involved major pressure to assimilate, was a contributory factor in many people losing their language and links to their own culture and may be a significant reason. Relocation from minorities’ core areas, or the fact that minorities have had to abandon their traditional way of life, may also be contributory factors when it comes to people no longer defining themselves as belonging to a national minority. A mixed family background may be another reason for this. For instance, many people in Finnmark and Troms have both Kven/Norwegian-Finnish, Sámi and Norwegian family backgrounds, and there may be variation in how individuals perceive and mostly define themselves. Regardless of the reason, the individual makes the decision on whether they belong to one of the national minorities.

Chapter 3 describes the five national minorities in Norway in greater detail.

2.1.2.3 Communication between national minorities and central authorities

According to Article 15 of the Framework Convention, the Parties shall create the conditions necessary for the effective participation of persons belonging to national minorities in cultural, social and economic life and in public affairs, in particular those affecting them.

To assist with effective participation, the Norwegian authorities have provided funding for the establishment and running of national minorities' own organisations and also hold regular meetings with representatives of the organisations via the *Contact Forum between national minorities and central authorities*. The Contact Forum was set up in 2003 at the request of the Council of Europe and normally takes place annually. Its purpose is to maintain communication between minorities and central authorities and give minorities the opportunity to provide feedback directly to the authorities. Contact Forum has evolved since the early days following feedback from minorities themselves. There has been an increase in the number of participants from each organisation in recent years, the organisations are more involved in what topics are to be addressed, and more time has been earmarked for discussion at the meetings. The Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation has also planned to hold discussions with national minority organisations individually, in addition to Contact Forum. See Chapter 4, section 4.2 for discussion of participation and communication.

The sector ministries also hold individual meetings with the national minorities' organisations in connection with specific matters.

2.1.3 The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

The Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers adopted the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (the Minority Language Charter) in 1992. Norway ratified the Charter in 1993 and it entered into force in 1998. The Minority Language Charter has a two-track system. The goals and principles of Part II of the Minority Language Charter are to be applied to all regional or minority languages. Moreover, states may choose to commit to applying at least 35 paragraphs or subparagraphs selected from the provisions of Part III of the Minority Language Charter in one or more languages. The obligations arising from Part III are more extensive, with detailed rules on matters such as education, the judiciary, public administration and the service sector, media, culture and transnational cooperation.

Norway has different obligations for the various languages. North Sámi, Lule Sámi, South Sámi, Kven, Romanes and Romani are recognised as regional or minority languages in Norway, and are thus ensured protection under the Minority Language Charter. North Sámi has Part III language status, while South Sámi, Lule Sámi and Kven, Romanes and Romani have Part II language status.

The matter of whether Part III should also apply to South Sámi, Lule Sámi and Kven has been brought up for discussion on a number of occasions. Most recently, this was discussed during Norway's eighth period of reporting to the Council of Europe on the Minority Language Charter. The matter of expanding the protection is also revived through efforts relating to the follow-up of Official Norwegian Report (NOU) 2016: 18 *Hjertespråket. Forslag til lovverk, tiltak og ordninger for samiske språk* and *Målrettet plan 2017–2021 – videre innsats for kvensk språk*.

Against this background, the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation has reviewed the Part III requirements and assessed whether it is possible to elevate Kven, South Sámi and Lule Sámi to Part III. The review shows that existing measures and legislation provide a foundation which will make it possible to consider extending the protection to South Sámi and Lule Sámi, but not to Kven.

The current situation for the Kven language means that it is not possible to meet the obligations resulting from Part III of the Minority Language Charter. The Ministry of Local

Government and Modernisation's review therefore deems additional ratification for Kven to be unrealistic in the short term. That said, the Ministry has provided financial support for a number of measures for the Kven language: see the references in Chapters 4.1.2 and 4.3.1. in this White Paper. The Norwegian Kven Association and The Kven Institute would like a specific plan to be compiled on the basis of this survey in order to elevate the Kven language to level III.

2.2 Norway's reports to the Council of Europe

The Council of Europe monitors how states are implementing the Framework Convention and the Minority Language Charter. The states report on the Framework Convention every five years, stating how the individual articles of the Convention and previous recommendations from the Council of Europe have been followed up. The Council of Europe's Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention considers the state's report before the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers makes its final recommendations. In connection with this work, the advisory committee goes on visits to countries and meets both state representatives and representatives of the various national minorities, as well as other relevant stakeholders where applicable.

Reporting on the Minority Language Charter essentially takes place in the same way as for the Framework Convention, albeit every three years. The Council of Europe's Expert Committee considers the state's report before the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers makes its final recommendations. As with the Advisory Committee, the Expert Committee travels on visits to countries when the state's report is processed.

In 2020, Norway submitted to the Council of Europe the eighth periodic report on the Norwegian State's implementation of the Minority Language Charter and the fifth periodic report on the implementation of the Framework Convention.² The reports were previously sent to the Council of Europe at different times, but the Council of Europe has decided to coordinate the two reporting processes in order to make them more efficient. As of 2020, therefore, reports on the Framework Convention and the Minority Language Charter will be sent to the Council of Europe every five years, with intermediate reporting halfway through the period of reporting.

The Council of Europe's feedback and recommendations based on states' reports on the implementation of the Framework Convention and Minority Language Charter are not legally binding upon the states. The Norwegian authorities undertake a specific assessment of the Council of Europe's recommendations before they are followed up, where applicable.

The Council of Europe's recommendations often relate to a wide range of responsibilities and activities of ministries and subordinate entities. The individual ministries are responsible for assessing which Council of Europe recommendations they wish to follow up, and then ensuring that the specific follow-up of the recommendations takes place. Comprehensive feedback to the Council of Europe, in response to their comments on Norway's reporting, is provided when the next status report is submitted. In the status reports to the Council of Europe, the Norwegian State generally reports on the Council of Europe's recommendations following the previous period of reporting and how Norway has followed these up until the next period of reporting.

² Report on the Framework Convention, 2020: <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/tema/urfolk-og-minoriteter/nasjonale-minoriteter/midtpalte/rapporteringer-pa-rammekonvensjonen/id458136/>
Report on the Minority Language Charter, 2020: <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/tema/urfolk-og-minoriteter/nasjonale-minoriteter/midtpalte/minoritetspraktakta/id86936/>

How Norway has followed up the Council of Europe's recommendations in a number of fields is described in Chapter 4.

2.3 National legal framework

2.3.1 The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act and the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud

The Storting passed a new Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act in 2017, and this came into force on 1 January 2018. The aim of this Act is to reinforce anti-discrimination protection and make the legislation more accessible to people who have rights under the Act. The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud provides guidance on the Act and answers questions relating to rights and obligations.

The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud must promote genuine equality and prevent discrimination on grounds of gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and age.

The Ombud must be a driving force for equality and diversity in society and provides guidance on the legislation. The Ombud is also obliged to provide guidance in discrimination cases that are subject by rules other than those upheld by the Ombud; in connection with reports of racially motivated crime, for instance. Anyone can contact the Ombud for free guidance.

The Ombud must also ensure that Norwegian law and administrative practice are compliant with Norway's obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud reports that they receive very few enquiries from national minorities who experience discrimination, and that this may be because they are unaware of the Ombud as a state body or have no confidence in the Ombud. The Ombud is working hard to reach out to more people among various ethnic minorities in Norway in order to provide guidance on rights and also to find out more about the forms of discrimination experienced by these groups.

As of 1 January 2018, the Anti-Discrimination Tribunal makes decisions on complaints of discrimination and harassment pursuant to the legislation, cf. the Act relating to equality and a prohibition against discrimination (Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act). The Tribunal is a neutral administrative body that deals free of charge with cases received.

2.3.2 Sections of the Norwegian General Civil Penal Code relating to racism and discrimination

Section 185 of the Norwegian General Civil Penal Code deals with discriminatory statements and hate speech. Discriminatory statements and hate speech are statements that threaten or insult someone or promote hatred, persecution or contempt of anyone on account of specified characteristics, including ethnic origin or religion. This provision must be interpreted restrictively out of consideration for the freedom of expression. In legal practice, a distinction has been made between critical statements about a subject and statements that attack one or more people. It takes less for personal attacks made purely to harass to be impacted by Section 185 of the Norwegian General Civil Penal Code than, for example, political statements made as part of a political debate.

The Norwegian General Civil Penal Code also includes other provisions that affect acts motivated by hatred or negative attitudes towards specified vulnerable groups, including

ethnic and religious minorities. This is applicable to Section 186 on discrimination, Section 264 on aggravated threats, Section 272 on aggravated assault, Section 274 on grievous bodily harm and Section 352 on aggravated criminal damage. The fact that an offence is based on the religion or ethnic origin of others is also an aggravating circumstance when it comes to sentencing: cf. Section 77 of the Norwegian General Civil Penal Code.

2.3.3 New Language Act

The Government presented Prop. 108 L (2019–2020) *Language Act*, a proposal for a comprehensive language act, in 2019. The purpose of this Act is to reinforce the Norwegian language and safeguard it as a socially important language, and to ensure the protection and status of the languages for which the Norwegian State is responsible. In this Act, public bodies are assigned responsibility for “protection and promotion of Kven, Romani, Romanes and Norwegian sign language”: cf. Section 1 (c). This Act is discussed in Chapter 4.1.2.

2.3.4 Norwegian National Human Rights Institution (NIM)

The Norwegian National Human Rights Institution (NIM) was established in 2015 by the Act concerning Norway’s National Institution for Human Rights. The job of the institution is to promote and protect human rights in Norway in accordance with the Constitution, the Human Rights Act, international treaties and international law in general. NIM is an independent public body answerable to the Storting. NIM was established because the UN recommends that all states have a national institution for human rights.

NIM does not deal with individual cases, but provides professional knowledge and gives advice and guidance so that the state authorities can fulfil their responsibilities in respect of human rights as effectively as possible. NIM provides legal advice to the Storting, the Sámi Parliament, the Government and the Public Administration. They monitor the position of human rights in Norway, teach and promote research on human rights, provide information to the general public on human rights and have to build bridges between the authorities and civil society. The institution submits statements and themed reports and describes the development of the human rights situation in Norway. NIM submits an annual report to the Storting on the human rights situation in Norway, recommending improvements as well. NIM will also take part in international cooperation to promote and protect human rights.

NIM published a report entitled *Norway’s national minorities* in 2019, which aimed to reinforce protection of human rights for national minorities in Norway by helping to raise awareness of both the relevant international legal frameworks and research and literature. The institution has also submitted consultative statements in cases relating to national minorities. The NIM website contains themed pages on the rights of national minorities.³

As of 2021, NIM will be holding annual meetings with representatives of national minorities, both from the organisations that receive operating grants from the Norwegian State and organisations working for Norwegian Roma. Its aim is to gain more of an understanding of the human rights challenges faced by the various minorities, and the issues that are important to them. Assisting with building bridges between national minorities, authorities and other relevant stakeholders is another objective. NIM also wishes to cooperate with cultural centres, museums and people working for national minorities.

NIM’s other contact with national minorities most frequently takes place in connection with events, seminars and international reporting initiatives. The institution is open for enquiries and has contact with a number of national minority organisations. Enquiries in respect of

³ <https://www.nhri.no/temaer/nasjonale-minoriteter/>

individual cases will be referred on to the Parliamentary Ombudsman, the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud or other relevant institutions.

3. The five national minorities today

The five national minorities all date back a long way in Norway. The minority groups differ from one another in terms of cultural and linguistic background, and their histories are very different.

The authorities' aim has been to help reinforce minorities' own organisations through grants and other initiatives. All five national minorities in Norway have established their own organisations to promote matters and address issues that concern minorities. All the minorities, except for the Roma, have organisations that meet the requirements for receipt of operating grants. Some of the minority groups also have a number of organisations.

In its work on the White Paper, the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation has held meetings with the national minorities' organisations in order to find out what minorities themselves believe is important to include in policy going forward. The Ministry has also held meetings with youth representatives of all the minority groups.

This chapter presents the five national minorities. This also includes the suggestions provided by the national minorities in respect of the report.

3.1 Kvens/Norwegian Finns

Kvens/Norwegian Finns are a linguistic and ethnic minority with historical affiliation to the High North, primarily Troms og Finnmark. Kvens/Norwegian Finns also live in other parts of the country nowadays. Some refer to themselves as Kvens while others call themselves Norwegian Finns, and so the authorities have chosen to refer to the group as Kvens/Norwegian Finns.

A number of Kven/Norwegian-Finnish traditions, such as the sauna tradition, continue to this day. Some of the old superstitions still persist, too. This group has a strong tradition of singing and music, which includes Læstadian singing and folk music. The narrative tradition, Kven names and concepts in nature and traditional handicrafts are all part of Kven/Norwegian-Finnish culture. The Kven language is an important part of the intangible cultural heritage of the Kven people.

The Kven organisations agreed in 2014 to choose 16 March as Kven People's Day, a day when the Kvens/Norwegian Finns celebrate themselves and their language, culture and history. 26 April is Kven Language Day, as this is the date on which the Kven language was recognised as a minority language in Norway back in 2005. The Kvens also have their own flag. This flag was raised at a public building in Norway for the first time in 2017, at the town hall in the municipality of Storfjord. The Kven costume was launched in 2001. This costume is designed to show the wearer's identity and background.

3.1.1. Kven language

Kven is a Finno-Ugric language closely related to Meänkieli⁴ in Sweden. Kven is a living language now, but it is endangered as the natural transmission of language between the generations is fractured, and because there are few active language users among the younger generation. In its 2013 report, the EU-funded research project ELDIA (European Language Diversity for All) has described the Kven language as severely endangered.⁵

⁴ Meänkieli means "our language" and was used from ancient times by people in Tornedalen to distinguish between the language of Tornedalen and Finnish in what is now Finland. Meänkieli was granted national minority language status in Sweden in 2000.

⁵ <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/244335/reporting/pl>

Primary and lower secondary school students in Troms og Finnmark are currently entitled to an education in Kven or Finnish when at least three students with a Kven/Norwegian-Finnish background demand it. This entitlement follows from Section 2-7 of the Education Act. See Chapter 4.3.1.1 of this White Paper for more information on teaching in Kven or Finnish.

In 2005, the King-in-Council decided that Kven should be regarded as a separate language in Norway: cf. Royal Decree of 24 June 2005, no. 3511. In Norway's fourth report on the implementation of the Minority Language Charter in 2008, it was made clear that Kven is recognised as a minority language in Norway and is therefore guaranteed protection under Part II of the Minority Language Charter.

Kvens/Norwegian Finns use different terms for their language. Some refer to the language as "Kven", others use "Old Finnish" or "Our Finnish", while still others use the term "Finnish". What to call the language is up to individuals. This White Paper uses the term "Kven", as Kven has minority language status in Norway. Some people in the Kven/Norwegian-Finnish community would also like to see Finnish recognised as a minority language in Norway, as indicated by the suggestions from the organisations.

3.1.2 Kven/Norwegian-Finnish organisation

Kvens/Norwegian Finns have three special interest organisations at present that receive operating grants.

3.1.2.1 Norwegian Kven Association – Ruijan kvääniliitto

The Norwegian Kven Association – Ruijan kvääniliitto was established in 1987 and is a nationwide organisation with a number of local teams. Most of the local teams are located in Troms og Finnmark, but there are also local teams in Trøndelag and Eastern and Southern Norway. The organisation had 945 members in 2019. The purpose of the association is to help enhance and promote the position of Kvens and people of Finnish descent, framework conditions and rights, in social, cultural and commercial terms, as well as reinforcing the Kven language and promoting the history of the Kvens and the Kvens as a people.

The Norwegian Kven Association – Ruijan kvääniliitto is working actively to make an offer to children and young people and has its own youth organisation, Kvääninuoret – Kvenungdommen Youth Organization. The nationwide youth organisation was founded in 2008. Kvääninuoret – Kvenungdommen Youth Organization is helping to create meeting places for young Kven people and reinforce the identity and culture of young Kven people. The organisation is also helping to develop the Kven language, culture and society, arranges gatherings and works in cooperation with other youth organisations both in and outside Norway.

Suggestions from the Norwegian Kven Association – Ruijan kvääniliitto:

The association would like the Government to commit to consulting the Kvens on matters concerning them. They support the recommendations in the Telemark Research Institute's report, which indicate that minorities should have direct representation in decision-making processes and concerning establishment of a directorate for national minorities. The association is of the opinion that implementing the said recommendations in the report will reinforce effective Kven participation.

As regards education, the association is keen to ensure that more people will have access to higher education in Kven. They would like the requirements for access to one-year courses in Kven and Kven and Finnish bachelor's and master's programmes at the University of Tromsø – The Arctic University of Norway to be altered, and they would like the offering to be developed further to include a Kven programme for preschool teachers, better schemes for further education and reinforced scholarships for students of Kven. The association is of

the opinion that there is a need to examine why students stop studying Kven at primary and lower secondary school. They point out the importance of giving parents information about students' rights, and propose that application forms for schools should indicate that Kven can be chosen. The association wants the right to an education in Kven to be an individual right applicable all over Norway, not just Troms og Finnmark, and that parents also have the opportunity to learn Kven. They would like Norway to provide additional ratification of the Minority Language Charter so that Kven is also covered by Part III of the Charter.

The association highlights the fact that there is a need for more Kven cultural institutions and more video and theatre in Kven, and that publishing books in Kven must be made easier. They also want to see more local language venues and are keen to make Kven culture more visible when marking special Kven days, flying the flag, using logos, etc.

The association is of the opinion that a Kven service should be offered in psychiatry, geriatric care and in district psychiatric centres.

Kvääninuoret – Kvenungdommen Youth Organization is calling for the opportunity to apply for funding for national minorities' youth organisations. The membership numbers of these organisations are too low to enable them to receive funding from the established grant schemes.

3.1.2.2 Norsk-finsk forbund/Norjalais-Suomalainen Liitto

Norsk-finsk forbund, the Norwegian-Finnish Association, was established in 1982 and is a nationwide interest organisation for both Norwegian Finns and Finns who have immigrated recently. As a national minority organisation, the association receives operating aid for the Norwegian-Finnish part of its activity. The association says it has approximately 500 members.

The aim of the organisation is to promote and safeguard the Finnish language, Norwegian-Finnish and Finnish culture, the rights of Norwegian Finns as a national minority and the rights of Finnish people living in Norway.

Suggestions from Norsk-finsk forbund/Norjalais-Suomalainen Liitto:

Norsk-finsk forbund would like to see more funding for the Finnish language and is of the opinion that the new curriculum is too unclear as regards the quality and level of education. The association would also like extended education offerings through the medium of Finnish to apply to Norway as a whole.

The association would like more funding for Norwegian-Finnish culture. They point out that more Norwegian Finns take part in Kven activities as more funding is being provided to Kven initiatives such as language centres and museums.

Norsk-finsk forbund points out that Kven is not the language of the Norwegian Finns, and they would like Finnish to be recognised as a minority language in Norway. The association would also like to see more consistent use of the term Kvens/Norwegian Finns.

The association would like more border cooperation so as to preserve ties with the Finnish side of things. They would like the Norwegian authorities to establish more contact with Finland, both linguistically and culturally.

3.1.2.3 Kvenlandsforbundet

Kvenlandforbundet⁶, the Kvenland Association, was established in 1999 and is a Norwegian part of a cooperative organisation with branches in Sweden and Finland as well. The association had around 300 members in 2019. They say they have established a student network in 2020. The association is concerned with culture, history, settlement areas, language and rights. They are keen to ensure that both Kven and Finnish are living languages in Norway.

Kvenlandsforbundet is responsible for the participation of Kvens/Norwegian Finns in the World Congress of Finno-Ugric Peoples, which brings together all Finno-Ugric peoples.

Suggestions from Kvenlandsforbundet:

Kvenlandsforbundet is of the opinion that a clear policy objective must be formulated for national minorities that involves full bilingualism, and that the number of language users must be the criterion for achieving success.

When it comes to language policy, the association would like both Kven and Finnish to be used in written language, as well as recognition of Finnish as a minority language in Norway. They are of the opinion that the best strategy for survival of the language is for Kven and Finnish to be placed on an equal footing in all respects. They would also like scholarships to be awarded through vocational education and apprenticeship schemes to young people who want to learn the language in Finland. They also point out that there should be preschool and school offerings where everything takes place through the medium of Kven or Finnish.

The association is also keen to ensure that Kvens are covered by ILO Convention no. 169 and gain indigenous status, just like the Sámi. They are of the opinion that people discriminate against Kvens/Norwegian Finns and Sámi, which in their view is contrary to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

The association is critical of the Government's policy in respect of national minorities, both in terms of the level of funding for the organisations and the commitment to the Kven language. They claim that the number of users of the language has fallen by 80 per cent while a policy has been in place in this regard.

The association would like to have a separate secretariat for national minorities at the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation, with its own Secretary of State for Kvens/Norwegian Finns.

3.1.3 Kven institutions

There are a number of institutions working to reinforce Kven language and culture. These include Foundation Kainun institutti – Kvensk Institute, Vadsø Museum – Ruija Kvenmuseum, the Kven newspaper Ruijan Kaiku, Halti kvenkultursenter in Nordreisa and Storfjord språksenter. In 2018, as a follow-up to *Målrettet plan 2017–2021 – videre innsats for kvensk språk*, grants were provided for establishment of three new language centres in Troms og Finnmark: *Porsanger kvenske språksenter, Vadsø kvenske språksenter and Kvænangen språksenter. These language centres receive operating aid managed by the Troms og Finnmark County Council via the grant scheme for Kven language and culture. Kainun Institutti – The Kven Institute and Vadsø Museum – Ruija Kvenmuseum receive operating aid via the Ministry of Culture's budget. See also Chapter 4.1.2.1 on the Kainun institutti – The Kven Institute.*

⁶ The Board of Directors of the association has adopted Kvensk Finsk Riksforbund [National Kven Finnish Association] as a "marketing name". According to the Brønnøysund Register Centre, Kvenlandsforbundet is its formal name and Kvensk Finsk Riksforbund is a subunit.

3.2 Jews

The history of Jews in Norway began in 1851 with the repealing of the clause in the Constitution that prohibited Jews from entering Norway. Immigration from Eastern Europe, primarily from the Tsardom of Russia in the 19th century, led to the formation of a Jewish community in Oslo and Trondheim. In 1940, around 2,100 Jews lived in Norway. The Holocaust hit the Jewish minority hard. Almost a third of the Jewish population of Norway were brutally murdered.

The Jewish minority in Norway today is diverse in terms of ethnic background, religiousness and relationship with tradition. Many associate their Jewish identity with culture, tradition and history as much as with their religion.

3.2.1 Jewish religion and culture

Besides being a national minority, Jews are a religious minority in Norway. This is a small minority, which can present particular challenges linked with observing festivals and complying with religious rules.

Kosher is the term used for Jewish food rules based on religion. Kosher also involves specific rules on animal slaughter, known as kosher slaughter. Norway has banned on such slaughter but allows kosher-slaughtered meat to be imported. Norwegian Jews diverge in their practising of kosher rules. Some strictly keep the kosher rules, while others follow a few selected kosher rules. Others do not consider this as part of their practice as Jews.

Circumcision of boys is a central practice in Jewish religion and culture. The Storting passed a law on the ritual circumcision of boys on 20 June 2014. The aim of this is to ensure that ritual circumcision of boys is carried out properly, and to ensure that an offer of ritual circumcision is available, cf. Prop. 130 L (2018–2019) *Act relating to religious and faith communities*.

3.2.1.1. Yiddish

Yiddish and Hebrew are languages used by Jews all over the world. Yiddish was considered for a long time to be the language of the people, while Hebrew was primarily used as a liturgical language. Yiddish was a living language in Norwegian-Jewish culture and was the day-to-day language spoken in many homes until World War II. The Holocaust during World War II meant that Norway lost many Yiddish-speaking people, and the language is no longer in use among Norwegian Jews. Hence Yiddish is not considered to be a national minority language in Norway. There is now growing interest in learning the language, and Yiddish courses at Oslo Jewish Museum are popular.

3.2.2 Jewish organisation

The Jews have two religious communities in Norway; one in Trondheim and one in Oslo. There are synagogues in each of these cities. These communities also have members outside Trondheim and Oslo. Both communities apply for and receive annual funding via the grant scheme for religious and faith communities, cf. Prop. 130 L (2018–2019) *Act relating to religious and faith communities*. The two faith communities jointly had around 830 registered members in 2019. The communities embrace both practising Jews and more secular ones. There are also Jews in Norway who are not members of either of the faith communities. The communities provide children and young people with training in Judaism and Jewish culture.

These churches are otherwise keen to promote Jewish culture, traditions and history in Norway and work to combat antisemitism and towards an inclusive and diverse society.

There is also an Orthodox Jewish group in Oslo that is not registered as a faith community.

3.2.1.1. Jewish Community of Oslo

The Jewish Community of Oslo was established in 1892 and is the biggest Jewish institution in Norway. This faith community has plenty to offer its members, from cradle to grave. Offerings include religious services at the synagogue and social events on the Sabbath and Jewish holidays, a Jewish preschool, teaching aimed at children and young people, organising camps, a study group and a Jewish residential and senior citizens' centre for older Jews from all over Norway. The Jewish Community of Oslo received funding as a faith community for 673 members in 2019 ⁷.

The Jewish Community of Oslo receives operating grants from the grant scheme for national minorities for the non-religious part of the organisation's activities, such as their work with children and young people and cultural and social activities. A separate grant scheme has also been established for the Jewish Community of Oslo at the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation for information initiatives to counter antisemitism and help promote security around the synagogue in Oslo.

Suggestions from the Jewish Community of Oslo:

The Jewish Community of Oslo experiences the Norwegian State's international commitment to ensuring a safe old age for Jewish Holocaust survivors (the Terezin Declaration⁸) as a number of municipalities and districts appear to be reluctant to allow older Jews to move to Det Jødiske Bo- og Seniorsenteret [the Jewish residential and senior citizens' centre]. The community is of the opinion that clearer guidelines and greater information for municipalities and districts are necessary so as to ensure that Norway's international obligation is followed up. Det Jødiske Bo- og Seniorsenteret needs significant upgrades, and the Jewish Community of Oslo would therefore like to see cooperation with the authorities in order to find funding schemes that will ensure the centre is restored.

The Jewish Community of Oslo would like to see an extended funding model for the Jewish preschool. There are very few Jewish children in some years due to small numbers of children being born, and hence the preschool fails to receive funding. The religious community points out that the Jewish preschool, the only one of its kind in Norway, is important when it comes to Jewish children a secure identity.

The Jewish Community of Oslo also points out that initiatives are needed from the Norwegian State if Jews are still to be living in Norway in 20 years' time. The "Jødiske veivisere" [Jewish Pathfinders] initiative in the Action plan against antisemitism (2016–2020) is significant and must be continued, ideally in combination with reinforcement of funding for national minorities.

The Jewish Community of Oslo receives earmarked funds for security work. This funding is important as a way of ensuring satisfactory security so that members of the community can feel safe when they visit the synagogue and community centre. This scheme should be extended due to a heightened threat perceived over the last few years.

⁷ Via the Ministry of Children and Families' grant scheme for religious and faith communities.

⁸ The Terezin Declaration was signed by 47 countries, including Norway, in June 2009. Among other things, this declaration points out that elderly Holocaust survivors and other victims of the Nazi persecutions are in need of social assistance and medical care. The countries recognise the special social and medical needs of all survivors and fund both private and public measures to ensure they lead dignified lives with the necessary basic care. The Terezin Declaration is named after the Teresienstadt concentration camp in what is now the Czech Republic.

3.2.1.2 Jewish Community of Trondheim

Det Jødiske Samfunn i Trondheim [the Jewish community in Trondheim] was established in 1905. This community received funding for 137 members in 2019 via the grant scheme for religious and faith communities. Det Jødiske Samfunn i Trondheim is based in the same building as the Jewish Museum in Trondheim, as is the synagogue, which is the world's most northerly synagogue. The community marks Jewish holidays, runs its own events for young people and has a friends' association. They do not receive operating grants for their activities via the grant scheme for national minorities.

Suggestions from Det jødiske samfunn i Trondheim:

Det Jødiske Samfunn i Trondheim is particularly keen to work to combat antisemitism, and supports the Government's Action plan against antisemitism. They also emphasise that the measures in the action plan should be assessed. They are of the opinion that the fact that the action plan emphasises that wider society is responsible for countering antisemitism and that the Government is clear that Jews belong in Norway is a positive thing.

Furthermore, Det Jødiske Samfunn i Trondheim would like measures to be put in place so that the population and the press can find out more about the Jews in Norway. They also indicate a need for funding in order to renovate the building housing the Jewish community and the Jewish Museum in Trondheim, for more universal design of the premises. This building is an important meeting place for Jews in the Trondheim area, and a venue for dissemination of Norwegian-Jewish culture and history.

3.2.3 Jewish museums

There is a Jewish museum in Trondheim, and another in Oslo. The museum in Trondheim opened in 1997 and is situated in the same building as the synagogue. Both museums have important social missions to impart Jewish culture, rites and traditions, as well as Jewish history in Norway. The museums actively provide information to school students in efforts to counter antisemitism. The two museums are seeing increasing interest from schools and are visited by between four and five thousand school students each year.

Nowadays, these Jewish museums are meeting places that bring together different people and people of different ages through various cultural events, academic lectures and courses.

3.3 Forest Finns

Forest Finns are descendants of Finnish immigrants who came to Norway in the early 17th century onwards and settled in forest areas in Eastern Norway, mainly along the border with Sweden. Some Forest Finns have a strong cultural affinity for Forest Finnish matters nowadays, while others find that it is relatively difficult to identify the differences between Norwegian and Forest Finnish matters. Finnskogen is a large, continuous forest that extends along both sides of the national border between Solør in Norway and Värmland in Sweden.

3.3.1 Forest Finnish language, culture and religion

Forest Finns highlight their cultural affiliation in various ways. Some actively participate in organisations and associations and make efforts to document history, traditions and handicrafts in cooperation with museums and historical teams. Many are involved in genealogy, and there is growing interest in reclaiming the family names of Finnish ancestors. Books on Forest Finnish culture and history have been written and published in recent decades, while Forest Finnish cooking and traditional handicrafts are being handed down to

new generations. A unique national costume for Forest Finns was designed in the 1970s, and traditional Forest Finn songs were recorded and released.

The Forest Finns originally spoke Finnish, in the form of a 17th-century dialect from Savolaks. They preserved the language as it was for a long time when they emigrated, detached from language development in Finland. The Forest Finns also learned Norwegian and were often bilingual. Finnish was spoken in Finnskogen until well into the 20th century, but the language gradually died out. Contributory factors in this regard were the fact that children had to speak Norwegian at school, and that only Norwegian was used in church. Some individual Forest Finnish words are still in use in Finnskogen, and there are also many hundreds of Forest Finnish place names in the area. Some people still have Finnish names, too.

Finnskogdagene [Finnskogen Days] has been held annually at Svullrya in the municipality of Grue in Innlandet since 1970, and visitors are shown Forest Finnish traditions here. Besides the museums and historical teams, Finnskogdagene has an important part to play in promoting the cultural heritage of the Forest Finns.

3.3.2 Forest Finnish organisation

Skogfinske interesser i Norge [Forest Finnish interests in Norway] was established in 1999 as a network for organisations, institutions and individuals working primarily with Forest Finnish culture. This network provides a common address and an information and communication channel between the minority and the authorities. Skogfinske interesser i Norge is currently made up of ten associations and teams.

Suggestions from Skogfinske interesser i Norge:

As far as Skogfinske interesser i Norge is concerned, the desire for a new building for Museum for Forest Finn Culture is the most central.

Skogfinske interesser i Norge would also like to see amendments made to the Names Act so as to make it easier for people to reclaim their forefathers' Finnish surnames.

The association also points out that there is great emphasis on language when working with national minorities, and that minority groups that have lost their language are often excluded. They point out that Forest Finns have different needs to the other minorities: for instance, they need funding for building protection, and this is not a priority matter in the project grant for national minorities.

Skogfinske interesser i Norge is otherwise dissatisfied with the distribution of operating aid. The association receives less operating aid than the other organisations as it has no direct members.

3.3.3 Museum for Forest Finn Culture in Norway

The Museum for Forest Finn Culture is a consolidated museum in Svullrya in the municipality of Grue. This museum serves as a hub and advocate for Forest Finnish culture and is responsible for buildings and collections scattered throughout much of Finnskogen and Solør. The collection includes some 440,000 artefacts, ranging from archives and photographs to items and antiquarian buildings.

A number of Forest Finnish smallholdings and farms have been protected in recent years thanks to initiatives by the Museum for Forest Finn Culture.

In 2019, NOK 90 million was awarded for a new building at Glomdalsmuseet in Elverum, which will provide accommodation for joint storage for the Anno Museum and the Museum for Forest Finn Culture. This joint storage will help to make both museums' collection management and documentation work more professional.

A total of NOK 106.6 million has been granted in the national budget for 2021 for the construction of Finnskogens Hus, a new building that will help to ensure that the museum's main site at Svullrya can be enjoyed by visitors all year round. For this grant to be offered, the professional cooperation between the Museum for Forest Finn Culture and the Anno Museum has to be reinforced so as to ensure a more robust organisation for implementation of the project, and a larger professional network that will help to provide better conditions for Forest Finnish cultural heritage.

3.4 Roma

The Norwegian Roma are descendants of five families who were affiliated to Norway prior to World War II. Most of them are organised informally into a few extended families. An extended family often consists of three to four generations, often headed by a grandfather or great-grandfather. Links with the family are strong, and the extended family forms the most important social and economic foundation in the lives of most Roma. Many of them belong to a European Pentecostal Church for Roma, Centre Missioner Evangélique Rom International.

There are many indications that living conditions for Roma in Norway today are far inferior to those of the general population. A number of families are experiencing complex and difficult life situations and poverty on account of loose working conditions and unpredictable finances. A number of adult Roma are functionally illiterate. Many Roma have received little schooling, but a number of adults report that they would like to attend school and find permanent jobs.

3.4.1 Roma language and culture

The Roma have a vibrant social and cultural community, and most people speak Romanes on a daily basis. Romanes is an important element in the identity of Norwegian Roma, and they have managed to retain their language despite attempts to exterminate them during World War II and Norway's policies in the post-war period. Like the other national minority languages in Norway, Romanes has primarily been used verbally, but nowadays there is increasing use of the written language on social media. A bilingual fairytale book for children, audio books and texts in Romanes have also been published, and some information has been translated into Romanes.

It is important to many Roma to maintain the traditional traveller's way of life, but many of them have reduced their travelling in recent years. Roma explains this by stating that their commercial activities are different to what they used to be. Moreover, more Roma are experiencing discrimination at campsites and are under increasing pressure from schools and the Child Welfare Services to reduce absence from school, which has also helped to reduce their travelling.

3.4.2 Roma organisation

The Roma Council was founded in 2016 and aims to provide a unifying mouthpiece for communication with the authorities in order to reinforce the position of Roma in society. Representatives from various Roma families participate in this. This organisation does not have members or hold regular meetings. The Roma Council does not meet the requirements to receive operating aid via the grant scheme for national minorities.

Suggestions from the Roma Council:

The Roma Council would like to see more assistance with finding accommodation and jobs, in particular labour-oriented measures for young people and women via the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration. They would also like help with setting up businesses.

Roma point out that there is a need for more cultural sensitivity and understanding from the Child Welfare Services, the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration and schools with regard to how Roma people live. They would like to see more cooperation with the Child Welfare Services, and they would like the Child Welfare Services to focus more on foster care among Roma. It is important for Roma children in foster care to be allowed to maintain contact with their own culture, and the Roma Council is calling for courses for families with Roma children in foster care. The Roma Council is of the opinion that policy in respect of Roma must be based more on rights through the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Child Welfare Act and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.

The Roma Council would like to see more measures in respect of discrimination, and reports that Roma often experience discrimination, particularly when it comes to housing, but also at campsites and in restaurants, shops and crisis centres. Cases reported to the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud have occasionally ended with confirmation that discrimination has taken place, but the Roma Council is of the opinion that there are nevertheless few genuine consequences. Roma also find that they are not taken seriously by the police when they report cases. The Roma Council is pleased to see that efforts have been made over the last few years to improve contact between the Roma and the police, so Roma should find that they are taken seriously when they report cases.

The Roma Council would like to see “anti-gypsyism” being used as a term to denote racism and discrimination against Roma⁹.

Roma point out that a number of resources in the group wish to contribute in various ways by providing information about Roma history, traditions and culture in schools and colleges, for example, and by providing suggestions on the development of learning materials. They would also like to provide suggestions on state policies that are of importance to them.

3.4.3 Romano Kher

Romano Kher is a Roma cultural and resource centre in Oslo that was established in 2018 as an way of expressing the Norwegian State’s collective compensation to the Roma people for the racist exclusion policies imposed against them in the decades before and after World War II, and the fatal consequences of this policy during the Holocaust. This centre is a gathering place where Roma can acquire knowledge and new skills, and where Roma children are able to play and learn. It also provides an interface between Roma and the majority population. The centre is also home to a bridge-building service for Roma which provides guidance and helps Roma in their dealings with public authorities. This cultural and resource centre is funded via the National Budget, and the Church City Mission runs the centre and manages the funding. See Chapter 5 for a further description of the Norwegian State’s collective compensation to Roma.

3.5 Romani/Tater people

The Romani/Tater people have traditionally been characterised by their way of life as travellers. Many Romani/Tater people are now settled and have jobs in a variety of professions.

The Romani/Tater people have been part of Norwegian society since the 16th century. This group has been subjected to severe abuse by the Norwegian authorities in the form of persecution, exile, forced sterilisation, forced adoption of children and other assimilation measures. Many of them have also experienced bullying, harassment and abuse in the communities in which they live. Some of the minority wish to keep their identities hidden on account of the persecution of the past.

⁹ Anti-gypsyism, prejudice, hate speech and propaganda against minority Roma (formerly known as “gypsies”). This is used as a collective term to denote discrimination against Roma (Store norske leksikon).

There are differing views among Romani/Tater people about which designation to be applied to the minority. Some prefer to be called Taters, while many are of the opinion that the word Tater is derogatory and would prefer to be referred to as Romani or Travellers. The authorities have therefore chosen to call them Romani/Tater people.

3.5.1 Romani/Tater language and culture

Many Romani/Tater people have survived by selling goods and services. Traditional handicrafts and the travelling culture persist among some members of this ethnic group and are mainly practised in summer. Romani/Tater people are particularly renowned for their metalworking skills, producing knives and wire and working as blacksmiths and tinsmiths. This ethnic group is also known for its strong music tradition.

The Romani language is essentially a verbal language, but the Romani/Tater organisations would like to revitalise the language and develop it into a written language. Linguists believe that the language is rooted in ancient Indian languages. Romani was recognised as a minority language in Norway in 2005 when the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages was ratified. No figures are available on how many people speak Romani in Norway.

Romani is deemed to be the second language of the Romani/Tater people in Norway, Norwegian being their first. A number of Romani/Tater people communicate with one another in Romani; or Rotipa, as some people call the language. The language of the Romani/Tater people in Norway has absorbed a lot of Norwegian words and phrases, and so Romani has developed differently in the countries where Romani/Tater people live. Romani is partly documented. For instance, there is an electronic dictionary where it is possible to search words from Romani to Norwegian and Romani to English. A book has also been published in Romani and Norwegian, and older glossaries are also available. Some language work is being carried out under the auspices of the Romani/Tater organisations. For instance, a Romani language app is being developed and work is in progress on establishing a Romani Language Council.

3.5.2 Organisation among the Romani/Tater people

There are a number of different associations among the Romani/Tater people. Two of these associations have more than 100 members and receive operating aid via the grant scheme for national minorities. There are also individuals within the minority who have contacted the authorities as they wish to provide suggestions on the policy in respect of Romani/Tater people, even though they do not wish to participate in any of the existing associations or form their own associations.

3.5.2.1 Landsorganisasjonen for romanifolket

Landsorganisasjonen for romanifolket [the national organisation for Romani people] was founded in 2000. This is a nationwide organisation and has around 100 members. Most of the members live in Eastern, Southern and Western Norway. The aim of the organisation is to pass on information about the Romani people, fight for the interests of the Romani people, provide practical assistance to their members in compensation cases and help people to find their relatives. Landsorganisasjonen for romanifolket is also working to safeguard the Romani language and preserve traditional ancient handicrafts. The organisation is particularly keen to preserving the culture of Romani/Tater boat travellers.

Suggestions from Landsorganisasjonen for romanifolket:

The organisation is particularly keen to preserve the Romani language and safeguard the Romani people's cultural environment and traditions. They state that more and more young

people are interested in learning more about the language, culture and background, and so the organisation would like to see more language projects.

Landsorganisasjonen for romanifolket would like to reinforce the living Romani culture so that the portrayal of the Romani/Tater people is not characterised primarily by their negative history. They would like the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation to be a driving force that allows the Romani people to work more collectively.

3.5.2.2 *Taternes landsforening*

Taternes landsforening [the National Association of Taters] was founded in 1995 and is a nationwide association. The aim of the association is to reinforce the position of Romani/Tater people in society, act as a link between the Romani/Tater people and the authorities, provide guidance and assistance to its members and help to preserve and promote language, culture, history and the cultural environment. The association is also working to safeguard the human rights of Romani/Tater people and raise awareness about the situation for Romani/Tater people, document discrimination, promote gender equality and attitude-forming initiatives, work with self-help activities and provide contact and cooperation between national minorities. Taternes landsforening has around 150 members.

Suggestions from Taternes landsforening:

Taternes landsforening is of the opinion that the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities should be incorporated into Norwegian law. The association is keen to ensure that the traditional way of life of the Romani/Tater people is preserved and that schooling is facilitated while they are travelling. They are also keen to preserve music and traditional handicrafts, and would like traditional settlements to be preserved and protected. Furthermore, the association would like the culture and traditions of the Romani/Tater people to be referred to in schoolbooks, and to make it clear that the Romani/Tater people are an important part of Norwegian cultural heritage. Language projects are vital, and the association has helped to establish a Romani Language Council.

Taternes landsforening is of the opinion that there is a need for a guidance service for Romani/Tater people and is keen to ensure that collective compensation to the Romani/Tater people is managed by the people themselves.

3.5.3 **Latjo drom**

When the Bondevik government issued an official apology to the Romani/Tater people in 1998 for the policies enacted against this ethnic group, a decision was also made to establish a centre for presentation of Romani/Tater culture and history at Glomdalsmuseet in Elverum. This centre was provided as a form of compensation for earlier policy in respect of the group. The museum was also assigned national responsibility for documenting the culture and history of the Romani/Tater people.

2006 saw the opening of the new part of Glomdalsmuseet, which includes the permanent exhibition entitled *Latjo drom*. This exhibition was created in cooperation with Romani/Tater representatives who wanted to highlight the positive aspects of Romani culture, such as traditional handicrafts, solidarity, music and survival strategies. A small part of the exhibition describes abuse and the assimilation policy of the Norwegian State. An online exhibition has also been created in addition to the permanent exhibition.

The centre at Glomdalsmuseet also serves as a meeting place for cultural activities such as lectures, concerts, courses or demonstration of traditional handicrafts.



A campsite, part of the Latjo drom exhibition. Photo: Glomdalsmuseet

3.6 Young national minorities

The authorities' contact with national minorities primarily takes place through meetings with representatives of minority organisations, cf. Chapter 4.2 . The national minority organisations have not had much in the way of their own youth organisations, and young national minorities have thus had little representation when communicating with central authorities. A number of young people among the national minorities have become involved in recent years. As can be seen from Chapter 3.1.2, the Norwegian Kven Association – Ruijan kvääniliitto has had its own youth organisation since 2008, Kvääninuoret – Kvenungdommen Youth Organization. Kvenlandsforbundet established a student network in 2020, and Taternes landsforening and the Jewish Community of Oslo both have youth groups.

In recent years, the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation has allowed more young minority people to make their voices heard and has earmarked additional places at the contact forum between national minorities and central authorities for organisations that include participants under the age of 30. The Ministry has held meetings with young representatives of the national minorities in connection with work on this White Paper. The aim of this has been to find out about their experiences of belonging and growing up as a national minority in Norway today, and what they are concerned about going forward.

Suggestions from the young national minorities

The suggestions from the youth representatives largely coincide with what the national minority organisations have stated. The young people pointed out that there is a need for more information about national minorities in society, as a lack of knowledge leads to invisibility. They pointed out that knowledge of national minorities must form part of curricula in schools to a greater extent than is currently the case. Venues for cultural dissemination, such as museums and festivals, are also important. They also indicated the need for more information about minorities at public bodies such as the Child Welfare Services, the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration and the police.

Young Kven/Norwegian-Finnish people stated that the right to language tuition in Kven or Finnish is not always fulfilled. They would also like the right to teaching provided through the medium of Kven and Finnish to apply to the whole country, not just to Troms og Finnmark as is currently the case. The young representatives are keen for the minority organisations to receive better funding, and for youth organisations to be able to receive operating aid. They would also like to see better communication between the authorities and minorities, along with measures for enhancing communication within the minorities.

4. Objectives and policy instruments in respect of national minorities going forward

Policy that applies to the population of Norway also applies to the national minorities. However, separate measures are needed in some areas so as to ensure that minorities can preserve and develop their religion, language, traditions and cultural heritage in accordance with Article 5 of the Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. Measures are also needed in order to ensure that national minorities are able to participate effectively in cultural, social and economic matters and public affairs that affect them in particular, in accordance with Article 15 of the Convention. The Government will continue to facilitate active policy in respect of national minorities.

This Chapter describes objectives and policy instruments. The objectives are derived from Norway's obligations under the Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, and they have remained reasonably fixed for the two decades in which a separate policy in respect of national minorities has existed. The three main objectives are as follows:

1. National minorities participate actively in society and can express and develop their language and culture.
2. National minorities participate in public decision-making processes
3. National minorities receive fair and equivalent services.

The Government will continue these objectives in policy in respect of national minorities going forward.

This chapter is divided into five parts, with each of the three main objectives having their own sub-chapters. The fourth sub-chapter describes instruments for raising awareness of national minorities in the population, and the last sub-chapter describes measures for ensuring good coordination and administration in line with the main objectives of the policy.

4.1 National minorities participate actively in society and can express and develop their language and culture.

The first goal is for national minorities to actively participate in society and be able to express and further develop their language and culture. Instruments in language, culture and education policy are key to attaining this objective. To make it possible for national minorities to participate actively in society, it is also important to have an active policy to counter racism, discrimination, prejudice and hate speech.

4.1.1 Funding for cultural initiatives and cultural activities

4.1.1.1 Operating grants for museums and cultural centres

The Ministry of Culture provides annual operating grants to a number of museums that play special roles in the administration and presentation of national minorities' cultural heritage, including their language. These include the Anno Museum (Romani/Tater culture), Varanger Museum and Nord-Troms Museum (Kven and Sámi culture), the Museum for Forest Finn Culture, the Oslo Jewish Museum and the Jewish Museum in Trondheim. A number of other museums have recently held temporary exhibitions that convey the culture of national minorities. For example, Haugalandsmuseet has an exhibition showing the history of Romani/Tater boat travellers. The Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation also provides annual grants to Romano Kher – Romsk kultur- og ressurscenter in Oslo.

Cultural stakeholders from Nord-Troms have been working since 2018 on establishing a Kven theatre at Halti in Nordreisa. The theatre's ambition is to explore the tension between Kven tradition and the future, and to fight for the Kven language. ITU Kvääniteatteri has been granted NOK 1.25 million from the grant scheme over three years for Kven language and culture, aimed at a pilot project to establish the theatre as a national Kven theatre. The theatre has also received NOK 200,000 in project funding for a children's theatre project from the grant scheme for national minorities.

4.1.1.2 Project grants for national minorities

The Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation's grant scheme aims to reinforce the language, culture and identity of national minorities. One particular aim of the grant scheme is to reinforce the language and identity in children and young people. Voluntary institutions, private individuals, municipalities, institutions and enterprises can apply. Since the grant scheme was established in 1999, funding for a variety of projects and activities has been provided over the years, such as language projects for children and adults, festivals and theatre, book and music releases, video projects, exhibitions and other information projects, as well as measures to enhance cooperation between the national minority groups.

In 2019, these projects received funding via the grant scheme for national minorities: Romano Kher – Romsk kultur- og ressurscenter received funding to make two episodes of Chabatane Romane, a Roma cookery programme. This programme was created and shown on Nevimos Norvego, Romano Kher's own media and news platform. The project shows Roma culinary traditions and how food and cultural identity are interrelated. The programme has been viewed more than 300,000 times in both Norway and Europe. The Jewish Cultural Festival in Trondheim received funding for the Tjuvstart ["false start"] project and for a family performance during the festival. The project involved two events, a Sabbath meal with music and stories, and a theatrical performance based on the Biblical story of Queen Esther. The Jewish Cultural Festival in Trondheim has been held every year since 2010 and imparts Jewish culture to a general Norwegian audience.



Chabatane Romane, a Roma cookery programme. Photo: Ingrid Styrkestad

4.1.1.3 Intangible cultural heritage

Norway ratified the *UNESCO Convention of 17 October 2003 for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* in 2007. The purpose of the Convention is to safeguard intangible cultural expressions, and with this promote and ensure respect and recognition for affected communities, groups and the intangible culture of individuals. Oral traditions and expressions, such as language, performing arts such as music, dance and theatre, social customs, rituals and festivals, knowledge and practice concerning nature and the universe and traditional handicrafts are all examples of intangible knowledge. Arts Council Norway is responsible for implementing the Convention in Norway and is the Ministry of Culture's professional body in this field.

When Norway endorsed the agreement, the Storting emphasised that the need for safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage of indigenous peoples and national minorities should be a priority field, cf. Proposition no. 73 (2005–2006) *Om samtykke til ratifikasjon av UNESCOs konvensjon av 17. oktober 2003 om vern av den immaterielle kulturarven*. The Convention has helped to raise awareness of the intangible cultural heritage of national minorities, and is key to efforts to reinforce its protection.

In 2010, Arts Council Norway published its report entitled *Immateriell kulturarv i Norge* [Intangible cultural heritage in Norway], where the culture and traditions of national minorities are discussed in separate chapters. The minorities in Norway provided suggestions for this work. In the suggestions, the need to ensure that the language is continued and for good meeting places where knowledge and traditions can be continued was highlighted. There were also requests for systematic documentation of the intangible cultural heritage of minorities such as narrative traditions, music, crafts and food traditions.

The Convention rests on the principle that inclusion and participation are essential in efforts to protect and continue intangible cultural heritage. For many people, intangible heritage is an important source of their identity. The stakeholders themselves, also known as traditionalists, recognise and thus define their own intangible cultural heritage. This is why Arts Council Norway attaches importance to involving the national minorities, which includes holding seminars with minorities and obtaining written suggestions from the groups.

Arts Council Norway has also started work on a list of intangible cultural heritage in Norway (2017) that is open to anyone wishing to document their traditions and share them with everyone.¹⁰

The Ministry of Culture is working on a folk music and folk dance strategy which will discuss national minorities' music and dance. The national minorities' organisations have been invited to provide suggestions for the strategy.

4.1.2 Continue initiatives for national minorities' languages

There has been positive development in the situation for national minority languages in recent years. At present, the Kven language has made the most progress in the development of a written language.

The Government presented Prop. 108 L (2019–2020) *Language Act*, which is a proposal for a comprehensive language law. The purpose of the Act is to reinforce the Norwegian language and secure it as a socially important language, and to ensure the protection and status of the languages for which the Norwegian State is responsible. In this Act, public bodies are assigned responsibility for “protection and promotion of Kven, Romani, Romanes and Norwegian sign language”: cf. Section 1 (c). This gives public bodies, across sectors, an independent responsibility for assessing measures in their sector that promote these languages in a relevant manner when formulating their sectoral policy. However, public use of these languages in texts will continue to present a challenge in the future as the languages are not very developed as written languages, and because there are no translators for them.

The fact that public bodies are to promote these languages means that they have to implement a range of positive measures in order to extend the use of Kven, Romani and Romanes in addition to those that follow directly from the Minority Language Charter.

The Language Act is a general law intended to pave the way for granting status and protection to the minority languages in other regulations as well. Kven, Romani and Romanes are given national minority language status. The proposed Section 6 reads as follows:

“Section 6 National minority languages

Kven, Romani and Romanes are national minority languages in Norway.

Kven, Romani and Romanes are equivalent to Norwegian as linguistic and cultural expressions.”

This section states that Kven, Romani and Romanes are of equal value to the status of the Norwegian language as a language of use and cultural heritage. This does not mean that these languages play the same role in society as the Norwegian language, as the Norwegian language is a socially important administrative language. Nevertheless, the section can be said to provide a statutory foundation for a future policy that deals with a past involving linguistic and cultural repression.

¹⁰ www.ikanorge.no

4.1.2.1 The Language Council of Norway's work with minority languages

The Language Council of Norway is the Government's advisory body on language issues. The main objective of the Language Council is to help secure Norwegian as a socially important language. The Language Council must also work to promote and reinforce Kven, Romani and Romanes in cooperation with users of these languages.

The Language Council has expertise in key disciplines that are crucial to the revitalisation of a language, such as language norming, word creation, documentation of languages, introduction of spelling norms and development of terminology.

The Language Council maintains contact with the minority organisations and other relevant institutions and provides advice in connection with language projects. The Language Council's outward-looking outreach work includes preparing and presenting information on Kven, Romani and Romanes.

The Language Council is helping to develop written language norms for Romani and Romanes in close cooperation with users of these languages. Written language norms for Romani and Romanes may reinforce the status of the languages, increase the number of language venues and maintain and increase the number of users of these languages.

4.1.2.2 Norming of languages

The norming of a language involves drawing up principles and official rules for that language. It is particularly important to establish an official written language with its own spelling. A language that has traditionally been used verbally has a great deal of variation. For example, the pronunciation of words, conjugations and vocabulary will vary between dialects in the language. By norming, attempts are made to avoid this variation by defining which forms of words and conjugations should be considered correct in the written language. It is important to note that languages that have no official spelling norm are also used in written form. For example, books have been published in both Romanes and Romani in Norway. Today, the authors of these books have selected different spelling principles. Romani and Romanes are also written in private contexts, but the spelling varies.

Norming is often referred to as standardisation, as the norming process frequently leads to a standard for a language. There are three standardised variants for Kven.

Norming is a long and complex process due to efforts to achieve consensus among users of the language on what the standard forms of the language should be; and also because of the many tasks that follow, such as developing official reference works for the language (dictionaries, grammar books, textbooks, etc.) where users can find the normed forms. While this process is ongoing and the traditional language venues are expanded, there will also be a need for word formation and terminology work. The fact that some of the norms and spelling norms are revised along the way is also a natural part of the process.

4.1.2.3 Responsibilities of the National Library of Norway

The National Library of Norway's social mission is to collect, preserve and make available published material from all publishing platforms in Norway, including those published about national minorities and in the languages of the national minorities. The National Library is an important source for research and knowledge about Norwegian conditions as it makes the collection available and disseminates it.

4.1.2.4 Language measures for Kven

2018 saw the Government's launch of *Målrettet plan 2017–2021 – videre innsats for kvensk språk* [Targeted plan 2017–2021 – further initiatives for the Kven language]. This plan builds

on the efforts made by the Kven community for a number of years in order to preserve and reinforce their own language. The Kven language is still vulnerable, with few active language users, particularly among younger people. At the same time, there is a linguistic revitalisation process underway in the Kven/Norwegian-Finnish community.

The Government established a grant scheme in 2015 so as to reinforce efforts to revitalise the Kven language and promote Kven/Norwegian-Finnish culture. One important purpose of this scheme is to promote the Kven language and Kven/Norwegian-Finnish identity in children and young people. In 2020, grants were provided for the running of five language and cultural centres in Troms og Finnmark. The total grant for this between 2015 and 2020 amounts to NOK 40.6 million.

The Ministry of Culture provides grants to Kainun institutti – The Kven Institute, a national centre for Kven language and culture in Børselev in the municipality of Porsanger. The institute was officially opened in 2007 and has been responsible for running Kväänin kieliraati – the Kven Language Council. Kväänin kieliraati – the Kven Language Council began working on principles for the written Kven language in 2007, and since 2008 it has been working on the norming of Kven, in cooperation with the Kven Language Forum. The Kven Language Council was discontinued in 2010, although the Kven Language Forum has continued its work. The institute is still responsible for running Kväänin kielitinka – the Kven Language Forum.

The purpose of Kainun institutti – The Kven Institute is to develop, document and disseminate knowledge and information about the Kven language and culture and promote the use of the Kven language among individuals, especially young people, and in the community. One example of this is *språkreirprosjektet*, the language nest project, launched by Kainun institutti The Kven Institute in Porsanger, which led to establishment of a Kven preschool department. Kainun institutti – The Kven Institute will receive NOK 6.9 million in operating grants from the Ministry of Culture in 2020.

Kainun institutti – The Kven Institute and the Language Council of Norway are key drivers in efforts to follow up language policy for Kven. They have adjacent tasks and responsibilities related to careful tending of the Kven language and development of the language, and complement one another's competences in key disciplines. Hence the Language Council of Norway and Kainun institutti – The Kven Institute have entered into a cooperation agreement, partly as a follow-up of *Målrettet plan 2017–2021 – videre innsats for kvensk språk*. The purpose of this agreement is to help the two institutions to apply and further develop the expertise in and relating to Kven that they manage, and to cooperate with different sectors.

Written Kven language is standardised in three norm variants that are still being developed. Eira Söderholm's Kven grammar (Kainun grammatikki, 2014) has been particularly crucial to standardisation. There is still no satisfactory dictionary for Kven, but The Kven Institute has created a Kven online dictionary in cooperation with the University of Tromsø – the Arctic University of Norway. This dictionary currently contains 9104 words.¹¹ Kainun institutti – The Kven Institute and Giellatekno at the University of Tromsø – the Arctic University of Norway are working together to develop Kven language technology tools.

¹¹ Kva bruker vi minoritetsspråksordbøker til? Ein studie av brukarloggane for tolv tospråklege ordbøker. In: *LexicoNordica* 26, 177–198. (Trond Trosterud, 2019).

4.1.2.5 Language measures for Romani and Romanes

The Romani and Romanes languages are recognised as non-territorial languages under the Minority Language Charter.¹² The Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers has made recommendations related to the Romani and Romanes languages in connection with Norway's reporting on the follow-up of the Minority Language Charter. They assume that Norway should develop a strategy and implement proactive measures to promote Romani and Romanes in cooperation with users of these languages.

Romani, also known as Norwegian Romani, is the language of the Romani/Tater people. This language is used in both Norway and Sweden and can be divided into different dialects and linguistic varieties. The Romani language is in a very vulnerable situation today on account of the assimilation policy. Many people, particularly the younger generation, use the language as a mixed language on a day-to-day basis as important expressions for communication and identity. Traditionally, Romani has primarily been a verbal language, but the language is often used in written form on social media, and there are a number of books published in Romani.

A number of measures have been implemented in order to collect terms and document the Romani language. Other language projects have also been implemented. Many of these measures have been implemented by language users themselves. At the University of Oslo, Jakob Wiedner has created a digital Romani dictionary as part of his PhD project. This makes it possible to search for terms between Romani and Norwegian and Romani and English.¹³

There is considerable disagreement in the Norwegian Romani community about whether the public sector should assist with efforts to reinforce the language, and whether the language should be disseminated through public institutions. This is why it is important for work on the language to continue to take place in cooperation with users of this minority language. Parts of the community are helping to revitalise the language. The Language Council of Norway has attended meetings as a supervisor and observer.

The Romani/Tater Cultural Fund Foundation was paid a total of NOK 36.6 million between 2008 and 2014. The purpose of this fund was to preserve and develop the language of the Romani/Tater people. The Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation is unaware of which language measures have been implemented by the foundation. Funding for the foundation was withdrawn in 2015, and a temporary grant scheme was established at the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation between 2017 and 2018, where grants were given for seminars on the preservation and revitalisation of Romani. Chapter 5.1.2.1 contains more information about the Cultural Fund.

Grants have been provided for various Romani language projects via the grant scheme for the Romani/Tater people, which was established by Arts Council Norway in 2019. Among other things, funds have been donated for development of a Romani app and establishment of a Romani Language Council.

Romanes is the language of the Norwegian Roma, and most people use the language verbally as their daily language. Romanes means "in the Roma way", and the language has adopted words from all areas where Roma have lived over the years. Roma from different countries understand one another, and periods of travel across national borders are helping the Roma to preserve their language.

¹² *Romani* (the language of the Romani/Tater people) and *Romanes* (the language of the Roma) are Indo-Aryan languages, a subset of Indo-European languages. Romani uses Norwegian sound and conjugation patterns and Scandinavian grammar. Romanes has more Indian traits than Romani.

¹³Wiedner defended his thesis *Norwegian Romani: A Linguistic View on a Minority Language in the North of Europe*, in 2017.

Romanes – unlike Romani, the language of the Romani/Tater people – is characterised by the fact that it has developed in areas where Roma have made up a significant proportion of the population, and so it has not been influenced grammatically by European languages.

The Roma have been without a written language for most of their history, which is why the narrative art has always been highly valued. Both their history and other forms of important knowledge have been passed on verbally from generation to generation. Romanes is now used in writing to some extent nowadays, including on social media. However, the language has no written standard. As the language is in daily use, there is a solid linguistic foundation on which to build in efforts to protect and promote Romanes in Norway. A language project under the auspices of Romano Kher, in cooperation with the Language Council of Norway, will culminate in an ABC for Romanes. This initiative is being funded by grants from the grant scheme for national minorities.

4.1.2.6 Promote the languages of national minorities in the public domain

Seeing your own language in use in the public domain helps to give the language status. It can also contribute to increased use of the language in other regards. Article 11 of the Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities states that "In areas traditionally inhabited by substantial numbers of persons belonging to a national minority, the Parties shall endeavour, in the framework of their legal system, including, where appropriate, agreements with other States, and taking into account their specific conditions, to display traditional local names, street names and other topographical indications intended for the public also in the minority language when there is a sufficient demand for such indications."

The Ministry of Culture administers the Act relating to Place Names (Place Name Act), which provides protection for Norwegian, Sámi and Kven place names in accordance with national legislation and international conventions. The Place Name Act ensures the use and continuation of Sámi, Kven and Forest Finnish place names as important national cultural heritage by promoting them in the public domain. Documentation of the name, determining the spelling of the name and active use of the name are the primary instruments for protecting place names. When determining the spelling, this is based on inherited local pronunciation of the place name and an analysis is performed to find out what the place name means. How the spelling can convey this phonetic and meaningful content is also taken into consideration.

Kven place names follow Kven spelling according to established principles.

Any place names in Romani and Romanes are not covered by the Place Name Act, primarily because no separate place names have been documented for these languages. If it were appropriate to determine the spelling of place names in Romani and Romanes, it would be necessary to decide which spelling principles to use, since no separate spellings have been adopted for these languages.

The Kven Place Name Service (Paikannimipalvelus) is an important element in the Language Council of Norway's efforts to promote the Kven language. This work is based on data collected from Kven-speaking informants who still know or used to know the Kven names used traditionally in certain areas. The Language Council of Norway also uses a funding scheme to provide grants to individuals, organisations and institutions wishing to collect Kven place names. These established structures can be used more actively in order to ensure that Kven place names are used and made available.

One of the measures in *Målrettet plan 2017–2021 – videre innsats for kvensk språk* is for the Language Council of Norway and the Kven Place Name Service to raise awareness among the Kven community of the grant scheme for collecting place names and create a strategy for increased use of Kven place names within the scope of the Place Name Act.

The Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers has indicated the need to follow up the implementation of existing legislation on multilingual place name signs that also include Kven. Although there is a legal framework in place, it is unfortunate that place names adopted are not always used in practice. In line with the intention of *Målrettet plan 2017–2021 – videre innsats for kvensk språk*, the Government is of the opinion that it is important to follow up decisions on the use of Kven place names and for central authorities to ensure that this is actually done.

An amendment to the Act relating to place names in 2019 ensures a clear right of appeal to the County Governor if municipalities fail to follow the rules on the use of Sámi, Kven and Forest Finnish place names. Appeals must be submitted to a superior body when state bodies fail to follow the law.

The Government has proposed establishment official Kven and Sámi names for Norway and the Kingdom of Norway in order to promote Norway's status as a diverse and multilingual state. The case is currently under consultation, and a decision will be made in the spring of 2021.



Trilingual signage in Porsanger. Photo: Bjørn Jørgensen / NN / Samfoto / NTB

4.1.2.7 Media

NRK's obligations towards national minorities include a requirement for NRK to offer programmes for these groups. Furthermore, NRK must pass on information about various minority groups and diversity in Norwegian society. NRK points out that this assignment is increasingly being performed by means of multilingual content and publishing. In its Public Broadcasting Report (most recently issued in 2018), the Norwegian Media Authority concludes that NRK meets the requirement to provide programmes for national and linguistic minorities.

The Norwegian Media Authority supervises NRK to see whether it is fulfilling its obligations and submits an annual Public Broadcasting Report. The Authority concludes in the report for 2019 that NRK meets the requirements. The Norwegian Media Authority is of the opinion

that NRK's general content strategy contributes effectively towards promoting the fact that Norway is a society that is home to a wide range of identities, as well as providing information on this. In 2019, the report points out that NRK had programmes about, or for, all the different national minorities on its platforms during the year.

The first broadcast in Finnish on NRK Radio took place in 1970, with a weekly broadcast time of five minutes. The broadcast time was eventually extended to 12 minutes. In 2017, NRK replaced the radio broadcasts with the website nrk.no/kvensk/kvaäni, which provides content for and about the Kven minority. NRK has communicated with its audience with Kven ancestry to find out about their needs. The website presents written Kven and recordings of spoken Kven, and readers can stay up to date on what is going on in the Kven/Norwegian-Finnish community in Norway. According to NRK, the aim of this offering is to help Kvens/Norwegian Finns experience a sense of pride and community. The district office in Tromsø runs the website and regularly publishes new content about Kven language and culture. According to NRK, the website is also an important forum for communication with the public and other people who are interested in Kven culture. One aim of the offering is to help more people learn Kven, and to motivate more people to use Kven in their day-to-day lives. In 2019, NRK Kvääni published 26 brief videos on its website that were aimed at children and young people, and also produced videos for social media. These videos contained simple words and short sentences for everyday use.

The Ministry of Culture provides operating grants to the monthly newspaper *Ruijan Kaiku*. *Ruijan Kaiku* was founded in 1995 and is a trilingual newspaper that writes mainly in Norwegian, Kven and Finnish, but also in Meänkieli and Swedish. This newspaper is aimed at Kvens/Norwegian Finns and Finns, and has subscribers in Norway, Sweden and Finland. In 2020, *Ruijan Kaiku* received NOK 1,265 million from the Ministry of Culture and NOK 830,000 from the grant scheme for the Kven language and Kven/Norwegian-Finnish culture.

4.1.3 Safeguarding the cultural environment of national minorities

The Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities places emphasis on cultural heritage as a fundamental component of the identity of national minorities. The physical traces, the cultural environment, of national minorities form an important part of the diverse cultural heritage of Norway. The cultural environment provides a physical foundation for knowledge, self-understanding and identity and therefore plays an important part. They are also important elements in the minority groups' narrative relating to themselves, for self-understanding and identity.

The role and importance of cultural heritage in society reflects the prevailing values in society at all times. While most attention used to be paid to nation-building and things that are specifically "Norwegian", nowadays we look more closely at the breadth and diversity of society. Increased representativeness of cultural heritage was brought in as one of the performance indicators for the national environmental goals in 2000, and has been continued in White Paper no. 16 (2004–2005) *Living with cultural heritage* and White Paper no. 35 (2012–2013) *The past with a foothold*. In 2009, the Office of the Auditor General of Norway pointed to a lack of attainment of goals linked with cultural heritage among minorities.¹⁴ Emphasis on the cultural heritage of national minorities at the Norwegian Directorate for Cultural Heritage began in 2016, and this is a concrete measure in order to ensure increased representativeness, greater awareness and more knowledge about the cultural heritage of the national minorities.

The emphasis on diversity is continued in the new White no. 16 (2019–2020) *New goals in cultural environment policy* – Engagement, sustainability and diversity. One of the measures

¹⁴ Office of the Auditor General of Norway, Document no. 3:9 (2008–2009), Office of the Auditor General of Norway's investigation of how the Ministry of the Environment observes its national responsibility for protected and listed buildings.

in the White Paper is to prepare a new Cultural Environment Act to replace today's Cultural Heritage Act. This White Paper also calls for close cooperation with the museum sector and volunteers in order to reinforce the link between tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

4.1.3.1 Minority project at the Directorate for Cultural Heritage

The minority project at the Directorate for Cultural Heritage is all about protecting important cultural environments and helping to raise awareness of the history and cultural heritage of national minorities all over Norway. One objective is for the initiative to ensure that the national minority groups feel that their history and cultural environment are perceived and recognised. Discussion with minority groups is a fundamental premise of the initiative, and a prerequisite for arriving at a unified selection of cultural environments that represent the history of the minority. The minority group itself defines which cultural environment represents their history.

In the past, cultural environments linked with the national minorities were not particularly valued by the wider community. Hence both lost knowledge and the poor condition of cultural relics and cultural environments present challenges. Acquiring knowledge and making financial contributions to remediation of the cultural environment are an important part of the initiative. Dissemination is also important as a way of highlighting the cultural heritage of the national minorities in society. The project's cooperation with museums and associations is key here.

The work done on the cultural environment of national minorities has also helped to raise awareness and increase knowledge about how the majority and minority populations have influenced one another mutually; for better or for worse. For some of the minorities, the cultural environment is of modest scope and more related to use and history rather than building traditions. The link to intangible cultural heritage becomes particularly important against that backdrop.

The Directorate for Cultural Heritage's emphasis on the cultural environment of minorities deals with the national minorities group by group. The initiative by the Directorate for Cultural Heritage that has made the most progress involves with Forest Finnish and Kven cultural environments, where a number of conservation initiatives have been announced and several decisions have been made. Work on Jewish cultural relics is just beginning. Work on cultural environments linked with the Roma and the Romani/Tater people is then set to follow.

Continuation of efforts on the cultural environment of national minorities must be viewed in light of the cultural environment report, White no. 16 (2019–2020) *New objectives in cultural environment policy*, and its follow-up.

Conservation of Abborhøgda

Situated in Varaldskogen in the municipality of Kongsvinger, Abborhøgda is a complete Forest Finnish place with intact characteristic buildings, an organic yard structure and surrounding operating areas. Conservation at Abborhøgda has set the standard for a new way of looking at conservation work, which involved working holistically and with different perspectives and stakeholders in parallel. The Abborhøgda cultural environment was in very poor condition but highly valued by the Forest Finnish minority, who highlighted this as one of the most important places that they wanted conserved. The Society for the Preservation of Ancient Norwegian Monuments has taken over as owner and will be working in cooperation with representatives of the minority group, local history teams and the Museum for Forest Finn Culture to use Abborhøgda as a venue for learning and passing on Forest Finnish cultural heritage, building tradition and other traditions.



An event taking place during the conservation of Abborhøgda. Photo: Synne Vik Torsdottir, Norwegian Directorate for Cultural Heritage

Glossary

Cultural heritage: A collective term for both tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

Cultural environment: Areas where cultural relics form part of a larger whole or context. This is also a collective term that covers the terms “cultural relics, cultural environments and landscapes”, and that is used when referring to the field as a whole.

Cultural relic: Traces of human activity in our physical environment, including locations linked with historical events, beliefs or traditions.

Landscape: An area, as people perceive it, where the distinctive character is a result of the influence of and interaction between natural and/or human factors.

Worthy of protection/preservation: A cultural relic/cultural environment that has undergone a cultural historical assessment and been identified as worthy of protection. Most cultural relics/cultural environments worthy of protection do not have formal protection pursuant to the Cultural Heritage Act, the Planning and Building Act or a binding agreement.

4.1.4 Safeguarding initiatives to prevent racism, discrimination and hate speech

Racism, discrimination and hate speech prevent active participation in society. Little is known about racism, discrimination and hate speech to which national minorities are exposed. One reason for this is that ethnic affiliation is not recorded in official statistics in Norway. Another reason is that it is difficult to conduct ethically sound studies on populations as small as the national minority groups. Confidence in the authorities is low among some of the national minorities, and so many people are sceptical about taking part in surveys all about belonging to a minority groups. Nevertheless, the qualitative research that does exist shows that national minorities experience discrimination to a greater extent than the general population. This is particularly true of Roma. Coding antisemitism as an independent motive was facilitated in the police criminal case system as of 2018. The Criminal Case Register shows that in 2019, there were 17 recorded cases of reported hate crimes listing antisemitism as a motive.

There are challenges associated with mapping attitudes towards the various national minorities by means of attitude surveys, partly because many people know little about these groups. With that in mind, we know that there are distinctly negative attitudes towards Roma in the population, and that there are also negative attitudes towards Jews. The Center for Studies of the Holocaust and Religious Minorities have mapped attitudes towards Jews and Roma by means of nationwide surveys conducted in 2012 and 2017. These surveys show that 12.1 per cent of the population was severely prejudiced against Jews in 2012, and 8.3 per cent in 2017. The same surveys also show that Roma are the group that most people in Norway would strongly dislike having as neighbours or friends. There are no corresponding surveys of attitudes towards the other three minority groups. In 2020, work began on a third survey on attitudes towards Jews, Roma, etc. in order to gauge developments over time. This survey, which again is being conducted by the Center for Studies of the Holocaust and Religious Minorities, is due to be completed in 2022. The Ministry of Culture holds primary responsibility for the survey, and it is being funded jointly by the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Children and Families, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security, the Ministry of Education and Research and the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation.

The Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers has made a number of recommendations for Norway with regard to discrimination against national minorities in connection with Norway's reports on follow-up of the Framework Convention for National Minorities. They have proposed, inter alia, that the Norwegian authorities take steps to counter the discrimination experienced by the Roma and the Romani/Tater people, including access to education and housing. There is a need to find out more about the extent of discrimination so as to assess measures that can counter discrimination in the housing market. This means that the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation will be able to chart discrimination against various groups in the housing market. The Government also has a number of measures that will help to bring about a more efficient market and reinforce the rule of law for tenants and landlords. In its national budget for 2021, the Government proposes to extend the scope of the Rent Disputes Tribunal to all of Norway. The Rent Disputes Tribunal is a body that deals with disputes between landlords and tenants. The Committee of Ministers highlights the fact that it is important to improve knowledge of national minorities in Norway and implement measures that increase awareness of national minorities in an effective and appropriate manner with a view to combating ethnic discrimination.

The Government has a broad and unified initiative to prevent racism, discrimination and hate speech in its *Action* plan against racism and discrimination on grounds of ethnicity and religion (2020–2023) and Strategy against hate speech (2016–2020). This action plan is based on the fact that racism and discrimination affect many different groups in Norwegian society, and includes fifty measures in nine different areas of society. The action plan includes measures to increase cross-sectoral cooperation in order to counter racism, discrimination and hate speech, research in order to find out more about racism and discrimination, and measures to reinforce diversity and inclusion in the cultural sector. The

strategy aims to counter hate speech due to gender, ethnicity and religion, sexual orientation and disability. The strategy is being reviewed by the Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research (NIBR).

The Government is establishing a new grant scheme to counter racism, discrimination and hate speech as of 2021. This scheme will be managed by the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir). The purpose of this scheme is to reinforce organisations, municipalities and any other stakeholders working to prevent racism and discrimination. The Ministry of Culture proposed in Prop. 1 S (2020–2021) that NOK 8 million be allocated to the scheme. The scheme will assist with following up the objectives of *Action plan against racism and discrimination on grounds of ethnicity and religion (2020–2023)* and efforts to combat hate speech. The Ministry of Culture will also be providing funding to the Center for Studies of the Holocaust and Religious Minorities for an exhibition on casual racism.

The Government also launched *Action plan against antisemitism (2016–2020)* in 2016. The aim of this plan is to reduce the extent of antisemitism in Norwegian society. The action plan includes eleven targeted measures in a wide range of areas such as teaching, dissemination, research, culture, recording of antisemitism as a motive for hate crime and efforts to combat antisemitism outside Norway. All measures have been initiated and are ongoing. The action plan will expire at the end of 2020, and the Government has decided to continue the initiative. The Government will be launching a renewed Action plan against antisemitism in January 2021.

4.2 National minorities participate in public decision-making processes

The other general objective of the policy is for national minorities to participate in public decision-making processes. This objective is derived from Article 15 of the Council of Europe's Framework Convention, which states that "The parties shall create the conditions necessary for the effective participation of persons belonging to national minorities in cultural, social and economic life, and in public affairs, in particular those affecting them", cf. Section 2.1.2.3 of the White Paper. This objective is also in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, target 16.7, which is based on "Ensuring responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels".

The Government operates in compliance with both the Framework Convention and the Sustainable Development Goal by supporting national minorities' own organisations and establishing different venues for communication between central authorities and minority organisations.

4.2.1 Define, anchor and continue to ensure effective participation

The Framework Convention does not specify how effective participation should take place, but states that national minorities must be made capable of influencing their own situation and expressing their identity freely. In a Norwegian context, effective participation has mainly involved reinforcing national minorities' own organisations by providing operating grants to organisations that meet certain criteria and establishing venues for communication between national minorities and central authorities. The reason for this is that active organisations and communication allow minorities to provide suggestions and have their voices heard in respect of policymaking and matters that particularly affect them. It is also in line with Norwegian tradition, where a vibrant democracy with broad participation is an important social goal, and where voluntary organisations are of great importance to democracy and the individual's opportunity make their voices heard. Voluntary organisations connect people and help to maintain equal shared values and a common cultural identity.

This is a practice that the Government plans to continue. At the same time, the Government recognises that there is both a need to clarify what the authorities understand by the concept of *effective participation* and the framework that applies to communication: see section 4.2.1.2 on communication.

A number of national minority organisations would like much more influence and involvement in policy formulation and approaches than the central authorities can provide, and a number of them interpret effective participation as being the same as co-determination. In its report *Kulturell berikelse – politisk besv er. Gjennomgang av politikken overfor nasjonale minoriteter 2000–2019* (2020), the Telemark Research Institute is thinking along the same lines. This report states that more co-determination is needed in order to achieve effective participation. Dr. Maria Lundberg (1998) has reviewed the international legal framework for the protection of national minorities and writes the following. “The term ‘effective participation’ does not imply that minorities should have co-determination, but they must be capable of influencing their own situation, and appropriate consideration must be given to their interests in cultural, social and economic life and in public life.”¹⁵ The Government builds its policy in respect of national minorities on this interpretation of the Framework Convention. Effective participation and co-determination are not the same thing.

A number of national minority organisations have stated to the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation that they want co-determination when it comes to distribution of grant funds. That said, the public sector has to adhere to rules on impartiality when it comes to grant management, cf. the *Act relating to procedure in cases concerning the public administration (Public Administration Act)*. The rules on impartiality can present particular challenges when it comes to small groups and communities. Nobody can help decide on allocations to themselves, their close associates, their own organisation or their own project. However, Arts Council Norway and Troms og Finnmark County Council, which manages the grant schemes for national minorities, have planned various forms of communication with minorities that are not directly linked with the processing of applications and decisions on allocations.

4.2.1.1 Continuation of operating grants to national minority organisations

A grant scheme was established for national minorities in 1999 so as to reinforce their participation in society and their opportunities to further develop their languages, culture and communities. Operating grants are given to these organisations via the grant scheme with a view to reinforcing minority organisations and their opportunities to promote their interests in respect of the authorities.

For the organisations to receive operating grants, their purpose must involve promoting the interests and safeguarding the rights of one of the national minorities and preserving and developing the minority’s culture, identity, language, tradition and/or cultural heritage. These organisations must also have at least 100 paying members. Exceptions may be made to the requirement for membership figures for the smallest minorities in terms of numbers, or in cases where there are no other organisations within the minority in question. Organisations that do not have direct members or are unable to provide auditor-verified membership numbers, receive funding as umbrella organisations.

As national minority organisations have relatively few members and the recruitment base within each minority is limited, the Ministry has proposed that the organisations receive slightly more funding per member than other organisations that receive government operating grants.

¹⁵ Survey of Instruments which contain or affect the Rights of Members of minorities. Dr. Maria Lundberg. Working Paper 1998:6 Norwegian Centre for Human Rights.

The Government will continue the scheme of operating grants to national minority organisations. Reinforcing the minorities' self-organisation is important so that minorities can participate actively in society and communicate with central authorities.

4.2.1.2 Facilitate better communication between national minorities and central authorities

The Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation has established various venues for communication between the national minorities and central authorities so as to help national minorities participate in public decision-making processes. The regular meeting point is the *Contact Forum between national minorities and central authorities* that was established at the request of the Council of Europe in 2003. This Contact Forum provides an opportunity for minorities to provide suggestions directly to the authorities, and for the authorities to keep the minorities up to date on current issues.

From the national minorities, organisations that receive operating aid from the grant scheme for national minorities are the primary Contact Forum participants. Since 2018, the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation has allowed each organisation to provide more representatives if they include at least two under the age of 30, with a view to including more younger participants from the national minorities. The Roma Council is also invited to attend the Contact Forum so as to help ensure that Roma are ensured effective participation in accordance with the Framework Convention, even though they currently have no organisations in receipt of operating aid. Representatives of relevant ministries, directorates and other public agencies participate in the Contact Forum, depending on what is on the agenda.

Contact Forum participants are invited to submit written evaluations after each forum. The Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation reviews this feedback and uses it to improve the following year's forum. Changes such as extending the forum over two days, providing minorities with more time to speak, having an external chairman and broader participation are examples of initiatives that have all been introduced at the request of participants. Minorities also make suggestions for topics to be addressed at the forum. These evaluations differ fairly substantially, but essentially it is clear that minorities would like to keep the Contact Forum between national minorities and central authorities. It emerged after the 2018 Contact Forum that minorities also would like to hold regular meetings with the Ministry separately. So from 2019, the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation has introduced regular annual meetings with any individual organisations wishing to meet. The Ministry also holds meetings with the organisations individually when the organisations themselves request it, or when the Ministry needs to raise specific issues. The other sector ministries also hold meetings individually with the organisations on specific issues.

The Ministry has held two meetings with young representatives of national minorities so as to bring greater diversity of perspectives into efforts on the White Paper. Some of these participants are affiliated with minority organisations, while others do not. These young people have provided valuable suggestions for the initiative. See Chapter 3.6 for further details.

The Government also ensures participation of national minorities in public decision-making processes by inviting representatives of minorities to attend when ministries devise action plans, information materials and other targeted efforts in policy areas that directly affect them. As far as the ministries are concerned, it is very useful to get minorities' contributions and suggestions in such processes. The Directorate of Education cooperated with minority organisations when preparing information material on national minorities for employees at preschools and schools in 2014, including the guide entitled *Våre nasjonale minoriteter* [Our national minorities]. The National Centre of Multicultural Education also communicated with minority organisations when preparing assignments and teaching programmes on topics

such as democracy, human rights and national minorities for use in preschools and schools at www.minstemme.no.

For instance, a reference group consisting of representatives from Romani/Tater organisations and individuals from the ethnic group was established in the follow-up to Official Norwegian Report (NOU) 2015: *7 Assimilation and Resistance – Norwegian policies towards Tater/Romani people from 1850 to the present*. Reference groups have also been established for work on *Action plan against antisemitism (2016–2020)*, and in ongoing efforts to renew and continue the action plan against antisemitism after 2020. National minorities are also represented in the reference group for *Action plan against racism and discrimination on grounds of ethnicity and religion (2020–2023)*.

Feedback to the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation has revealed that minority organisations have different experiences of being part of reference groups. Whether minorities' participation in a reference group is perceived as relevant and useful for them is dependent on factors such as what initiatives such reference groups should help to develop and what opportunities the minorities have to influence this work. It is important for the ministries to clarify expectations in advance so as to include contributions and suggestions from the national minorities when formulating action plans and similar documents going forward. This applies both to the role of the representatives in a reference group and the extent to which they can influence policy by participating in such processes.

The fact that the national minorities' organisations have goals and ambitions that go beyond the objectives of policy and what the Government is able to achieve is natural. There are also organisations within a number of minorities that have different goals and are concerned with different issues.

The Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation is continuing its communication with national minorities' organisations. The Contact Forum exists at the request of most of the minorities, but the Ministry will assess together with the minorities whether there is a need for annual forum meetings and whether the Contact Forum should be organised differently. The 2019 scheme involving regular annual meetings with the organisations will be continued individually, for those organisations that wish to do so.

4.3 National minorities receive fair and equivalent services

The third overall goal is for national minorities to receive fair and equivalent services. The municipalities are responsible for ensuring that their residents receive fair and equivalent services in respect of preschools, primary and lower secondary education and various health and welfare services, for example.

The Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers has had recommendations related to equivalent services, including on matters such as improving knowledge about national minorities in public services and reinforcing competence when it comes to tackling cultural diversity.

National minority groups have historical experience with state discrimination and pressure with regard to assimilation and exclusion as part of previous Norwegianisation policies. This may affect the groups' relationship with public authorities today and influence how they seek out public services, and to what extent. Aarseth and Nordvik's 2015 study of the living conditions and quality of life among Taters/Romani¹⁶ also shows how the encounters of some Romani/Tater people with the public sector are characterised by mistrust and a feeling that they are treated differently because they are Romani/Tater people. The fact that parts of the administration know little about the national minorities may also influence minorities'

¹⁶ Dagens situasjon. Levekår og livskvalitet blant tater/romanifolk by Monica Five Aarset and Ragnhild Nordvik, appendix to Official Norwegian Report (NOU) 2015: *7 Assimilation and Resistance*.

experience of using public services. According to the evaluation of *Action plan for improvement of Roma living conditions in Oslo*, employees of the first-line service in contact with Roma may refuse physical contact. This applies to a number of public services, such as schools, the police, child welfare and the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration.

The Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers has made a number of recommendations concerning the Kvens and education in the Kven language. Teacher shortages and teaching and learning opportunities in Kven have been highlighted as areas that the Committee of Ministers feels that Norway should follow up. The Committee of Ministers has pointed out its reports in both 2010 and 2015 that continuing and stepping up efforts to revitalise and promote the Kven language requires immediate action. Development of Kven teaching in schools, reinforcing teacher training and an increased presence in the media are highlighted as such immediate measures.

The Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers has been concerned with opportunities for Romani/Tater people and Roma to gain employment and access to apprenticeship schemes and reduce inequalities experienced by Roma in particular when it comes to access to housing.

Many Roma have difficult living conditions characterised by extensive challenges in the conditions in which they live. Romano Kher has a bridgebuilding service which helps to ensure that Roma receive equivalent services. The bridgebuilder service supervises and assists Roma in encounters with government bodies and agencies, and has employees with both Roma and non-Roma backgrounds.

The bridgebuilder service is based in Oslo, but it also assists Roma in adjacent municipalities in their dealings with the authorities and the wider community. On average, four to five people every day turn to the bridgebuilder service for guidance. This service provides support and guidance to Roma in matters related to child welfare, discrimination, various conflicts, housing and schools. Low confidence in the authorities remains a challenge.

The bridgebuilder service also informs the first-line service about the Roma's need for assistance: for instance, there may be a need to find solutions to linguistic challenges or illiteracy among some Roma.

4.3.1 Preschool, primary and lower secondary education and higher education

Preschool and primary and lower secondary education must ensure that all preschool children and school students, including those from national minorities, have a good preschool and school environment. Preschools must promote an inclusive and stimulating environment that supports the desire to play, explore, learn and master. Schools must develop inclusive communities that promote health, well-being and learning for all.

One of the UN Sustainable Development Goals affecting policy in the field of education is target 4.1, which states: "By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes." Of the national minorities, primarily Roma have little schooling and challenges associated with completing schooling. The Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers has pointed out that Norway should improve access to education for both Roma and Romani/Tater people and that these groups must be given equivalent access to good teaching while also helping them to safeguard their own culture. The Government provides funding for measures for Roma students, cf. Chapter 4.3.1.2.

Universities and colleges must offer higher education based on research and experience and help to bring about high skills levels in society. Knowledge of national minorities is part of this. Teacher training must help to ensure that teachers with Kven language skills are available.

4.3.1.1. *Kven language at preschools and in primary and secondary education*

Preschools must highlight, value and promote diversity and mutual respect and use diversity as a resource in their educational work. Staff at preschools must promote linguistic and cultural diversity, support the children's different cultural expressions and identities and promote diversity in communication, language and other forms of expression.

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training has allocated funding to reinforce the Kven preschool programme. This funding has largely been allocated to projects linked with Kainun institutti – The Kven Institute, which has been working for a number of years on language revitalisation projects such as Kven language nests and language showers. These projects have concentrated on language stimulation for preschool children, support for parents to help their children with bilingual development, increasing knowledge among preschool teachers working with the Kven language at preschools in Northern Norway and creating networks between these preschools. In Porsanger, the language nest project has led to the establishment of a separate Kven department in one of the preschools. In Nordreisa, six or seven preschools attended by 77 children are taking part in various projects to stimulate their use of the Kven language.

The general part of the curriculum emphasises that schools must help to ensure that every student can safeguard and develop their identity in an inclusive and diverse community. It also highlights the fact that this education must ensure that students become secure users of the language, develop their linguistic identity and feel that being multilingual is a resource in school and in society.

Section 2-7 of the Education Act states that students at primary and lower secondary schools are entitled to education in Kven or Finnish when at least three students with a Kven/Norwegian-Finnish background at primary and lower secondary schools in Troms og Finnmark require it. The Education Act Committee has proposed to continue this right in Official Norwegian Report (NOU) 2019: 23 *New Education Act*. With effect from 1 August 2019, Section 2-7 of the Education Act was amended so that Kven and Finnish are placed on an equal footing in the Act.

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training provides funding for teaching in Kven or Finnish as a second language in primary and secondary schools.

A renewed *curriculum for Kven or Finnish as a second language* has been established for primary and secondary schools and will be introduced gradually from 1 August 2020. Together with the introduction of this curriculum, there will be differentiation between teaching in Kven and Finnish in GSI¹⁷ in the future so that statistics on how many students are taught in each of the languages will be available.

The research institute Norut mapped the reasons for dropouts from Finnish as a second language on behalf of the Norwegian Directorate of Education in 2015. This survey showed that there are challenges related to a lack of teaching materials and teachers who are able to teach the subject, that many students and parents are unaware of their rights, and that there is a lack of information about the subject.¹⁸ A number of measures have been implemented in an attempt to alleviate these challenges.

The County Governor of Troms og Finnmark, for instance, has funds for development of teaching aids in Kven. A series of textbooks in Kven has been developed for Years 1 to 7, along with a dictionary for this textbook series, and a Kven grammar book for Years 5 to 7. Textbooks in Finnish have also been developed for junior and lower secondary levels with

¹⁷ Grunnskolen informasjonssystem [the primary and lower secondary school information system], a system for recording information about primary and lower secondary schools in Norway.

¹⁸ Kartlegging av årsaker til frafall fra finsk som andrespråk, Vigdis Nygaard and Jørgen Bro, Norut Alta 2015

teacher supervision. Other reading books, workbooks and suchlike have been created in Finnish as well.

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training is in touch with the County Governor of Troms og Finnmark on how best to use the funds allocated for development of teaching aids so that they remedy the challenging teaching material situation. There are few applicants for the grant scheme as it stands at present.

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training has initiated a pilot project in order to assess whether Digilær.no can be used as a digital platform for online teaching in Kven and Finnish. At Digilær.no, teachers can develop, exchange and conduct digital teaching, and teachers and students can collaborate across the current school structure where appropriate.

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training has prepared a video in consultation with representatives of Kven/Norwegian-Finnish organisations about the right to learn Kven or Finnish as a second language. This video was ready by the time schools started back in August 2020, and the aim of the video is to motivate, inspire and inform in order to persuade more students to choose the subject. When the video was released, the Minister for Education and Integration went on social media and encouraged children and young people from Kven/Norwegian-Finnish backgrounds to learn more about their rights. The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training plans to make a number of similar information videos about the subject. The Directorate has also developed support materials for the curriculum in Kven or Finnish as a second language and for the amendment to section 2-7 of the Education Act.

The Government will allow the measures to work for a number of years in order to see whether this helps to increase in numbers of students studying Kven or Finnish as a second language. If these measures do not result in more students studying the subject, the Ministry of Education and Research will consider conducting a new survey in order to investigate why.

4.3.1.2 Measures for higher education in the Kven language

Målrettet plan 2017–2021 – videre innsats for kvensk språk includes measures to reinforce teachers' Kven skills. The University of Tromsø – The Arctic University of Norway (UiT) offers one-year programmes (60 credits) in Kven language, grammar and culture, bachelor's degree programmes in Kven and Finnish and a study programme in Kven and Finnish within its master's programmes in language and literature, with 80 credits in Kven.

In 2018, the Ministry of Education and Research provided financial support for UiT's efforts to develop a teacher training programme in Kven. Funding was also given to the county governors of Troms og Finnmark via the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training to recruit students for Kven in teacher training.

In 2019, UiT announced a study programme in Kven as part of its teacher training for primary and lower secondary level. No primary and lower secondary teacher training students chose this in the first year, but the university admitted students for Kven as in-service training for teachers. Teachers who complete this in-service training will be able to teach Kven in schools, thereby helping to reduce the shortage of Kven teachers.

From 2019, a scheme has been introduced for clearing student loans for students who take 60 credits in Kven as part of or in addition to their teacher training. Recruitment and qualification for Kven studies in teacher training is a long-term initiative, and it is too early to conclude anything about the impact of the measures. UiT has focused on developing material for flexible learning and worked in cooperation with the Norwegian Kven Association – Ruijan kvääniliitto to establish a mentoring scheme for students studying the Kven

language. The aim is for students studying Kven to feel more secure in using the language in teaching contexts, for example.

In the spring of 2021, Kven language centres will offer a basic course in Kven through UiT, which will be worth 10 credits. The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training offers project funding to cover the cost of temporary staff for preschool and school owners whose employees want to take the course.

4.3.1.3 Initiate to ensure that more Roma students complete their schooling

Roma have poor living conditions and little schooling. Low confidence in the authorities has resulted in opposition to sending children to school. Measures have been implemented over a number of years to reinforce the educational facilities offered to Roma students.

When Norway was reporting on the Framework Convention in 2015, the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers pointed out that Roma children's access to education must be improved by reinforcing Roma pilots in financial terms so as to ensure coordination between schools, municipal guidance services and families.

The Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation funds the City of Oslo's "Skolelos for romelever" [School pilot for Roma students] initiative. This measure aims to improve communication and understanding between schools and Roma families and increase the chances of Roma students completing their education. The school pilot system has gradually been reinforced in 2016 and 2019, which has included adding more staff.

The school pilots assist with coordination between schools, students and home. The schools pilots have various educational measures at their disposal to enhance students' learning outcomes and measures to reduce absence. The City of Oslo has indicated increased demand from Roma parents for assistance from the school pilot service. The school pilot service has recently moved from the adult education centre in Skullerud to the Language Centre in the City of Oslo. The service wanted to relocate so as to spend less time travelling and bring about an academic environment that could assist with further development. The school pilot service works in partnership with Romano Kher by holding regular collaborative meetings and providing homework assistance services on Romano Kher premises. Measures have also been implemented for adult education for Roma, but efforts in recent years have primarily been aimed at children.

The Ministry of Education and Research is aiming to establish communication with Romano Kher and the Roma Council in order to look at measures for improving information for Roma about the right to primary and lower secondary education for adults, and about the various opportunities available for upper secondary education for adults.

4.3.2 Child Welfare Services

Many children with Romani/Tater backgrounds were forcibly removed from their homes, and also forcibly adopted from the early 20th century until the end of the 1980s. A study on living conditions and quality of life among Romani/Tater people¹⁹ shows that this policy is still affecting families and their relationship with the Child Welfare Services. Some people mistrust the Child Welfare Services and find that they are treated differently to others, or else they fear such discrimination. This may complicate their relationship with the Child Welfare Services. That said, Child Welfare Service employees who were interviewed in the same study state that they do not find the family situation is any different in families with a

¹⁹ Dagens situasjon. Levekår og livskvalitet blant tatere/romanifolk by Monica Five Aarset and Ragnhild Nordvik, appendix to Official Norwegian Report (NOU) 2015: 7 *Assimilation and Resistance*.

Romani/Tater background than in other families, and that ethnic affiliation is not something that is emphasised when they work with the group.

Encounters between Roma in Norway and the Child Welfare Services have been characterised by challenges. Fear and mistrust of the Child Welfare Services are still widespread. Language problems and failings in communication between the Child Welfare Services and the Roma due to inadequate use of interpreters, for example, create challenges when it comes to establishing good relations. Many Roma would like better cooperation and more understanding from the Child Welfare Services, and Roma representatives emphasise the need for outreach work and communication as important factors in improving relations between the Child Welfare Services and the Roma.

The University of Tromsø – The Arctic University of Norway, in cooperation with Romano Kher and the Church City Mission, will be conducting a research project that aims to improve child welfare for Roma children. This research project is funded by the Ministry of Children and Families.

When Norway was reporting on the Framework Convention in 2015, the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers recommended that the Norwegian authorities should consider the possibility of alternative measures for removing children with Roma and Romani/Tater backgrounds from their homes. The Committee of Ministers was also keen for Norway to reinforce efforts to preserve family ties and the cultural identity of children placed with foster families, including recruiting foster families who belong to the same minority. The committee was also keen to promote a broad understanding of Roma culture at the Child Welfare Services.

The fact that children's linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds should be safeguarded at the Child Welfare Services is a fundamental principle. This applies to everyone with a minority background in Norway. The new Child Welfare Act proposed that the Child Welfare Services should take this into account in its work.

A new general provision is proposed in the proposal to the new Child Welfare Act, which has been submitted for consultation; that the Child Welfare Services should take into account children's linguistic, religious and cultural backgrounds in their work. This will clarify the Child Welfare Services' responsibility to assess specifically how the child's background should be emphasised and taken into account at different stages in a child welfare case.

A major competence boost has also been initiated for the municipal Child Welfare Services. Major emphasis has been placed here on increasing employees' relationship skills and cultural understanding. Among other things, efforts are being made to establish more training programmes in order to reinforce the work of the Child Welfare Services with indigenous peoples and national minorities. One of these services involves a new in-service training programme at VID Specialized University in Stavanger, which began in the autumn of 2019.

The Ministry of Children and Families is also assessing how cultural bridgebuilders, or link workers, can help to reinforce trust and interaction between public services and users. This is an instrument for improving communication and cooperation between the Child Welfare Services and minority families.

A supplementary training programme on minority skills (which also includes indigenous peoples and national minorities) has also been developed which is being offered to selected municipalities and entities within the state Child Welfare Services from spring 2020.

Awareness of national minorities has been specified in the new Regulations on learning outcomes in child welfare training (bachelor's degree in child welfare). It is evident that students must obtain a knowledge about indigenous peoples, ethnic minorities and refugees' life circumstances and rights.

4.3.3 Social services

In some instances, fear and mistrust of the Child Welfare Services can also result in challenges in relation to other public bodies, such as the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration and the health service. In Aarseth and Nordvik's 2015 study *Levekår og livskvalitet blant romanifolk/tatere* [Living conditions and quality of life among Romani/Tater people], a number of people say they have found that they are suspected of wrongdoing in encounters with the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration and other public bodies because they are Romani/Tater people. Their confidence in these institutions is low, therefore. A number of people state that the fact that representatives of the public sector are not familiar with the history of the Romani/Tater people and the assimilation policies that were brought to bear against the group presents a challenge, while others talk about good experiences in their encounters with the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration.

Pursuant to Section 14a of the Act concerning Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration Act), everyone

who contacts the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration office and who wants or needs help to find a job has the right to have their need for assistance assessed. Users who need more extensive assessment of their need for assistance have the right to receive a work capability assessment. Users who have been found to be in need of assistance have the right to participate in the preparation of a specific plan on how to get them a job (activity plan).

There are no specific labour market policy programmes or measures aimed at national minorities. Labour market policy is universally oriented, and labour market measures are assigned by the local Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration offices following an assessment of the individual's needs and capacity for work and viewed in the light of the labour market situation.

The municipalities play an important part in promoting economic and social security through their responsibility for social services at the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration office. This responsibility includes both preventive social work and the individual services relating to information, advice and guidance, financial support, temporary housing provision, individual planning and qualification programmes. The Social Services Act does not include specific provisions relating to national minorities. Decisions on applications for assistance are made on the basis of a specific and individual assessment. Like others, national minorities will be entitled to social services if they meet the conditions of the Act.

4.3.4 Health and care services

Essentially, the health and care services must be universal. On the Granavolden platform, the Government states that the health and care services must be organised on the basis of patients' needs, and patients must be guaranteed equal provision of health services all over Norway.

The Ministry of Health and Care Services knows little of the health and health service needs of national minorities. It is not possible to record patients' ethnicity, and so it is also difficult to know who belongs to a national minority.

During the Public Health Survey in Troms og Finnmark, the Centre for Sámi Health Research at the University of Tromsø – The Arctic University of Norway sent out additional questionnaires to participants with Sámi or Kven/Norwegian-Finnish backgrounds. This survey was conducted in 2019, and a separate report was compiled in 2020 on the basis of the additional module. The results of the survey showed that there were fewer men and women with Kven/Norwegian-Finnish backgrounds who reported good health and dental health compared with majority men and women.

Moreover, there is little research-based knowledge about the health of Jews and Forest Finns, but there is some knowledge about the health of Romani/Tater people and Roma. *Action Plan to improve living conditions for the Roma in Oslo* (2009) describes Roma experiences, with little contact with the health service, inadequate health services and substance abuse problems.

Funds have been allocated to Det Jødiske Bo- og Seniorsenteret Foundation in Oslo since 1996 via the budget for the Ministry of Health and Care Services so as to provide services to residents in care homes for the elderly and nursing homes adapted to specific faith communities. This grant goes some way towards covering the expenses for running the centre and to persuading municipalities to buy places at the centre. Det Jødiske Bo- og Seniorsenteret has a contract with the City of Oslo. The centre received a grant of around NOK 2.7 million in 2019. The centre is run by the Jewish Community of Oslo.

4.4 Awareness of national minorities in the population

The national minority groups are small, and relatively few people are familiar with national minorities. The minorities themselves state that they are frequently met with ignorance. Ensuring that more people are aware of national minorities is an end in itself. This is particularly important as part of efforts to counter prejudice, racism, discrimination and hate speech and to ensure equivalent services.

IPSOS conducted a survey among a representative population base on behalf of the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation in November 2020 in order to map knowledge of national minorities in the population. This survey shows that nine out of ten respondents claim to be aware that we have national minorities in Norway. Among those who claim to be aware of our national minorities, seven out of ten state that Sámi are a national minority. Furthermore, it is evident that people who are aware of the actual national minorities are most likely to know about Kvens/Norwegian Finns (19 per cent). This is followed by Roma (7 per cent) and Romani/Tater people (6 per cent). People are least likely to state that Jews (4 per cent) and Forest Finns (3 per cent) are national minorities in Norway. The survey also shows that elderly people are slightly more aware of national minorities than younger people. People living in Northern Norway are more aware of Kvens/Norwegian Finns than the average.

When people who are unaware that Norway has national minorities are told of which minority groups we have, nine out of ten state that they are aware of Jews, Roma and Romani/Tater people. Fewer people in this group are familiar with Kvens/Norwegian Finns and Forest Finns.

The *Attitudes towards discrimination against Sámi and national minorities* survey conducted by FAFO in 2020 shows that there is broad support in the population for measures for national minorities; both social measures and measures against various forms of discrimination.

4.4.1 Raise awareness of national minorities through the education sector

Awareness of national minorities must be included in all stages of education. *The framework plan for preschool content and tasks* refers specifically to national minorities in the field of Local environment and society. Preschools must help children to become aware of the national minorities. General part – values and principles for primary and lower secondary education in the curriculum, which applies as of 1 August 2020, states that the national minorities have helped to shape Norwegian cultural heritage and that education must provide a knowledge about these ethnic groups. Everyone who has been through Norwegian primary and lower secondary education must essentially know that there are national minorities in Norway and know something about each minority.

The *curriculum for social studies* at primary and lower secondary school defines an objective for education; ensuring that students are familiar with the main features of the history of the national minorities in Norway and present the rights that these groups have in Norway today. The curriculum also emphasises that students should be able to explain the Norwegianisation of the national minorities and the injustices to which they were subjected, and reflect on the impact of this at an individual and societal level both now and in the past. There are skills objectives where it is appropriate to include the national minorities in curricula for a number of other subjects as well.

There is a need for more knowledge about national minorities so that employees at both preschools and schools can deal effectively with minorities, and so that children and students can learn more about them. The reinforcement of the content relating to national minorities in the new curricula further highlights the need for knowledge enhancement. The Government will assess how we can facilitate the enhancement of awareness about the national minorities in preschools and schools and help to effectively attain the objectives of the framework plan for preschools and curricula. National minority museums, cultural and resource centres, organisations and individuals can work with partners in order to help with quality assurance of their content. The Norwegian Directorate of Education prepared information material about the national minorities in 2014 so as to equip employees at preschools and schools with more information so that they could teach children and students about the national minorities and to see the opportunities to include information about minorities in activities at preschools and education in schools. The introductory chapter has been updated in line with the new framework plan for preschools and new curricula. The National Centre of Multicultural Education has worked on behalf of the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training to create materials for use at preschools and teaching programmes on national minorities for use at all school career levels.

Although national minorities are not referred to as a concept in framework plans for primary and lower secondary teacher training, knowledge of national minorities is addressed indirectly through the curricula that all students of teaching must be familiar with. There may be a need to investigate in more detail how teacher training courses are working with this so as to enhance skills on national minorities in teacher training. The Ministry of Education and Research will consider how this can be followed up.

4.4.1.1 Dembra

Democratic preparedness against racism, antisemitism and undemocratic attitudes (Dembra) is a skills development service for schools that want to work systematically with critical thinking, democratic formation and inclusion, or who find that schools face challenges related to group hostility and prejudice. Dembra is offered to primary and secondary schools and upper secondary schools. Dembra for teacher training began in 2018: this is a cooperation involving six teacher training institutions and aims to develop learning resources aimed at teacher training courses and teachers at schools. Another five teacher training institutions will be taking part in 2020/21.

93 schools have participated in Dembra since its inception in 2013, with the participation of around 2,800 teachers in the courses included. From 2021, between 30 and 45 schools will be able to participate in Dembra each year. This will involve courses and follow-up of between 800 and 1,500 teachers each year. Teachers, headteachers, teacher training staff and teaching students form the target groups.

Dembra is headed by the Center for Studies of the Holocaust and Religious Minorities and is offered by peace and human rights centres to schools all over Norway. The Center for Studies of the Holocaust and Religious Minorities also offers online Dembra resources to all schools in Norway.

Dembra gives schools the opportunity to work holistically to prevent group hostility, from racism to radicalisation and extremism. This also includes prejudice and negative notions of national minorities and indigenous peoples. Schools' own needs form the starting point.

Dembra.no also includes separate learning resources about national minorities and the Sámi as an indigenous people. Here, teachers can find basic principles for teaching about these groups, background material and specific schemes for use in teaching.

4.1.1.2 Jewish Pathfinders

Jewish Pathfinders is a key initiative in *Action plan against antisemitism (2016–2020)*. Young Jews visit upper secondary schools around Norway and talk about Jewish life and history in Norway and what it is like growing up as a Jewish minority in this country. The purpose of this measure is to help counter antisemitism and reduce prejudice through awareness and knowledge of the Jewish minority. The Norwegian Jewish minority is small, and many have never met a Norwegian Jew before the Pathfinders come to school visits. These young people are trained under the auspices of the Jewish Community of Oslo and at OsloMet before starting out as Jewish Pathfinders.

4.4.2 Raise awareness of national minorities through cultural activities

White no. 8 (2018–2019) *The power of culture* states that the Government wishes to help ensure that the culture of the national minorities becomes a more natural part of cultural activities all over Norway, and that everyone has the opportunity to experience this. The Government also emphasises the need for breadth and diversity in art and cultural activities: “The art and cultural expressions of minorities represent voices and experiences that must be included if we are to show the entire breadth of our art and cultural activities”.

In the follow-up to the report, the Ministry of Culture stated in letters of grant commitment to institutions of a certain size and to ministries' agencies that: “Art and cultural institutions must develop their own strategies in order to help enhance their relevance and representativeness in cultural activities. This also means that institutions must assess their own scope for manoeuvre so as to help ensure that art and cultural expressions of the Sámi and national minorities can form part of cultural activities throughout Norway.”

NRK will also be offering programmes for national and linguistic minorities and disseminate knowledge about different minority groups and the diversity of Norwegian society. See Section 4.1.2.4 for a more detailed discussion of NRK.

Efforts to increase diversity are a main priority across policy areas at the Ministry of Culture. Cultural policy must make it possible for art and cultural activities, sports and volunteering to reflect the diversity that characterises the society of today. The objective is an all-out, pro-diversity effort. This is expressed by means of a number of priorities in the Government's proposed cultural budget for 2021.

4.4.2.1 Minorities' promotion of their own culture

A number of cultural events are held each year by the minorities themselves, helping to promote and raise awareness of the national minorities. A number of these events are funded via the grant schemes for national minorities.

In Trondheim, the Jewish Cultural Festival is held every autumn. This festival takes place three days and demonstrates various aspects of Jewish culture. The festival has helped to raise awareness of Jews in Trondheim and make people aware that the lives and history of the Jews have become part of the cityscape. Jewish cultural days and Jewish film days are also held in Oslo under the auspices of the Jewish Museum.

The annual Finnskogen Days have been held in Svullrya every summer since 1970. This event showcases the distinctive Forest Finnish cultural traditions. The performance entitled *Spillet om innvandrerne* [The play about immigrants] is a regular part of the Finnskogen Days.

A number of annual Kven festivals are held in Troms og Finnmark; including Paaskiviikko, which involves various events such as lectures, concerts and Kven religious services across six municipalities in northern Troms over the course of a week.

The Yagori International Gypsy Festival is held in Oslo each year.



The Jewish Cultural Festival in Trondheim. Photo: Yaniv Yoshi

4.4.3 Raise awareness of national minorities through research

The Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation funds research into national minorities via the Research Council of Norway's programme entitled *Samfunnsutviklingens kulturelle forutsetninger* (the cultural preconditions of societal development), also known as SAMKUL. The Research Council of Norway's initiative now includes a number of projects following up the Government's *Action plan against antisemitism (2016–2020)*. The Center for Studies of the Holocaust and Religious Minorities has initiated the research projects *Skiftende grenser* [Shifting boundaries], *Definisjoner, uttrykk og konsekvenser av antisemittisme i samtidens Norge* [Definitions, expressions and impact of antisemitism in contemporary Norway] and *Jødiske identiteter – valg og forhandlinger, praksiser og tradisjoner i samtidens Norge* [Jewish identities – choices and negotiations, practices and traditions in contemporary Norway]. The Research Council of Norway is also funding the University of Tromsø – The Arctic University's research project *Intangiblization, Materializations and Mobilities of Kven Heritage: Contemporary Articulations in Fields of Family, Museums, and Culture Industry*. The Research Council of Norway has previously funded projects on Romani languages and music traditions as part of the same programme.

Besides research funded via the Research Council of Norway's programme, a knowledge review of discrimination against national minorities in Norway²⁰ has been conducted on behalf of the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs since the time of the last White Paper. The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training has funded a description of how national minorities are discussed in teaching aids²¹, and the Ministry of Children and Equality has funded a knowledge overview of children and young people from national minorities²². Considerable research was also conducted concerning the Romani/Tater people in connection with Official Norwegian Report (NOU) 2015: 7 *Assimilation and Resistance*, paying particular attention to the treatment they received from the Norwegian authorities. The Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation has also directly funded research into the fate of Norwegian Roma before and during the Holocaust, which became the report *Å bli dem kvit – utviklingen av en "sigøynerpolitikk" og utryddelsen av norske rom* [Getting rid of them – the development of a "gypsy policy" and the extermination of Norwegian Roma]²³.

The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs has developed an online resource relating to living conditions and equality for ethnic and religious minorities in Norway.²⁴ As a follow-up to *Action plan against racism and discrimination on grounds of ethnicity and religion (2020–2023)*, the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs is gathering new knowledge about racism and discrimination aimed at different groups.

See also Chapter 4.1.4 for more information about research into *attitudes* towards minorities.

Besides the research conducted on behalf of public authorities and under the auspices of the Research Council of Norway, some research is being carried out into national minorities at colleges and universities, and at private and public research institutions. Two anthologies about national minorities have been published since the last White Paper, for example.

Overall, there has been relatively little research into national minorities in Norway over the past two decades, and what there is indicates primarily that there is a lack of knowledge and documentation about minorities. No information about ethnic affiliation is recorded in official statistics in Norway, and this is one of the reasons why there is little research in the field.

4.5 Good coordination of policy in respect of national minorities

Policy in respect of national minorities is organised in the same way as in the administration in general. This means that the sector principle is applicable to all disciplines; in culture, education and health, for example. The various ministries are responsible for ensuring that consideration for national minorities is taken into account within their own disciplines. The Ministry of Culture is responsible for both cultural policy and language policy, and the Ministry of Culture has the most policy instruments in respect of national minorities. The Ministry of Education and Research also has a number of important instruments at its disposal. The Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation is responsible for coordinating Government policy in respect of national minorities.

²⁰ Diskriminering av samer, nasjonale minoriteter og innvandrere i Norge. En kunnskapsgjennomgang, (Midtbøen and Lidén 2015)

²¹ Fremstillingen av etniske og religiøse minoriteter i lærebøker og undervisning. (Midtbøen, Orupabo and Røthing 2014)

²² Barn og unge fra nasjonale minoriteter : En nordisk kunnskapsoversikt, (Lidén 2005)

²³ *Å bli dem kvit – utviklingen av en "sigøynerpolitikk" og utryddelsen av norske rom*, Maria Rosvoll and Jan Alexander Brustad, Centre for Studies of the Holocaust and Religious Minorities

²⁴ https://bufdir.no/Statistikk_og_analyse/Etnisitet/

4.5.1 Responsibility for coordination and distribution of tasks

It is clear from White Paper no. 15 (2000–2001) *National minorities in Norway. About state policies in respect of Jews, Kvens, Roma, Romani and Forest Finns*, that responsibility for coordination involves maintaining overall responsibility for ensuring that the policy is based on the principle of equal treatment and non-discrimination. Responsibility for coordination also involves working to promote policy coherence and context across sectors and administration levels. According to the White Paper, responsibility for coordination also means that the Ministry has to act as a point of contact in management of the national minorities and must inform the minorities about which ministries bear professional responsibility for various matters. As a result of this development, minorities today generally contact the sector ministries directly on relevant issues without going via the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation. This is a positive development. Reinforcing self-organisation among national minorities so that they participate actively in society and decision-making processes that affect them personally has always been a key objective of the policy.

The Government is constantly working on further development of public administration so as to ensure that it is user-oriented, efficient, results-oriented and modern. Government policy instruments in respect of national minorities have been assessed on a number of occasions over the past two decades. The latest review was conducted by the Telemark Research Institute (2020), which proposes establishing a separate directorate for national minorities under either the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation or the Ministry of Culture. This is because the opinion of the Telemark Research Institute is that many of the tasks performed by the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation, such as grant management and communication, would be more appropriate at directorate level, rather than ministry level.

The Government is constantly assessing how management tasks should be performed as efficiently as possible so as to ensure the best possible attainment of goals. This policy area is too small to establish a separate directorate for national minorities. Moreover, the management of multiple instruments is already being addressed at levels other than at the ministries. The management of three of the grant schemes run by the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation and aimed at national minorities was transferred to Arts Council Norway in 2019. Grants for Kven language and culture were also transferred to Troms og Finnmark County Council in 2020.

Today, two decades after a separate policy for national minorities came into force, more is known about national minorities in central government and a number of sectors take national minorities into account when developing policies and measures. There is no longer as great a need for one ministry to act as a point of contact for minorities in central government. That said, there is still a need for one ministry to hold responsibility for coordination and an element of a role as a driving force in respect of the other sectors.

The Government will be looking in more detail at how responsibility for coordination can be both reinforced and safeguarded most appropriately going forward, including whether more tasks should be transferred to management levels other than the Ministry.

4.5.2 Ensure efficient management of grant schemes

The Government has to have effective grant management: this is a key objective. The Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation has mainly been responsible for managing the various grant schemes aimed at national minorities and has communicated with minorities about these schemes since they were established in the late 1990s. As of 2019, Arts Council Norway has managed the grant scheme for national minorities and the grant scheme for the Romani/Tater people. The management of grants for Kven language and culture was transferred to the new Troms og Finnmark County Council from 2020 as part of

the Government's regional reform, with a view to streamlining and ensuring good services. One reason for transferring the management of grant schemes out of the Ministry is that grants should be distributed by a professional body. Moreover, transferring responsibility for grants for Kven language and culture aims to ensure that applications are processed and decisions on grants are made more closely to users.

The Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation is the appeal body for decisions on grants made by Arts Council Norway and Troms og Finnmark County Council. The Ministry is also responsible for the regulations for the grant schemes.

After some time, the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation will review how the transfer of the management of the grant schemes to Arts Council Norway and the county council has gone.

4.5.3 Ensuring awareness of national minorities in the public administration

Safeguarding responsibility for coordination also means helping to devise government policy, the rights of minorities and the Norwegian State's obligations towards the national minorities known in the administration. County councils and municipalities are also responsible for following up obligations in respect of national minorities. This is why it is important for both the county councils and the municipalities to know which groups are national minorities in Norway, and what rights they have. The county councils and municipalities have to ensure that the rights of the national minorities are safeguarded in county council services and municipal services.

There is no comprehensive mapping of knowledge about national minorities at municipalities and county councils. When holding discussions with the Ministry, the national minorities have reported that knowledge levels at the municipalities is low, and they are calling for measures in this regard.

The Government wishes to raise awareness of national minorities in the administration. The current e-learning programme on indigenous peoples and national minorities for employees of the public administration will be replaced with a new e-learning programme. The target group for the e-learning programme will be extended to include employees at municipalities as well. The Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation will notify the municipalities about the e-learning programme and create an information folder about national minorities.

Troms County Council was the first to implement its own general initiative for the Kven minority through its plan entitled *Kven er jeg og kven er vi? Handlingsplan for kvensk språk og kultur 2017 – 2020* [I am Kven, we are Kven? Action plan for Kven language and culture 2017 – 2020]. This plan was compiled by Troms County Council in cooperation with relevant academic communities and Kven communities. There are 40 measures in this plan, divided into five areas: Cultural relics, libraries, Kven language in public, Kven language in education and art, creativity and cultural cooperation. With this plan, Troms County Council wanted to raise awareness of the Kven language in society and at the county council, and also wanted to increase use of the language in public. The county council also wanted to use the plan highlight diversity in Troms and show that Kven language and culture are a natural element of cultural heritage in the region.

This plan is a good example of county council efforts aimed at a national minority. Troms County Council received grants from the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation to prepare the plan. The new county council has been working towards a new unified effort for Kven language and culture since the merger of the counties of Troms and Finnmark on 1

January 2020

The Ministry will also consider visiting particularly relevant municipalities in order to provide information about national minorities and the e-learning programme. The Ministry will also consider implementing other information measures going forward.

5. Reconciliation with past policies

Current policy in respect of national minorities seeks to build up culture and languages that previous policies have helped to break down. The authorities have also placed emphasis on apologising for the injustices committed, and on compensating for the impact of the policy by creating museums and memorials that can help to pass on information about what happened and promote the fact that national minorities are an integral and natural part of Norway's shared and diverse history and cultural heritage. See section 4.1.3.

Reconciliation with past policies is an ongoing task on which the entire policy in respect of national minorities is based. The Government recognises the fact that it has taken a long time to put a new policy in place in respect of these groups, and that the authorities still have some way to go if they are to create trust between the authorities and the national minorities. The Government supports the apologies given to national minorities for the injustices committed against them.

5.1 Compensation and ex gratia payment schemes

The ex gratia payment scheme is the Storting's own compensation scheme for people who have been particularly unfortunate in their dealings with the public sector. Individuals who have fared particularly badly following injuries or other nuisance that is not covered by the regular compensation schemes are able to apply for this scheme. The Norwegian Civil Affairs Authority has been assigned the position of secretariat for the committees that process the applications that come under the ex gratia payment schemes. Errors made by the Child Welfare Services or inadequate schooling are examples. The authorities are using state ex gratia payments to show that they accept responsibility for the fact that individuals have been subjected to censurable treatment. The scheme is not intended to cover the entire financial loss suffered. The Storting can grant compensation of up to NOK 250,000 per applicant. Moreover, separate special schemes as described below have been set up that affect some of the national minorities.

5.1.1 Individual and collective compensation to Jews following the Holocaust

In 1999, the Storting allocated NOK 450 million for a settlement aimed at compensating for the losses suffered by the Jews of Norway during World War II. The Storting stressed that it will never be possible to make up for the injustices suffered by the Jewish people during the war, but agreed that a historical and moral settlement had to be made with the financial liquidation, and that this settlement had to be financial in nature. The amount was divided into an individual settlement and a collective settlement. The Storting decided that what was known as a sum of gratitude amounting to NOK 200,000 would be paid to individuals as compensation. 970 applicants were each paid individual compensation.

NOK 250 million was allocated for collective compensation. A decision was made to divide the collective compensation for Norwegian Jews into three parts. NOK 150 million was paid to the two registered Jewish Communities in Norway. The funds would be used to safeguard Jewish culture and the future of Jews in Norway. The religious communities were free to spend the funds however they pleased, and among other things they have been spent on refurbishing the synagogue, modernising community centres, building a concert and meeting hall and extending the preschool. NOK 60 million was transferred to an international fund to commemorate and develop the tradition and culture that the Nazis wanted to eradicate. These funds were to be spent outside Norway. NOK 40 million was also used as basic capital for establishment of a Center for Studies of the Holocaust and Religious Minorities.

On Holocaust Day on 27 January 2012, Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg expressed his regret about the treatment received by Norwegian Jews during World War II. In his apology, the Prime Minister placed emphasis on Norwegians' participation in the detention and deportation of Jews from Norway.

5.1.2 Individual and collective compensation to Romani/Tater people

5.1.2.1 Individual compensation to Romani/Tater people

In 2004, a separate scheme was devised under the Storting's ex gratia payment scheme for applicants with Romani/Tater backgrounds. Romani/Tater people can receive compensation for bullying on account of their ancestry, forced sterilisation and being sent to Svanviken labour colony. Romani/Tater people can receive compensation of up to NOK 20,000 for bullying on account of their ancestry. A higher ex gratia payment may be given if it is possible to document that this bullying has caused serious harm.

A separate scheme was also created in 2005 for former children from orphanages under the ex gratia payment scheme, and Romani/Tater people can also apply for this. Many municipalities have also had their own compensation schemes for people who were taken into care as children.

Compensation schemes for the Romani/Tater people are described in greater detail in Chapter 0.

5.1.2.2 Collective compensation to the Romani/Tater people

In 1998, the Bondevik I Government apologised for past abuses against the Romani/Tater people and said that things like this must never happen again. The apology was repeated by the Stoltenberg I Government in White Paper no. 15 (2000–2001) *National minorities in Norway – About state policies in respect of Jews, Kvens, Roma, Romani and Forest Finns*.

When making this apology, the Bondevik I Government promised to establish a centre for documentation and dissemination of Romani/Tater culture and history at Glomdalsmuseet in Elverum. This centre was provided as a form of compensation for earlier policy in respect of the group. The Latjo Drom exhibition opened at Glomdalsmuseet in 2006. The idea was for the centre to serve as a meeting place for cultural activities such as lectures, concerts, courses or demonstration of traditional handicrafts.

The Romani/Tater people were not of the opinion that establishment of the exhibition at Glomdalsmuseet was satisfactory collective compensation for the injustice to which had been subjected. The Government proposed establishment of a Romani fund of NOK 75 million in White Paper no. 44 (2003–2004) *Compensation scheme for war children and compensation schemes for Romani/Tater people and elderly educationally impaired Sámi and Kvens*. The earnings on the fund were to be spent on measures and activities to promote the preservation and development of the culture, language and history of the Romani/Tater people. The Government considered it important for the Romani/Tater people to have an influence on how the fund was spent, and the fund was planned to be managed by a foundation representing Romani/Tater organisations. The Storting endorsed Recommendation to the Storting no. 250 (2003–2004) to the Government's proposal. The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development prepared a memorandum of association for the foundation in cooperation with representatives of the Romani/Tater organisations. The founding document was signed in 2007, and the Romani/Tater Cultural Fund Foundation was established in 2008. The board at the Foundation has consisted of representatives of the Romani/Tater organisations, as well as a representative appointed by the Norwegian State. The Ministry chose to appoint a lawyer with good organisational skills to provide representation on the board for the first few years in which the Foundation was

active. The aim of this was to ensure that the board received effective training on board work and ensure good follow-up.

The Government made changes to a number of state funds in 2014. Instead of the Foundation being paid earnings on funds set aside in a fund, fixed – and higher – grants were paid via the National Budget. While the Foundation had paid approximately NOK 3.5 million each year through the fund model up to and including 2013, the disbursement was increased to NOK 5 million each year in 2014. The total grant via the budget item for the Romani/Tater people from 2004 to 2020 amounts to NOK 68 million.

The Ministry was in doubt as to whether the Foundation was spending the funds properly and efficiently, and the annual earnings were withheld in 2015. The Storting made a decision in 2017 to discontinue the scheme whereby the Romani/Tater Cultural Fund Foundation was the beneficiary of funds via the National Budget, and in 2018 the Minister for Local Government and Modernisation and the Minister for Culture decided jointly that the collective compensation should be managed by Arts Council Norway as a grant scheme.

In 2011, a committee was established to investigate implementation of the policy in respect of the Tater/Romani people. The committee submitted its report, *Official Norwegian Report (NOU) 2015: 7 Assimilation and Resistance – Norwegian policy towards the Taters/Romani people from 1850 to the present*, in 2015. This report and its follow-up are described in Chapter 6.

5.1.3 Collective compensation to Roma

On 8 April 2015, Prime Minister Erna Solberg apologised on behalf of the Government for the racist exclusion policy practised against Norwegian Roma people in the decades before and after the Second World War, and the fatal consequences this had at the time of the Holocaust. The Prime Minister also said that the Government would give the Roma some form of collective compensation, and that this compensation would be formulated in consultation with the Roma. The Prime Minister said that she hoped for a fresh start in the relationship between the authorities and the Roma, and expressed a desire for good communication and a hope that the authorities and Roma could have confidence in one another.

Romano Kher – Romsk kultur- og ressurscenter – opened in 2018 and is the result of the Norwegian State's collective compensation to the Roma. This centre is a place where Roma people acquire knowledge and new skills, and where Roma children are able to play and learn. It also provides an interface between Roma and the majority population. This centre has its own bridgebuilder service that helps Roma people in their dealings with public bodies. Relocation to new premises at Ryen in Oslo is planned for 2021.

5.1.4 Individual compensation to Sámi and Kvens who missed out on schooling during World War II

In 2004, the Storting adopted a compensation scheme for Sámi and Kvens who missed out on schooling as a result of World War II and Norwegianisation policy. This scheme applies to people who missed out on at least 18 months of schooling and who had Sámi or Kven/Finnish as their native language and so did not master Norwegian to a satisfactory degree. A total of 987 people have received compensation via this scheme.

5.2 Memorials

Official memorials after wars, disasters or terrorist attacks serve as concrete places where people – both those directly affected and the general population – can go to commemorate

and process the past. There are few official memorials relating to national minorities in Norway. A monument was erected at Akershuskaia in 2000 in memory of Jews who were deported during World War II. The memorial was commissioned as a gift from the Norwegian State. It consists of eight chairs, lined up in pairs or individually. Stumbling stones have also been laid as memorials to Jewish victims of the Holocaust. These stumbling stones have been laid in the street outside the houses where the victims lived and are found all over the country. The Jewish Museum in Oslo has brought the project to Norway, and shares responsibility with the Jewish Museum in Trondheim for coordination of the laying of stumbling stones.

Some memorials have also been created privately. A number of memorials have been erected for Romani/Tater boat travellers and individuals in this ethnic group in Western Norway, and a memorial to the lives and history of Romani/Tater boat travellers was erected in Gjerstadholmen in the municipality of Arendal in 2014. The Ris churchyard in Oslo is home to Skammens stein, the Stone of Shame, which has been erected to commemorate Romani/Tater people who were affected by the Norwegian State's abuse of the people. A commemoration service is held at the stone on 7 May each year, under the auspices of Taternes Landsforening.



Stumbling stones at St. Hanshaugen in Oslo. Photo: The Jewish Museum in Oslo

5.3 The commission to investigate Norwegianisation policy and injustice in respect of Sámi, Kvens/Norwegian Finns and Forest Finns

On 20 June 2017, the Storting decided that a commission should be established in order to look at the Norwegianisation policy pursued against the Sámi and Kvens/Norwegian Finns. The presidency of the Storting was asked to formulate proposals for a mandate, name and

composition for the commission in consultation with parties such as Kven organisations and the Sámi Parliament. Dagfinn Høybråten chairs the commission, which began working in 2018. On 9 May 2019, the commission interpreted the mandate to include Forest Finns as well. The commission will be submitting its report in the autumn of 2022.

The commission is working on the Norwegian authorities' Norwegianisation policy in respect of the Sámi, Kvens/Norwegian Finns and Forest Finns, and the impact of this policy on individuals and groups, and on the relationship between the majority population and these groups. First and foremost, the commission has to map the impact of the Norwegianisation policy on the opportunities for Sámi, Kvens/Norwegian Finns and Forest Finns to use and practise their own languages, culture and traditional business routes. The commission also has to investigate the impact of the Norwegianisation policy among the majority population in the form of discrimination and the propagation of prejudice directed at Sámi, Kvens/Norwegian Finns and Forest Finns.

6. Follow-up of Official Norwegian Report (NOU) 2015: 7 *Assimilation and Resistance*

The Tater/Romani Committee presented its Official Norwegian Report (NOU) 2015: 7 *Assimilation and Resistance. Norwegian policy towards Taters/Romani people from 1850 to the present* in June 2015. The Government is following up the report in this White Paper. Many of the challenges presented in this report are applicable to a number of national minorities, and the Government has followed up several of the recommendations by means of general measures, such as measures to raise awareness of minorities, measures in the field of discrimination and building of trust between the authorities and minorities. The Government proposes that no further special measures be introduced for the Romani/Tater people.

6.1 The committee's report

In 2011, the Government appointed a public committee that was tasked with investigating and describing the development of policies of the Norwegian authorities, institutions, organisations and other entities and measures in respect of the Romani/Tater people to the present day, paying particular attention to the objectives, implementation and instruments of the policy (the Tater/Romani Committee). Among other things, the Committee was to consider the findings in light of Norwegian legislation and the international law obligations by which Norway was and continues to be bound. The objective was to come by an overall presentation showing the impact of the policy on both individuals and the Romani people of Norway as a whole. The committee was chaired by Knut Vollebæk.

The initiative for this work was provided by representatives of Romani/Tater organisations, with funding from the Norwegian Helsinki Committee.

The investigation showed that the Romani/Tater people were subject to heavy-handed assimilation policies by Norwegian authorities. The key measures involved taking children into care and measures to settle the ethnic group, partly by coercion. The private organisation Norsk misjon blant hjemløse [Norwegian mission among the homeless] administered the measures relating to this ethnic group. The report shows that the policy pursued had and continues to have very adverse consequences for individuals and the ethnic group as a whole. The policy is still affecting the relationship between the Romani/Tater people and wider society.

The committee's main recommendations to the Norwegian authorities were as follows:

- Adopt a clear stance against the past and communicate broadly that the Norwegian State accepts responsibility for past abuses and failures.
- Reinforce trust between the Romani/Tater people and the authorities and ensure that the Romani/Tater people are genuinely able to participate in processes that concern them.
- Promote the Romani/Tater people by raising awareness of the ethnic group among public employees, at schools and in teaching.
- Ensure that children and young people with Romani/Tater backgrounds have equivalent and genuine access to schools and education.
- Prevent discrimination and give the group a genuine opportunity to report discrimination and receive guidance when they experience discrimination.
- Facilitate clarification of whether unlawful conditions existed and continue to exist, including human rights violations. Assess whether the Norwegian National Human

Rights Institution (NIM) or other bodies can be given roles to supplement existing opportunities to submit complaints.

- Equal opportunities in practice – ensure that information and guidance are provided in respect of the welfare system, training programmes and business activities, and rights in the event of discrimination.
- Help people to find their way around archives in order to find out about their ancestry and history.
- Fair compensation and redress schemes. The committee specifically points out that municipal compensation schemes for Tater/Romani children who have been taken into care vary greatly between municipalities. The ethnic group must have broad confidence in the management of collective compensation schemes.
- Fund further research and research dissemination, in particular research into how the ethnic group has been discussed in psychiatry and the current situation for different parts of the ethnic group.

6.2 Consultation on the committee's report

The Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation decided, in consultation with representatives of the committee's reference group, to send the Tater/Romani Committee's report out for broad consultation. Besides the general consultation, the Ministry arranged ten consultation meetings in different parts of the country – Drammen, Sandefjord, Kristiansand, Stavanger, Bergen, Hamar, Elverum, Gjøvik, Sarpsborg and Trondheim – in order to obtain suggestions from as many of the Romani/Tater people as possible. Information was provided at these consultation meetings about the committee's report, along with a brief presentation of the main content of the report. It was possible to ask the Ministry questions about the report and provide suggestions on how the proposals in the report could be followed up. It was also possible for individuals to submit suggestions directly to a representative of the Ministry after the consultation meetings.

It became clear early on that few Romani/Tater people were aware that a public committee had been set up and that a report had been published. A number of them replied that they had not received information ahead of the work on the report, and felt that the fact that the history of themselves and their families was extracted from the archives without them being notified was a violation of their rights.

6.3 Consultation suggestions

Approximately 220 consultation suggestions were received from individuals, organisations, institutions and government agencies. A petition was also submitted which included 300 signatures from people who opposed the report and its contents. The message in the petition was that the Romani/Tater people have what they need in Norwegian society today, on a par with other Norwegians, and that there is no need for special measures. The Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation also held ten consultation meetings in various parts of the country where people could put forward their views verbally.

The consultation suggestions from the Romani/Tater people essentially showed two different views of how the Tater/Romani Committee's report should be understood and followed up. One group of people, mainly individuals, were negative about the committee's report and believed that the report was a new violation of their rights. A number of people believed that the report portrayed the Romani/Tater people incorrectly. There were also many people who reacted to the fact that the committee saw sensitive information about individuals in archives,

without the consent of themselves or their families. They were sceptical of special measures for the group, and particular scepticism about teaching about the Romani/Tater people in schools. Many people expressed mistrust of the organisations and did not want the organisations to act as advocates for all Romani/Tater people. There were also many people who were sceptical about the running of the Romani/Tater Cultural Fund Foundation (RT Fund) and believed that this was not genuine collective compensation. Many people in this group supported the proposal in the report stating that the current individual compensation scheme should be increased and amended.

The second group, which consisted mainly of the Romani/Tater people's organisations, the Romani/Tater Cultural Fund Foundation, Romanifolkets/taternes senter and a few individuals, supported a number of the committee's proposals and also proposed new measures. A number of them wanted special measures for the Romani/Tater people, such as easier access to debt restructuring schemes, additional ECTS credits, facilitation during travel periods for schoolchildren, housing measures, higher pension points, help with setting up businesses and easier access to craft certificates on the basis of traditional knowledge. Some also wanted to see more information about the Romani/Tater people in schools and wider society. In addition, a number of people wanted the Romani/Tater Cultural Fund Foundation to be reinforced in financial terms. There were also a number of people who were negative about the process surrounding the work of the Tater/Romani Committee, the consultation process and the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation.

The work of the committee met with a positive response in most of the suggestions from municipalities, directorates and institutions. A number of people highlighted the need to raise awareness about the Romani/Tater people among key personnel and increase funding for research, information, education and non-discrimination work. Many of these people also pointed out the need for better communication between the authorities and representatives of the Romani/Tater people.

Two topics in particular were highlighted in many of the suggestions: the individual compensation scheme and the management of the cultural fund.

Many people felt that the level of individual compensation provided for serious abuse is too low. There was a desire for higher compensation, and it was felt that the requirement for documentation should be lowered, applications should be processed more quickly and new applications should be processed for people who have received little compensation. There were also suggestions that the Norwegian State, and not the municipalities, had to take responsibility for all the compensation schemes so as to ensure equal treatment for all.

Most of the suggestions leaned towards winding up the Romani/Tater Cultural Fund Foundation due to a lack of trust in the foundation's board of directors, along with the fact that the fund's money was benefiting only a few people. Some felt that the fund's board should be made up of neutral people who were not linked with the Romani/Tater people so as to prevent problems relating to impartiality and ensure that the collective compensation benefited the ethnic group as a whole. Many were critical of the establishment of Romanifolket/taternes senter, which was established by the foundation as a centre of expertise for the ethnic group, and felt that setting this up had resulted in less insight into how the funds were spent.

6.4 Follow-up of the recommendations in the report

The Government has assessed the recommendations in Official Norwegian Report (NOU) 2015: 7 *Assimilation and Resistance*, and all the consultation suggestions on the report have been reviewed. Some of the recommendations have already been followed up.

The Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation established a reference group in 2018 that would provide suggestions on the follow-up of Official Norwegian Report (NOU) 2015: 7

Assimilation and Resistance. This reference group was made up of eleven representatives of the Romani/Tater people, both representatives from the organisations and individuals who were not affiliated with any of the organisations. The Ministry has also set up a website containing information about the work on the follow-up.²⁵

In its report, the Tater/Romani Committee indicated that it is important for the Romani/Tater people to have broad confidence in the management of the Romani/Tater Cultural Fund Foundation. The committee was of the opinion that the information about the fund, and its management, should be reinforced so that the fund reaches out to as many people as possible in the Romani/Tater community. This was a relevant topic for the reference group to address as the Ministry had withheld the funds from the Cultural Fund since 2015.

The reference group raised four proposals for further management of the collective compensation. One of the proposals, which was supported by a number of group members, was for the funds to be managed as a grant scheme by Arts Council Norway. Against this background, the Minister for Local Government and Modernisation and the Minister for Culture decided jointly to establish a grant scheme for the Romani/Tater people at Arts Council Norway from 2019.

6.4.1 Clear reconciliation with the past

The Tater/Romani Committee recommends clear and widely communicated public confirmation that the Norwegian State accepts responsibility for abuses and failures in respect of the Romani/Tater people.

In 1998, the Bondevik I government apologised for the first time for the abuses suffered by the Romani/Tater people. This apology was given at a meeting attended by a number of representatives of the Romani/Tater people, and was not disseminated widely among the ethnic group. The Stoltenberg I government reiterated the apology in White Paper no. 15 (2000–2001) *National minorities in Norway – About state policies in respect of Jews, Kvens, Roma, Romani and Forest Finns*.

When Official Norwegian Report (NOU) 2015: 7 *Assimilation and Resistance* was presented in June 2015, the Minister for Local Government and Modernisation reiterated previous apologies, saying: *The treatment to which the Romani/Tater people have been subjected is a dark chapter in the history of Norway. We know that the authorities' policy constituted a violation of rights. The Solberg government fully supports the apologies already given. We deeply regret the violations of the rights of the Romani/Tater people and the suffering these have caused.*

The publication of the report and the cabinet minister's apology received widespread coverage in the press. Information about the apology was also provided at the ten consultation meetings relating to the report and on the website about the follow-up of Official Norwegian Report (NOU) 2015: 7 *Assimilation and Resistance*.

6.4.2 Build trust and ensure genuine participation

The committee recommends assessment of measures that could reinforce trust between the Romani/Tater people and the authorities, and ensuring that this ethnic group participates in processes that apply to them. This includes turning Romani/Tater organisations into consultative bodies. The committee also recommends providing funding for establishment of networks, also independently of the established organisations.

The Government wishes to reinforce the trust of the Romani/Tater people in the authorities and ensure that the Romani/Tater people are allowed to participate in processes concerning

²⁵ <https://nettsteder.regjeringen.no/romanitater/>

them. This was why the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation conducted a broad round of consultations on the report submitted by the Tater/Romani Committee. A reference group was also set up in order to follow up this report. A website containing information about the work was established to make it easier for the Romani/Tater people to keep up with what was happening with regard to the follow-up. The regulations for the new grant scheme at Arts Council Norway were circulated for broad consultation.

Anyone can submit suggestions during public consultations. Public authorities do not have joint consultation lists, invitations to submit comments are sent to relevant organisations and institutions and others, depending on the matter in hand. The Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation provides lists of national minority organisations at the request of other ministries, and provides reminders that national minority organisations should also be consulted when the Ministry learns of a relevant consultation case. However, the Ministry does not have a list of all consultation cases, particularly not consultations from directorates or municipalities and county councils. This is why the organisations must also monitor matters themselves.

Operating grants will be given to the Romani/Tater organisations that meet the conditions for receipt of such funding. The funding will enable the organisations to promote their views to various authorities. Otherwise, it is possible to apply for funding from the grant schemes managed by Arts Council Norway for creation of networks, etc. Private individuals can also submit applications for these schemes.

How national minorities and central authorities communicate – which also applies to Romani/Tater organisations – is discussed in Chapter 4.2.1.2.

A number of people with Romani/Tater backgrounds have contacted the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation and want their voices to be heard in cases relating to the ethnic group, even though they are not affiliated to any organisation. The Ministry is aware that there are differing views among the Romani/Tater people and that the priorities of the two established organisations do not embrace all views. In line with the democratic rules in society, however, the Ministry reacts primarily to the organisations in its formalised communication with the national minorities. Individuals who wish to influence policy may consider joining the established organisations, or forming their own democratic organisations.

6.4.3 Promotion and raised awareness of the Romani/Tater people

The committee points out that there is a need to raise awareness about the Romani/Tater people, and national minorities in general, at state agencies, municipalities and schools. In communication with other sector ministries, the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation has assessed various measures that may raise awareness among Norwegian State employees.

In 2013, the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation launched an electronic training programme on indigenous peoples and national minorities in order to raise awareness among employees in the public administration. This programme was created in consultation with the organisations for national minorities. The Ministry has to create a new and updated e-learning programme where the target group also includes employees of municipalities and county councils, and is also assessing other information initiatives. See Chapter 4.5.3 for more details.

The Government also supports a number of initiatives to ensure that teaching about national minorities, including the Romani/Tater people, is as effective as possible: see measures discussed in Chapter 4.3.1.

6.4.4 Secure access to preschools, schools and education

The Tater/Romani Committee has recommended ensuring that children and young people with Romani/Tater backgrounds have equivalent and genuine access to schools and education. In particular, the committee points out efforts to prevent bullying, information in schools about national minorities, follow-up in cases where children are taken out of school when travelling and the fact that information about national minorities should be included in teacher training. The committee is also of the opinion that the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training and the National Centre for Multicultural Education must ensure that schools and preschools familiarise themselves with the guide entitled *Våre nasjonale minoriteter*.

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training has notified all Norwegian preschools and schools about the guide *Våre nasjonale minoriteter*. This guide was updated in 2020. See also the brief discussion in Chapter 4.2.1.2.

Good childhood conditions, with good preschools and schools, are important to individual children and crucial to a society with continued high confidence with minor differences. Good primary and lower secondary education provides a gateway to higher education, which in turn is of major importance as regards job opportunities for children and young people, and for their social mobility.

All children below school age in Norway are entitled to a preschool place, cf. Section 12a of the Kindergarten Act. The Kindergarten Act states that preschools must help children develop a sense of well-being and enjoy play and learning and provide a challenging and safe place for children to form communities and friendships, and that they must oppose all forms of discrimination. The preschool must deal with, stop and follow up on abuse or bullying if a child experiences such things.

In Norway, all children are entitled and obliged to attend primary and lower secondary school from the year in which they reach the age of six. This obligation can be met by attending state schools or approved private primary and lower secondary schools or providing private primary and lower secondary education in the home. This right is applicable to children and young people with Romani/Tater backgrounds in the same way as everyone else.

Where justifiable, the municipality can give students time off from primary and lower secondary education for up to two weeks at a time, cf. Section 2-11, first subsection of the Education Act.

The Storting adopted new rules on the school environment in the Education Act in the spring of 2017. All students have the right to a good, safe school environment that promotes health, well-being and learning, and where there is zero tolerance towards bullying, violence, discrimination and harassment. The school has a duty to act if they are aware or suspect that any student is not experiencing good, safe conditions at school. Students or parents of students can report the matter to the County Governor if they feel that the school is not doing enough to ensure that a good, safe school environment is being provided for the student. The County Governor has to make a decision on whether the school has fulfilled its duty to act.

The Storting adopted new rules on psychosocial preschool environments in the spring of 2020. These amendments mean that preschools have a statutory duty to maintain a zero tolerance policy against bullying and to work preventively to promote children's health, well-being, play and learning. Preschools are also assigned a duty to act in line with the duty applicable to the school.

6.4.5 Prevent discrimination

The Tater/Romani Committee points out that there is a need to prevent discrimination against Romani/Tater people. The Committee indicates in particular the need to prevent discrimination at campsites. They also recommend that adding information about national minorities to police training.

The Government is actively working to prevent discrimination and has presented its *Action plan against racism and discrimination on grounds of ethnicity and religion (2020–2023)*, which is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4.1.4. As a follow-up to the action plan, the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs is developing new information about racism and discrimination aimed at different groups. The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs has developed an online resource on living conditions and equal opportunities for ethnic and religious minorities in Norway.²⁶

A new Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act has been adopted, as referred to in greater detail in Chapter 2.3.1.

6.4.6 Clarify whether unlawful circumstances have occurred

The committee points out that the Romani/Tater people have been subjected to severe abuses that violate their human rights. They also point out that even now the Romani/Tater people face challenges that can lead to conflict with human rights and anti-discrimination protection. The committee recommends making arrangements to clarify whether unlawful circumstances have occurred and are still occurring. The committee points out that it is important for the Romani/Tater people to have institutions that they can turn to in order to clarify their legal position, and recommends that the authorities should assess whether the Norwegian National Human Rights Institution (NIM), or other bodies, can be assigned a role as a supplement to existing opportunities to submit complaints.

The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud has been established in order to assist people who feel they have been subjected to discrimination. Please see also the discussion in Chapter 2.3.1 describing current opportunities to submit complaints, as well as Chapter 6.4.5. The Norwegian National Human Rights Institution (NIM) is an independent public body subordinate to the Storting. The Government cannot instruct NIM. The role of NIM is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2.3.4.

6.4.7 Equal access to rights and opportunities in society

The committee points out that some Romani/Tater people know little about their rights to public schemes, such as welfare services, continuing education, debt relief and procedures when setting up businesses. The committee is of the opinion that the authorities should deploy resources so that the Romani/Tater people are ensured equal access to public services, assess measures that provide easier access to guidance from the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud, and provide help and guidance to people wishing to find out about their ancestry and history from the archives.

The Romani/Tater people have the same rights as the general population to make use of the welfare schemes available. Nevertheless, genuine access to the schemes presents a challenge; in terms of both individuals' awareness of the support measures that exist and the administration's awareness of national minorities. Measures to raise awareness in management are discussed in Chapter 4.4.

²⁶ https://bufdir.no/Statistikk_og_analyse/Etnisitet/

A campaign will be conducted as a follow-up to *Action plan against racism and discrimination on grounds of ethnicity and religion (2020–2023)* on how to submit complaints about discrimination on grounds of ethnicity and religion.

One of the three main objectives of the Government's policy in respect of national minorities is that minorities should receive fair and equivalent services. This is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4.3. Individual authorities such as the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration, public educational institutions or similar are obliged to provide guidance to anyone needing it. There are also legal assistance measures available in civil society, such as Jussbuss, JURK (Legal counselling for women) and Rettferd for taperne, which provide free guidance. See also information about the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act in Chapter 2.3.1 and measures to raise awareness about national minorities in society in Chapter 4.4.

The Ministry of Education and Research will be establishing communication with representatives of the Romani/Tater people, in the same way as for the Roma, in order to see whether there is anything that can be done at state level to help raise awareness about various opportunities for upper secondary education for adults.

Everyone has the right to view information about themselves in public archives. The National Archival Services of Norway provide guidance to anyone in need of assistance.

6.4.8 Reassess aspects of the compensation schemes

The committee is of the opinion that there is reason to reassess the current compensation and redress schemes so as to ensure that they are fair and function according to their purpose. In particular, the committee points out that there is major variation between municipalities as regards the municipal compensation schemes for people who were taken into care as children, and is of the opinion that the Norwegian State must look at how equal treatment and coordination can be ensured. They also point out that the public sector is responsible for providing guidance to anyone wishing to submit applications to compensation schemes. The committee also recommends that more dissemination of language and culture be facilitated throughout more of the country, in a similar way to the Latjo Drom exhibition at Glomdalsmuseet. As regards collective compensation schemes, the committee recommends that these schemes are organised so that they do not help to increase tensions between individuals and groups, and that their management is transparent and engenders the necessary confidence.

The Government points out that management of the collective compensation to the Romani/Tater people has been rearranged, partly to improve confidence in the management of the scheme. It is possible to apply for funding via this grant scheme, which is now managed by Arts Council Norway, for a number of measures that convey information about Romani language and culture, which is one of the committee's recommendations.

6.4.8.1 Special schemes for Romani/Tater people

In 2004, a special compensation scheme was established under the Storting's ex gratia payment scheme for applicants with Romani/Tater backgrounds. Through this scheme, Romani/Tater people can receive compensation for bullying on account of their ancestry, forced sterilisation and being sent to Svanviken labour colony. The Romani/Tater people are the only group in Norway who can receive compensation for a number of situations simultaneously without reduction of the compensation. The maximum amount of compensation from state schemes is essentially NOK 250,000, but the Romani/Tater people can receive compensation above this amount if they apply on a number of grounds. The Romani/Tater people are also the only group that can receive compensation of NOK 20,000 for bullying on the basis of a self-declaration. Higher compensation may be awarded if it is

possible to document that bullying has caused serious harm by means of a medical certificate, discharge summary or medical records, for example.

According to the annex to Official Norwegian Report (NOU) 2015: 7 *Assimilation and Resistance*, 1251 people applied for compensation between 2006 and 2013 via the special arrangement for the Romani/Tater people. Of these, 1231 received compensation. A further 94 people have been granted compensation via the special scheme between 2013 and 2019.

The level of compensation paid to Romani/Tater people via the Storting's compensation schemes ranges from NOK 20,000 to NOK 470,000. The people who have received the highest compensation were awarded amounts based on a number of grounds simultaneously, such as bullying, forced sterilisation and being sent to at Svanviken labour colony, and via the regular ex gratia payment schemes for inadequate schooling and failures in Child Welfare Services.

6.4.8.2 Other compensation schemes

The Romani/Tater people are also able to apply for compensation via the Storting's regular ex gratia payment scheme, which is the Storting's compensation scheme for people who have endured a particularly great amount of suffering in their encounters with the public sector compared with others at the same time. As a general rule, ex gratia payments are granted in instances where the authorities have acted improperly and have thus caused injury or inconvenience to an individual. Up to NOK 250,000 can be granted per applicant via the scheme.

In 2005, a special scheme was established for people who have experienced censurable conditions in orphanages, foster homes, reform schools and special schools for children with behavioural difficulties. The Romani/Tater people can also apply to this scheme.

There is no list of how many Romani/Tater people have applied for or received compensation via the regular ex gratia payment scheme or the special scheme for people who were taken into care as children.

6.4.8.3 Municipal compensation schemes

Many municipalities have had their own compensation schemes for people who were taken into care as children. Most of these have been terminated. The committee points out that the amounts paid out via the municipal compensation schemes have varied depending on the municipality. Some municipalities have paid no compensation. Among municipalities that have paid compensation, the amounts have ranged from NOK 30,000 to NOK 725,000. Some municipalities have not awarded compensation to people with a Romani/Tater background as the municipality in question was not responsible for them being placed in orphanages or foster homes. For instance, some children were placed in orphanages by Norsk misjon blant hjemløse with no municipal input.

The municipal compensation schemes have been established as schemes that exist alongside the ex gratia payment scheme and other state schemes. Each individual municipality can decide whether they want to establish compensation schemes, determine how the scheme will be organised and decide on the levels of compensation paid. The Norwegian State has preferred not to regulate municipal compensation schemes out of consideration for the principle of municipal autonomy.

6.4.8.4 No amendments to individual compensation schemes

The Stoltenberg II Government conducted a fundamental review of the ex gratia payment scheme in 2013. It was concluded that this scheme should be kept as it was, and it was not deemed necessary to create additional adapted schemes for special groups of applicants. The Government is of the opinion that there is no reason to conduct a new review now, and does not advocate making amendments to the individual compensation amounts paid to the Romani/Tater people.

The Romani/Tater people were subjected to horrendous abuse with a view to eradicating their culture and the travelling lifestyle, and making the minority equivalent to the majority. This policy was part of an age in which vulnerable people from the majority population, such as people who were taken into care as children, were subjected to serious abuses of power by the authorities. A special scheme has already been established for the Romani/Tater people. The Government is of the opinion that any further expansion of compensation schemes in respect of abuse may need to be general and apply to anyone who has experienced abuse, regardless of their affiliation with a minority. The Government does not deem further expansion of the schemes to be the right thing to do.

Ex gratia payments (compensation) paid by the Norwegian State are used by the authorities to show that they accept responsibility for the fact that individuals have been subjected to censurable treatment. Compensation can never set right the injustices committed and is not intended to cover the entire financial loss suffered by the victim of the abuse.

6.4.9 Future research and dissemination of research findings

The Tater/Romani Committee's report is based on research enclosed with the report as an appendix. This research was funded by the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation. The Ministry has also funded a doctoral thesis on Romani languages via the Research Council of Norway.

To find out more about the policies applied in respect of the Romani/Tater people, the committee recommends that the authorities fund further research into how psychiatry has referred to the Romani/Tater people and treated individuals from this ethnic group. The committee also recommends research into living conditions among Romani/Tater people who were subject to the assimilation measures of Norsk misjon blant hjemløse, including rehoming of children and the placement of families in labour colonies. The committee also recommends research into living conditions for the Romani/Tater people in general today, and research on policy in respect of the group during World War II.

It is clear to the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation that more information is needed, and so it may be appropriate to fund relevant research projects at a later date: see Chapter 4.4.3. The Ministry has also noted the scepticism among the Romani/Tater people in respect of further research into the group, particularly research that involves viewing information about individuals in the archives, as stated in the consultation following Official Norwegian Report (NOU) 2015: 7 *Assimilation and Resistance*.

7. Summary

The purpose of this White Paper is to describe developments in policy in respect of national minorities since the last White Paper was presented 20 years ago and to outline how the Government can help to reinforce the languages, culture and situation of national minorities in Norwegian society going forward. The White Paper also explains the Government's final follow-up of Official Norwegian Report (NOU) 2015: 7 *Assimilation and Resistance. Norwegian policy towards Tatars/Romani people from 1850 to the present.*

Norwegian policy towards Tatars/Romani people from 1850 to the present.

Any policy that applies to the population of Norway also applies to the national minorities. However, separate measures are needed in some areas so as to ensure that minorities can develop their unique features, languages and culture in line with the Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.

There has been significant development on policy over these two decades. More ministries include national minorities when developing policies and measures now than they did 20 years ago. The national minorities also have their own organisations that present the minorities' issues to central authorities and the general public. This is in line with the objectives for the policy. The Government is continuing its funding to the national minority organisations in order to help ensure effective participation for national minorities in cultural, social and economic life and in public affairs. There has been formalised communication between the national minorities and central authorities throughout the period. The Government is planning to continue this communication, but with a few minor adjustments following suggestions from the national minorities. There is still a need for a ministry to stand responsible for coordinating policy in respect of national minorities in central government so as to ensure that the national minorities and the policy as a whole are taken into account.

The national minorities in Norway are very small groups, and there are different interests between the minorities and even within each minority: this presents certain challenges when it comes to developing policy. For instance, some time may pass between a measure or service being established and the time at which it has participants or a response to a certain extent. Although the authorities have had measures in place over a number of years that reinforce the languages of national minorities, special measures are still needed in order to both reinforce and preserve these languages going forward. Kven, Romani and Romanes are given legally established status in the proposed new Language Act proposed by the Government in the spring of 2020. This draft legislation is being considered by the Storting.

The profile of national minorities has been raised in public over the two decades. Among other things, multilingual signs have appeared in parts of Northern Norway, a proposal for the official Kven name for Norway is currently out for consultation and the Norwegian Directorate for Cultural Heritage is working on a project to protect important cultural environments and highlight the history and cultural heritage of national minorities all over Norway. These are useful measures that are being continued. Museums and cultural centres have also been established about, with and for the national minorities, and annual cultural events such as the Jewish Cultural Festival in Trondheim and the Finnskog Days are helping to promote minorities in society.

The national minorities are all different, and their history in Norway differs too. Some groups were subjected to a harsh Norwegianisation policy and may experience stigmatisation as a consequence of their background. The Government's broad and active efforts to prevent hate speech, antisemitism, racism and discrimination also embraces the national minorities. This initiative is important in order to facilitate the participation of national minorities in society.

The Roma are still a very vulnerable minority, with poor living conditions and, to an extent, illiteracy. Improving their living conditions and taking steps to ensure that Roma students complete their schooling will continue to form an important part of the Government's policy in respect of this group going forward.

Still little is known about national minorities in the general population and in parts of the administration. In the White Paper, the Government therefore plans to develop and implement information measures so as to ensure that municipalities and county councils find out more about the national minorities and Norway's obligations towards these groups. Knowledge is important as a way of ensuring that the minorities receive equivalent services.

This White Paper shows that there has been positive development in policy in respect of national minorities over the past two decades. The overall budget has increased significantly – for both the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation's budget and the budgets of other ministries – since 2014 in particular. The Government plans to continue the same positive policy developments in this White Paper.

The Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation

recommends:

A recommendation from the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation, dated 18. December 2020 National minorities in Norway will be sent to the Storting.