**Supplementary info to the Sixth periodic report submitted by Norway under articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant**

**Info from Save the Children Norway on three selected issues**

**Children growing up in poverty**

**From the list of issues paragraph 10 a:**

10. Please provide information on the evolution over the past 10 years of:

 (a) The proportion of the population below the poverty line as defined at the national level and the levels of inequality, defined as the ratio of the total income accruing to the richest decile of the population and the total income of the poorest 40 per cent of the population;

**The State Party’s reply to paragraph 10 a:**

10. (a) Norway does not have an official poverty line, but the EU definition of poverty is often applied when mapping out the extent of low income. According to the EU At-risk-of-poverty indicator at the 50 per cent threshold, incomes below 50 per cent of median income are considered to fall below the low income line. Likewise, the 60 per cent threshold considers incomes below 60 per cent of median income to fall below the low income line.

**People in households with yearly income after taxes per consumption unit below 50 and 60 pct. of median income in 2007-2017[[1]](#footnote-2). In pct.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|   | **2007** | **2008** | **2009** | **2010** | **2011** | **2012** | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** |
| EU scale 50 per cent | 5.1 | 5.2 | 4.7 | 4.6 | 4.7 | 4.9 | 5.2 | 5.4 | 5.5 | 5.5 | 5.6 |
| EU scale 60 per cent | 10 | 10.2 | 9.5 | 9.4 | 9.6 | 10.1 | 10.5 | 10.8 | 10.9 | 11.0 | 11.2 |

Source: Statistics Norway

The table below shows the total income (the sum of labour income, capital income, taxable and tax-free transfers in a year) that accrues to the tenth income decile and the poorest 40 pct. of the population, respectively.

**Share of total income accruing income decile 1-4 and income decile 10, residents 17 years and above in 2007-2017. In pct.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2007** | **2008** | **2009** | **2010** | **2011** | **2012** | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** |
| Decile 1-4 | 16.45  | 16.40  | 16.71  | 16.55  | 16.46  | 16.35  | 16.19  | 16.02  | 15.87  | 16.14  | 16.22  |
| Decile 10 | 28.27  | 27.80  | 27.09  | 27.60  | 27.72  | 27.74  | 27.89  | 28.24  | 29.65  | 28.48  | 28.47  |

Source: Statistics Norway

The proportion of the population (students are excluded) living in households with persistently low income, defined by an average income over a three-year period that is below 60 per cent of the median income according to the EU equivalence scale has slightly augmented over the last ten years:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Period** | **Proportion of the population (%)** |
| 2015-2017 | 9.6 |
| 2014-2016 | 9.4 |
| 2013-2015 | 9.3 |
| 2012-2014 | 9.0 |
| 2011-2013 | 8.6 |
| 2010-2012 | 7.9 |
| 2009-2011 | 7.7 |
| 2008-2010 | 7.9 |
| 2007-2009 | 8.1 |
| 2006-2008 | 8.2 |
| 2005-2007 | 8.1 |

**Info from Save the Children Norway:**

Both The Norwegian National Human Rights Institution (NIM) and The Norwegian Red Cross calls for The State Party, in their reply to The list of issues, to inform the committee that the number of children growing up in poverty is increasing. The Norwegian Red Cross also calls for a list of all the measures taken by the government to combat this issue.[[2]](#footnote-3) We agree that this list should include both preventive measures and those meant to lift the families out of poverty. Save the Children Norway share both NIMs and The Norwegian Red Cross’ opinion.

The State Party must focus its efforts on the major social structures and systems that create poverty challenges instead of implementing compensatory measures. We also share the Norwegian Red Cross’ concern that the majority (according to them 85%) of the State Party’s municipalities take child benefits into account when mapping their parents needs for social support.

**Bullying:**

**From the list of issues paragraph 30 e:**

30. Please provide information on:

 (e) Statistical data on bullying in schools, disaggregated by ethnic group, and the measures taken to combat bullying in schools and their impact (para. 23);

**The State Party’s reply to paragraph 30 e:**

 (e) In the Pupil Survey from autumn 2018, 6.1 per cent of the pupils responded that they were bullied at school 2-3 times a month or more often. This was a decrease of 0.5 per cent compared with the previous year. We do not have data that distinguishes between different ethnic groups.

In 2017, the Norwegian Centre against Racism[[3]](#footnote-4) published a report on racism experienced by young people. The report shows that many young people have had experiences with racism at school. Of 247 respondents where one or both parents were born in a country other than Norway, 24 per cent state that they have experienced racism, discrimination or unfair treatment regularly (2-3 times a month or more often) while attending primary school, while 25.6 per cent experienced the same at secondary school.

The Government has launched new measures to combat bullying in kindergartens and schools. The measures include legislative changes, competence enhancement, and support and guidance for children and young people who are exposed to bullying and other offenses, and for their families. The main effort to strengthen adults' competence to prevent, uncover and deal with bullying in both kindergartens and schools is a competence package that is now used by more than 800 schools and kindergartens across the country.

Dembra[[4]](#footnote-5) is a professional development programme for teachers, school leaders and other school staff. Based on the school’s own circumstances, Dembra helps strengthen the school’s work on participation and critical thinking. Dembra is suitable for schools whose leaders and teachers wish to take a more systematic approach to critical thinking, democratic development and inclusion, and/or find that their school has or may come to experience particular challenges relating to group-based hostility.

**Info from Save the Children Norway:**

We recommend that bullying on the grounds of ethnicity is included in The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Trainings yearly survey “Elevundersøkelsen”/ The Pupil Survey. This will secure national statistical data in accordance with the Committees request.

Save the Children Norway share The Norwegian Red Cross’ concern when it comes to the increased opportunity to move “the bully” out of the school. Bullying is first and foremost the responsibility of the school, and secondly, we are concerned of what the effects might be for the relocated pupil when it comes to stigma. We know that many of the children that bully others face the same challenges as the ones who are subject of bullying.

Save the Children Norway recommends[[5]](#footnote-6):

* The State Party must stipulate a requirement that the Education Act should also regulate who is responsible for digital bullying that takes place outside school hours and impacts children’s well-being and security in school.
* The State party must ensure that the systematic training measures[[6]](#footnote-7) that improve teachers’ competence in kindergartens and schools about bullying and other offenses, also includes digital bullying and teach them the necessity of involving children in the work.

• The State Party must ensure that the school’s duty to act and follow-up, notify and step in with measures also applies in cases of digital bulling and abuse, even if the bullying between the pupils takes place outside school hours

• The State Party must ensure that the complaint procedures are adequately designed for children and that equal cases are treated the same away in the different counties[[7]](#footnote-8)

**Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children**

**From the list of issues paragraph 15 b:**

15. Please provide information on the situation of asylum seekers, in particular:

 (b) The steps taken or envisaged to ensure that the protection and care of all unaccompanied asylum-seeking children under the age of 18 are provided by the Child Welfare Services (para. 12);

**The State Party’s reply to paragraph 15 b:**

(b) The Child Welfare Act applies to all children in Norway, regardless of their status, nationality or citizenship. Minor asylum seekers are offered health and care services and education in compliance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The responsibility for the care of unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors is shared between the child welfare service and the immigration authorities.

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors below the age of 15 are offered accommodation in care centres provided by the Norwegian Office for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufetat).[[8]](#footnote-9) The immigration authorities have the primary responsibility for housing and care services for unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors above 15 years of age.

The Norwegian Government is not currently considering transferring care responsibility for unaccompanied minors aged 15–18 to the child welfare service. Norway acknowledges that all unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors require a level of care and accommodation designated for their special needs. However, younger children normally require a higher level of care than older children. Norway accordingly has an age-adjusted reception offer. The reception facilities offered to unaccompanied minors aged 15–18 are designed to meet the needs of this group. The Norwegian Government is working systematically to ensure that the care provided for all unaccompanied children is managed in the best possible way.

**Info from Save the Children Norway:**

The State Party must ensure child welfare services are given responsibility for all unaccompanied refugee minors under 18, the care provision is regulated by the Child Welfare Act. We strongly disagree to The State Party’s description that “The reception facilities offered to unaccompanied minors aged 15–18 are designed to meet the needs of this group”. In our experience the care provided for this group is not adequate. This report from the Fafo Research Foundation confirms this.[[9]](#footnote-10)

The State Party has been recommended that the protection and care for these children are provided by the Child Welfare Services by The UN Committee Against Torture (2018), The UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (2019), The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (2018), The Human Rights Committee (2018) and the UN Human Rights Council earlier this year.

1. Student households and children below the age of 18 that live alone are excluded. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Meeting with the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, September 16th, 2019. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Antirasistisk senter (2017) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. https://dembra.no/en/om-dembra/ [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. See also our supplementary report to UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (2017) <http://forumforbarnekonvensjonen.no/onewebmedia/Supplerende%20rapport%20engelks%20endelig.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. [https://www.udir.no/kvalitet-og-kompetanse/nasjonale-satsinger/tilbud-om-kompetanseutvikling-miljo-og mobbing/](https://www.udir.no/kvalitet-og-kompetanse/nasjonale-satsinger/tilbud-om-kompetanseutvikling-miljo-og%20mobbing/) (in Norwegian) [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. An evaluation by Deloitte (2019) concludes that national measures must be taken to ensure equal practice throughout Norway. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. These provide care services appropriate to the particular needs of the child. The provision is governed by Chapter 5A of the Child Welfare Act. The rules for approval, quality, residents' rights, and supervision in care centres are identical to those of other child welfare institutions. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. <https://www.fafo.no/index.php/zoo-publikasjoner/fafo-rapporter/item/et-trygt-sted-a-vente> English summary: <https://www.fafo.no/index.php/zoo-publikasjoner/fafo-rapporter/item/et-trygt-sted-a-vente> [↑](#footnote-ref-10)