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**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION
FOR THE PROTECTION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES**

**COMMENTS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF
NORWAY ON THE OPINION OF THE
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FRAMEWORK
CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF
NATIONAL MINORITIES IN NORWAY**

Opinion on Norway, adopted 12 September 2002, Chapter IV Main findings and comments of the Advisory Committee

In respect of the General remarks

(69) Methods to improve statistical data will be discussed with representatives of the national minorities.

In respect of Article 3

70. The Authorities will in their dialog with the Saami Parliament inform the Saami People about the Framework Convention remaining available to the Saami should persons belonging to this indigenous people wish to rely on the protection provided therein. The authorities will in their dialogue with the Saami parliament and others concerned with a view to ensuring that the Framework Convention and the treaties designed for indigenous peoples are not construed as mutually exclusive regimes.

In respect of Article 4

71. Norway will consider the matter.

72. The Government will forward a draft bill on prohibiting ethnic discrimination by the beginning of 2004.

73. National Plan of Action to Combat Racism and Discrimination 2002-2006 also applies to the national minorities. See enclosure.

74. The Government has decided to continue to operate the Centre for Combating Ethnic Discrimination.

75. The following institutions collect/monitor data pertaining to ethnic discrimination in Norway:

Antiracist Centre: "Rikes tilstand" – a periodical report including national minorities

Centre for Combating Ethnic Discrimination's yearly report including national minorities

The Directorate of Immigration publishes every 1 ½ year a report focused mainly on immigrants and refugees.

76. The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development is in a dialogue with the municipality of Oslo regarding living conditions of the Roma. The setting up of a network between Roma/Romani women at Nordic and national level will start spring 2003.

In respect of Article 5

77. This question will be dealt with in connection with the state budget of 2004.

78. A Contact Committee between representatives of the national minorities and the authorities will be set up spring 2003.

79. Regarding the Act on land rights in the Finnmark county work is going on with the aim of forwarding a proposition to the Norwegian Parliament in 2003. The work is done in consultation

with the Sami Parliament and with the Finnmark County Council representing also the non-Sami population.

80. A working group headed by the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development is set up and will present its report by May 1 2003 on possible alternative payment schemes aimed at supporting Romani who have been victims of previous forced serialisation. The *ex gratia* payment scheme will also be looked into.

81. The Skogfinns are entitled to apply for public grant schemes for national minorities in line with the other national minorities

In respect of Article 6

82. See. 73 above.

83. See 73. The Plan of Action, 5 Measures, 5.4 Police/prosecuting authorities/courts, states:

“The police will increase their awareness and knowledge of minorities. A central forum for dialogue will be established, consisting of representatives of the Directorate of Police and representatives of relevant non-governmental organisations. Local forums for dialogue will also be established in each police district. These forums are intended to contribute to greater communication and dialogue between the involved parties. In addition, training in this field will be provided for all police employees.

In addition, the Government will establish special units under the public prosecuting authority that will provide specialist expertise in this field. ...”

In respect of Article 8

84. The opinion of the Advisory Committee has been noted and the authorities will look into the matter.

85. The opinion of the Advisory Committee has been noted and the authorities will look into the matter.

In respect of Article 9

86. There is a dialogue going on between the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development and the Ministry of Culture and Church Affairs concerning this matter.

87. See 86 above.

88. The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development is currently working out new info material concerning national minorities.

In respect of Article 10

89. The opinions of the Advisory Committee have been noted and the authorities will look into the matter.

In respect of Article 11

90. The new Act on Personal Names meets the needs referred to.

91. The Ministry of Culture and Church Affairs will in the near future revise the Place Name Act and the problems referred to will be dealt with in this connection.

In respect of Article 12

92. A research projects on the status of the Kven language has recently been started. A new research project on the origin of Romani culture and language is planned to start in the middle of 2003.

Dronning Mauds Minde - a pre-school teacher's college - is preparing to make a survey of the specific needs Romani children have in pre-school and primary school and make a programme to meet these needs.

93. The Ministry of Education and Research is preparing a white paper where the main topic is how the schools can improve in teaching culture and apply cultural activities and performances during the ordinary school hours. The language and culture of the national minorities will be pointed out as important

94. See 76 above

95. The opinions of the Advisory Committee have been noted and the authorities will look into the matter.

In respect of Article 14

96. The opinions of the Advisory Committee have been noted and the authorities will look into the matter.

In respect of Article 15

97. See 78 above. In addition representatives of the national minorities are invited by central authorities to participate in reference groups etc. in matters concerning them. The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development encourages institutions and local authorities are encouraged to involve where relevant.

98. The opinions of the Advisory Committee have been noted and the authorities will look into the matter, reference to 73 above.

99. The Worker Protection and Working Environment Act and the provisions referred are exemptions from the act and only used when strictly necessary. Examples would be special function within a congregation and the function of a butcher performing Halal. Full implementation of EU-directive 2000/43/EC of June 2000 *implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin* will be dealt with in connection with the bill on prohibiting ethnic discrimination, Ref. 72 above.

Work is going on to implement EU-directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 *establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation* into the Worker Protection and Working Environment Act, entering into force 01.01.04.

In respect of Article 18

100. There are projects grants for regional and bilateral cross-border contact. The National minorities may apply for such grants.

A Nordic expert working-group has been mandated to draft a Nordic Convention on Saami Affairs. The Nordic Committee of Senior Officials on Saami Affairs was established in 1964. A similar Nordic committee regarding national minorities will be established in 2003.