

**Group of Experts on Action against Violence  
against Women and Domestic Violence  
(GREVIO)**

---

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

**Report submitted by Norway  
pursuant to Article 68, paragraph 1  
of the Council of Europe Convention  
on preventing and combating violence  
against women and domestic violence  
(Baseline Report)**

**Received by GREVIO on 16 September 2020  
GREVIO/Inf(2020)15**

Published on 17 September 2020

Baseline report by the Government of Norway on legislative and other measures giving effect to the provisions of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention)

15 September 2020

# Content

- 1. Introduction ..... 4
- 2. Integrated policy and data collection ..... 5
  - A. Strategies and action plans ..... 5
  - B. Allocation of financial resources ..... 8
  - C. Civil society cooperation and support..... 10
  - D. Official bodies for coordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation ..... 12
  - E. Data collection ..... 14
  - F. Research conducted or supported by the Government ..... 17
  - G. Population based surveys ..... 19
- 3. Prevention..... 21
  - A. Campaigns and programmes ..... 21
  - B. Inclusion of teaching material in formal education curricula ..... 22
  - C. Initial training of professionals..... 24
  - D. In-service training of professionals..... 26
  - E. Support programmes for perpetrators ..... 30
  - F. Support programs for sex offenders ..... 31
  - G. The private sector and the media..... 32
  - H. Self-regulatory standards (for the ICT sector and the media)..... 33
  - I. Measures to encourage protocols or guidelines..... 34
  - J. Other taken or planned measures to prevent violence against women ..... 34
- 4. Protection and support ..... 37
  - A. Information on support services and legal measures available to victims..... 37
  - B 1. General support services..... 39
  - B 2. Health care and social services ..... 41
  - B 3. Number of women victims of violence assisted by health and social services ..... 46
  - C. Information on complaints mechanisms ..... 46
  - D. Specialist women's support services ..... 47
  - E. Telephone helplines ..... 50
  - F. Rights and needs of child witnesses ..... 51
  - G. Other measures ..... 54
- 5. Substantive law ..... 55
  - A. Legal framework ..... 55

B. Guidance on implementation of legal framework.....	55
C. Civil remedies .....	56
D. Compensation from perpetrators and state compensation .....	59
E. Custody and visitation rights of children.....	59
F. Criminalisation of certain forms of violence .....	60
G. Legislation against sexual harassment .....	62
H. Aiding or abetting .....	63
I. Attempts.....	63
J. Unacceptable justifications for crime .....	63
K. Applicability notwithstanding the relationship between perpetrator and victim.....	63
L. Applicable sanctions and further measures in relation to perpetrators.....	63
M. Aggravating circumstances .....	64
N. Prohibition of mandatory alternative dispute resolution processes or sentencing .....	64
O. Administrative and judicial data on cases of violence and murder .....	65
P. Other measures.....	66
6. Investigation, prosecution and procedural law and protective measures.....	67
A. Measures to ensure a prompt and appropriate response from law enforcement agencies.....	67
B. Risk assessment.....	68
C. Emergency barring orders.....	68
D. Restraining or protection orders – legal framework .....	69
F. Ex officio legal proceedings .....	70
G. Ex parte legal proceedings .....	71
H. Support for victims in legal proceedings .....	71
I. Measures of protection available during investigation and judicial proceedings .....	71
J. Free legal aid .....	73
K. Other investigation, prosecution, procedural and protective measures .....	74
7. Migration and asylum .....	74
A. (Autonomous) residence permits .....	74
B. Gender based violence as a form of persecution for asylum claims .....	77
C. Gender-sensitive procedures .....	78
D. Non-refoulement .....	79

## 1. Introduction

Norway ratified the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) in July 2017. The Convention came into force November 1 2017.

Norway is using the term violence in close relationships as an umbrella concept referring to physical, psychological, sexual and economical violence against women, men and children committed by a person in the family or someone the victim in other ways are closely related to. In addition the concept covers female genital mutilation, honour-related expressions, unacceptable negative control and oppression.

Despite the gender neutral understanding and policy approach, Norway acknowledge that such forms of violence disproportionately affects women.

Other forms of violence against women are referred to by type of crime.

The use of violence is in contravention of Norwegian law and an attack on basic human rights. Violence against women and domestic violence are criminal acts on par with violence that occurs in other contexts. Norway has also acceded to a number of international agreements that obligate the State to protect its own citizens from violence, abuse and other inhumane treatment.

National legislation is considered to be in accordance with the Istanbul convention. The convention is not incorporated into Norwegian law, but according to the principle of presumption Norwegian legislation should be interpreted in accordance with obligations in public international law that are binding on Norway. The principle has been cited a number of times by the Norwegian Supreme Court.

In May 2014, the Norwegian Constitution was strengthened with the adoption of a separate chapter on human rights. The chapter starts with a general provision requiring the authorities to respect and safeguard human rights as they are expressed in the Constitution and in the human rights treaties that are binding for Norway.

The Norwegian National Human Rights Institution (NIM) was established in 2015 with a broad-based mandate to promote and protect human rights. In 2017 it received 'A status' accreditation from GANHRI, meaning it is in full compliance with the Paris Principles, cf. Chapter 2 D.

Work against domestic violence and sexual assault is a central and important task for the Norwegian Government. Norway's ambitions in this area have been highlighted in the Government's political platform – the Granavolden platform – which states that a comprehensive and offensive policy shall be pursued and that efforts to combat domestic violence and sexual assault shall be given priority.

Norway recognises the link between achieving gender equality and the eradication of violence against women. The new Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act entered into force on 1 January 2018. Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of gender applies to all areas of society, including family life and other purely personal relationships. The Act's prohibition of

discrimination on grounds of gender and the prohibition of harassment or sexual harassment encompasses gender-based violence that is considered discrimination.

The UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) has been incorporated into Norwegian law through the Human Rights Act and shall, in the event of any contradiction, precede other legislation, cf. sections 2 and 3 of the Human Rights Act.

New rules on the activity and reporting duties of public authorities and employers entered into force on 1 January 2020, cf. Chapter 5, A.

The Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs has prepared guidance for the activity and reporting duties. In addition, the Directorate has been tasked with preparing templates for the activity and reporting duties. The guidance and templates shall ensure that it is as easy as possible for enterprises to follow up on their duties.

In addition, the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud provides guidance on rights and follows up on the activity and reporting duties. The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud also has offers of assistance for persons who have been subjected to sexual harassment.

This report has been prepared by the Ministry of Justice and Public Security in co-operation with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, the Ministry of Children and Families, the Ministry of Health and Care, the Ministry of Labour and Social affairs, the Ministry of Education and Research, the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation and the Ministry of Culture. The Police Directorate, The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs, the Directorate of Health, the Directorate of Labour and Welfare, the Office of the Director General of Public Prosecutions, the National Courts Administration, and the Victim Compensation Office have all contributed to the report. The Sami Parliament and the Norwegian National Human Rights Institution have also provided inputs to the report. The Government has funded a shadow report prepared by the civil society.

## **2. Integrated policy and data collection**

### **A. Strategies and action plans**

Efforts to combat violence against women and domestic violence has been a priority area for numerous governments over the past 20 years, and the first national action plan was launched in December 1999. Since 2000, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security has been responsible for the coordination of work in this field. In 2001, a government-appointed committee was tasked with investigating issues related to violence against women. The Committee's report became an important premise provider for further work in this subject area.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Official Norwegian Report (NOU) 2003:31, *The Right to a Life Without Violence. Men's Violence against Women in Close Relationships*.

On 8 March 2013, the former Government submitted a report to the Norwegian Parliament (Storting) on domestic violence<sup>2</sup>. The report described the measures that had been implemented and outlined the guidelines for future work. The measures in the report were concretised in the subsequent Action Plan against Domestic Violence (2014–2017) *A Life without Violence*.

Norway has worked on the subject of violence against women and domestic violence for several years through various strategies and action plans in the field. The purpose of the plans is to structure and coordinate work in a field where several ministries/sectors have responsibility. There are separate plans against domestic violence, against sexual assault, against violence and abuse against children and young people, and against negative social control, forced marriage and female genital mutilation. In addition, there are a number of plans for related subject areas, such as human trafficking, racism and discrimination on grounds of ethnicity, religion, etc. Several reports to the Storting also deal with subject areas that are part of a larger picture, including Report No. 19 the Storting (2018–2019), *The Public Health Report. Good Lives in a Safe Society*.

#### *Action Plan against Domestic Violence (2020–2024)*

The Government is now working on the sixth national action plan against domestic violence, which will apply for the period 2020 to 2024. This action plan follows up on and further develops the Action Plan against Domestic Violence, *A Life without Violence (2014–2017)*, and outlines and addresses the remaining challenges. For the first time the present plan of actions includes a separate section on violence and abuse in Sami areas for the first time. The plan will thus follow up on recent research and requests from amongst others the Sami Parliament, the Norwegian National Human Rights Institution, the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud and several UN committees to prepare an action plan to combat violence and abuse in Sami communities.

The new action plan, which is expected to be presented in the autumn of 2020, will also help meet the obligations of the Istanbul Convention, including placing the victim's human rights in the centre of these politics. The aim is to facilitate the implementation of a comprehensive and coordinated policy against domestic violence that prevents violence, protects and helps the victims, and makes accountable, treats and prosecutes the perpetrators. The Action Plan will be translated into English and will be made available to GREVIO when launched.

Work on the action plan is coordinated by the Ministry of Justice and Public Security and anchored in the Interministerial Working Group against Domestic Violence.

#### *Escalation Plan against Violence and Abuse (2017–2021)*

The Escalation Plan against Violence and Abuse t (2017–2021) was adopted by the Storting in April 2017. The aim of this plan is to reduce the incidence of domestic violence, with particular emphasis on combating violence and abuse affecting children and young people. Follow-up of the Escalation Plan is anchored in the Interministerial Working Group against

---

<sup>2</sup> Report No. 15 (2012–2013), *Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence. It is about Living*.

Domestic Violence. Special cooperation has also been established at the directorate level. The County Governor has been tasked with helping the municipalities strengthen their efforts to combat violence against and abuse of children. The plan includes 88 measures. As at 1 June 2020, all the measures had been started, and 37 had been completed. A report on the status of the measures in the Escalation Plan will be published every six months. The consequences of the Escalation Plan will be evaluated. Work on the escalation plan is coordinated by the Ministry of Children and Families.

*Action Plan against Negative Social Control, Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation*

The Action Plan against Negative Social Control, Forced Marriage and Female genital mutilation for the period 2017–2020 includes 28 measures. In addition, in 2018, the Storting requested that the Government follow up on 12 resolutions. The Government's integration strategy (2019-2022)<sup>3</sup> includes 9 additional measures. The Government has decided to prepare a new Action Plan against Negative Social Control and Honour-Related Violence (2021–2024) to ensure the continuation and coordination of the efforts beyond 2020.

The Ministry of Education and Research coordinates this work and is in lead of a working group from seven ministries to follow up the Government's overall efforts against negative social control, forced marriage and female genital mutilation. The cooperation at the directorate level for the implementation of various measures are formalised. The regional and local authorities are both responsible for carrying out measures, and are the target group for measures such as development of the competence of employees in municipal first-line services. The progress of all the measures in the action plan, request from the Storting and the Integration Strategy will be reported on every six months.

*Action Plan against Rape*

In the spring of 2019, the Government launched an Action Plan Against rape for the period 2019-2022. The action plan focuses on targeted preventive efforts, good offers of assistance to victims and high quality investigations, as well as more knowledge and expertise. The action plan helps ensure comprehensive and coordinated efforts in an area where many sectors share responsibility.

The action plan focuses on both women and men over the age of 14 who are victims of rape, and on women and men over the age of criminal responsibility who have perpetrated abuse. The plan is based on the definition of rape in section 291 of the General Civil Penal Code. The National Police Directorate is coordinating the follow up of the plan.

*Action Plan against Human Trafficking*

This action plan was presented in December 2016 and has no limited time frame. The plan establishes a coordinated effort against human trafficking, in which the public authorities and non-governmental organisations work together to stop the abuse and protect the victims. The Ministry of Justice and Public Security is coordinating the follow up of the plan.

---

<sup>3</sup> Kunnskapsdepartementet (2018) Regjeringens integreringsstrategi 2019-2022. *Integrering gjennom kunnskap.*

### *Strategy against internet-related abuse*

The Government is preparing a strategy against child abuse that takes place over the internet. The strategy has a comprehensive, cross-sectoral and knowledge-based approach to the subject area. Completion of the strategy is expected by the end of 2020.

The Ministry of Justice and Public Security is coordinating the follow up of the plan.

### *Public Health Report*

Report No. 19 (2018–2019) *to the Storting: Public Health Report. Good Lives in a Safe Society* contains a separate chapter on violence and abuse. The report emphasises that violence and abuse are a public health challenge, and that good preventive work requires early intervention, long-term planning and good coordination.

### *Equality plans*

The Government's equality policy encompasses work on gender equality, non-discrimination, and efforts against racism, as well as equality of LGBTIQ persons and persons with disabilities. In all these areas, separate action plans or strategies have been presented: Strategy against Hate Speech (2016–2020) *Safety, diversity, openness*, The Norwegian Government's action plan against discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression (2017-2020) *A society for all – Equality, Democracy and Human Rights*, The Government's action plan for equality of persons with disabilities (2020-2025) and The Government's action plan against racism and discrimination on grounds of ethnicity and religion (2020–2023).

## **B. Allocation of financial resources**

There is no complete overview of the grants for work against violence against women and domestic violence in Norway. The majority of the funding is covered by the ordinary budgets of the affected sectoral authorities and relevant services, including the police, health and care services, Family Counselling Service, Child Welfare Service and crisis centres. The municipalities' statutory services are largely financed through the municipal budget. In addition, the State funds certain special measures for victims and perpetrators of violence. In 2020, for example, over EUR 6.3 million was appropriated for the operation of Alternative to Violence, over EUR 9.35 million was appropriated for the operation of Support Centres against Incest and Sexual Assault and approximately EUR 2.95 million was appropriated to a separate centre for children exposed to violence. Funds have also been appropriated to establish treatment programmes for persons who have committed or are at risk of committing sexual assault. In addition, the authorities fund a number of preventive measures, surveys and research programmes. Funds are also appropriated to a number of non-governmental organisations that have measures in this area, cf. Section II C.

In some cases, additional funding is also appropriated to new action plans and strategies in this area, in other cases, funds will be appropriated as the measures are implemented during the action plan period. The measures in the action plans are covered by the budgets of the individual sectoral ministry. In connection with the Action Plan against Domestic Violence (2014–2017), EUR 2.8 million was appropriated through the budgets of the Ministry of Justice and Public Security. These funds were earmarked the Research Programme on

Domestic Violence (EUR 934,579), package of measures to prevent domestic violence (EUR 654,205), new grant scheme to prevent and combat domestic violence (EUR 747,663) and the establishment of a pilot project (Project November), where the police and support services were to assist victims of violence at the same location (EUR 467,289). All of this funding has continued beyond the action plan period.

Since the Escalation Plan against Violence and Abuse (2017-2021) was adopted by the Storting in 2017, the Government has increased the appropriations to follow up the measures in the Escalation Plan by over EUR 100,000,000 in the budgets of various ministries. These funds will, for example, be used to strengthen investigations into violence and abuse, strengthen the treatment programmes for victims and perpetrators of violence, and strengthen preventive work and work to support parents in the municipalities.

In connection with the Action Plan against Negative Social Control, Forced Marriage, and Female Genital Mutilation, the largest appropriations are related to minority advisers in the lower and upper secondary schools (EUR 4,6 million), integration advisers at several embassies (EUR 1 million) and the operation of The Expert Team against Forced Marriage, Female Genital Mutilation and Negative Social Control (EUR 268,519). Management of national housing and support services for young people over the age of 18 exposed to negative social control, honour related violence and forced marriage (EUR 1.8 million) and a mentoring scheme for vulnerable people (EUR 253,045). Voluntary organizations can apply for annual grants for preventive projects (EUR 1.9 million), in addition funding has been allocated for research on negative social control, forced marriage and female genital mutilation (EUR 562,324).

Funds have not been appropriated for the work on the action plans against rape and against human trafficking beyond the ordinary budget limits.

For the special schemes and efforts in the plan documents related to equality, cf. Chapter 2 A, around EUR 9.3 million is allocated annually from the Ministry of Culture's budgets, including EUR 4.4 million for the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud, EUR 2.1 million for the Anti-Discrimination Tribunal and EUR 1.5 million for the equality centres. EUR 21.8 million has been allocated to the grant scheme for persons with disabilities, EUR 588,785 has been allocated to the grant scheme for family and equality policy organisations, and EUR 1.2 has been allocated to the grant scheme for LGBTQI persons. In addition, EUR 654,205 has been allocated to the equality of persons with disabilities, EUR 140,186 has been allocated to the strategy against hate speech, EUR 177 570 has been allocated to the Action Plan against Racism and Discrimination and EUR 382,043 has been allocated to the Action Plan for LGBTQI Persons. In addition, there are funds allocated by other ministries to these plans/areas.

As large parts of the funds for the work against violence against women and domestic violence are financed within the ordinary budgets of the relevant sector authorities and relevant services, the authorities do not have an overview of its percentage of annual state and regional budgets.

### **C. Civil society cooperation and support**

Non-governmental organisations and private foundations, including women's organisations, contribute to important services and programmes for victims and perpetrators of violence in the Norwegian society. These organisations are important partners for the authorities and have experience that brings useful knowledge and expertise to our overall work to prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence.

When action plans and strategies are prepared, actors from civil society are invited to input meetings, and input is often also requested for the implementation/execution of measures.

In 2014, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security established a forum for cooperation between the authorities and non-governmental organisations for work against domestic violence. This forum is chaired by the State Secretary in the Ministry of Justice and Public Security. The Government also intends to engage the non-governmental organisations in the follow-up of the Istanbul Convention through this forum for cooperation.

The Ministry of Justice and Public Security further finances three annual conferences where public actors and the non-governmental organisations participate: 1) Conference on the prevention of domestic violence every spring, 2) Conference on cooperation and coordination in the work against domestic violence every autumn and 3) conference to mark the entry into force of the Istanbul Convention in Norway every 1 November. The conferences help spread knowledge and exchange experiences between the voluntary sector and the authorities.

Also the children and youth organizations are important actors in the work against violence and abuse, and the ministries are in regular contact with these organisations. The Ministry of Children and Families has two semi-annual meetings with the Norwegian Children and Youth Council, Norwegian Association of Youth with Disabilities and Youth Work Norway, in addition to an annual meeting with the breadth of children's and youth organisations. In addition, the organisations are invited to input meetings and the development of new measures, such as the youth panel. The Ministry of Children and Families has had the subject of violence and abuse on its agenda at dialogue meetings between the political leadership and children's and youth organisations.

As a follow-up of the Youth Health Strategy, the Minister of Health and Care Services meets annually with youth organisations. This provides important input for work for and with children and young people.

Civil society organisations also participate in reference and resource groups, and are consulted for the design and implementation of measures in action plans. In addition, the organisations participate in input meetings and hearings in cases that are under investigation.

The Ministry of Health and Care Services has its own contact forum for users in the health and care services. One of the members shall have experience and expertise from the field of violence.

The Norwegian Directorate of Health has regular meetings with organisations for users and relatives in the field of mental health and drug and alcohol abuse. Some of the organisations focus somewhat on violence, but few have it as their main area of work.

Many non-governmental or private organisations receive support from the state to provide programmes for victims or perpetrators of violence. In addition, several grant schemes have been established aimed at non-governmental organisations and civil society to prevent and combat domestic violence, including separate grant schemes for organisational work against negative social control, forced marriage and female genital mutilation. These schemes support many important measures throughout the country, while helping to strengthen cooperation between the non-governmental and public sectors. The funds are channelled through the budgets of various ministries and managed by various underlying agencies. The most important searchable schemes with a grant budget for 2020 are:

- The EUR 1.36 million grant scheme to prevent and combat domestic violence is managed by the Central Administration of the National Mediation Service.
- Operations and project grants of around EUR 841,121 for measures against violence and abuse are managed by the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs.
- The EUR 1.76 million grant scheme aimed at strengthening the attitude-changing work of non-governmental organisations, including the prevention of negative social control, forced marriage and female genital mutilation is managed by the Directorate of Integration and Diversity.
- The EUR 10.1 million grant scheme for work with users and close family members in the field of mental health, drug and alcohol abuse and violence is managed by the Norwegian Directorate of Health.
- The EUR 587,392 grant scheme for family and equality policy organisations is managed by the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs.

In addition to the grant schemes in the field, earmarked funds are also allocated to measures under the auspices of a number of organisations, including:

- The nationwide phone line for incest and sexual abuse received a grant of EUR 401,869 in 2020
- The nationwide violence and abuse helpline received a grant of EUR 162,368 in 2020
- The Red Cross Hotline for forced marriage and female genital mutilation, received grant of EUR 214,953 in 2020
- The Red Cross Mentor Family is an offer for young people between the ages of 18 and 30 who have severed ties with their families due to negative social control, forced marriage or honour-related violence, and received a grant of EUR 187,969 in 2020
- Oslo Crisis Centre's network project "Together", for young women subjected to negative social control, forced marriage or honour-related violence who have severed ties with their family, received a grant of EUR 65,604 in 2020.

- The Stine Sofie Centre, which is a private centre for life mastery and joy of life for children who have experienced violence or sexual assault, their trusted caregivers carers and siblings, received a grant in 2020 of about EUR 2.95 million.
- State operational support for Centres against Incest and Sexual Assault (SMISO) and Resource Centres against Sexual Assault, received a grant of around EUR 10.5 million in 2020. In addition, the centres receive grants for ordinary centre operations from municipalities, county authorities and health trusts, which altogether will cover at least 20 per cent of the operating expenses and trigger a State grant of up to 80 per cent.

A large portion of the appropriations in the area of equality and non-discrimination are allocated to grant schemes and named recipients. These may be organisations that work to set the agenda in the area of equality and carry out active equality work. Many organisations that receive grants work in areas that fall under the Istanbul Convention and the CEDAW. In addition, grants are allocated to acquire more knowledge about the challenges in the area of equality and non-discrimination, such as the CORE – Centre for Research on Gender Equality and the equality centres: The Equality Centre, KUN Centre for Equality and Diversity, Reform – Resource Centre for Men and Centre for Gender Equality at the University of Agder. The equality centres represent key specialist environments that work to acquire knowledge about victims of violence and to increase competence in equality among both private and public actors who request such, among other things.

The following grant schemes have been established in the area of equality:

<i>Name of scheme appropriation</i>	<i>No. of organisations</i>	<i>Total</i>
		in euro 2019
Better living conditions LGBTIQ*	23	1,113,457
Organisations for persons with disabilities (incl. special grants)**	136	18,734,128
Recreational measures for persons with disabilities	113	2,233,908
Better living conditions for persons with disabilities	31	1,617,476
Universal design	36	1,115,420
Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities' Universal Design Network	26	280,373
Family and equality policy organisations	33	572,112

#### **D. Official bodies for coordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation**

The Ministry of Justice and Public Security coordinates the Government's work against domestic violence and chairs an Interministerial working group consisting of eight ministries and several directorates. Work against violence and abuse against children and young

people, which is coordinated by the Ministry of Children and Families, is also anchored in this working group. Similar groups have been established to coordinate work against negative social control, forced marriage and female genital mutilation, which is chaired by the Ministry of Education and Research, work against rape, which is chaired by the National Police Directorate, and the work against human trafficking, which is chaired by the Ministry of Justice and Public Security.

The working groups are responsible for the implementation of the measures in the current plans and regularly report on the status of this work. In addition, new strategies and measures are also proposed.

For Norway's part, the Interministerial Working Group against Domestic Violence is responsible for the coordination and implementation of the Istanbul Convention, including reporting to the monitoring body GREVIO. The working group consists of 1-3 civil servants (advisors, senior advisors and/or policy directors) from each of the eight ministries. In addition representatives from several directorates participate in the working group. There is no separate budget line for this group/work.

As for the role of a national monitoring body for the Convention, the Government is considering who might be relevant to assume such a role.

However several bodies supervise the authorities' work against violence against women/domestic violence. The Office of the Auditor General is the Storting's supervisory body and conducts inspections and investigations (audits) of the ministries, other state enterprises and the State's ownership interests in companies. The Office of the Auditor General has decided to conduct a study of the Government's efforts to combat domestic violence. The audit has begun, but it is delayed due to COVID-19.

The Norwegian National Human Rights Institution is tasked with promoting and protecting human rights in Norway in accordance with the Constitution of Norway, Human Rights Act, international treaties and international law in general. The institution works with a broad range of human rights, from freedom of expression and privacy protection to rights for vulnerable groups such as asylum seekers, indigenous peoples, children and the elderly. The Norwegian National Human Rights Institution advises the Storting, the Government and other authoritative bodies on issues affecting human rights.

The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud oversees that Norwegian law and administrative practices comply with Norway's obligations under the UN Women's Discrimination Convention, UN Convention on Racial Discrimination and UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The Anti-Discrimination Tribunal enforces the prohibition of sexual harassment in the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act. The Anti-Discrimination Tribunal has the authority to impose restitution in sexual harassment cases within the workplace and compensation in simple cases. The Anti-Discrimination Tribunal also enforces the employer's reporting duty. The Tribunal may issue orders and impose coercive fines to ensure the fulfilment of the order to remedy any failure to fulfil the reporting duty.

## **E. Data collection**

Several entities in Norway collect data that is relevant for the implementation of the Convention.

Statistics on registered crime can be roughly divided into official crime statistics and figures retrieved directly from the work flow management system of the police, courts and the Norwegian Correctional Service.

The police publish quarterly statistics that include all forms of violence and sexual abuse reported to the police. The reports are made publicly available on the police's website. Statistics Norway is responsible for the official crime statistics in Norway. The statistics from Statistics Norway are taken from the same work flow management system as the police. However, the data from these systems is processed and compiled into Statistics Norway's own statistics.

Statistics Norway publishes the following statistics in the field of crime and justice. Data is disaggregated by sex, age, type of violence and geographical area (county).

- Offences reported to the police
- Offences investigated
- Imprisonments
- Victims of offences reported to the police
- Penal sanctions

The National Criminal Investigation Service (Kripos) prepares statistics and analyses in a number of areas, including sexual assault, organised crime, murder and narcotics. The reports are made publicly available on the police's website.

The Family Counselling Service collects data at the individual and family level on whether violence is part of the problems for couples and families who visit for mediation or other help. Data is collected by employees at the family counselling offices by registering that violence is part of the problem in individual cases in the work flow management system. Data is published at the national level and unit level by Statistics Norway.

The Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs collects data on the users of crisis centres, divided into residents and day users, as well as data on the services offered (including the premises where the services are offered, support services for victims of violence, employees and competence). User data is reported on violence experienced, sex, age, relationship to the perpetrator of violence, immigrant background, disabilities, degree of employment and where users go after completing their stay at the crisis centre. The data is generally received at an aggregate level (i.e. information about distribution according to the aforementioned identity markers) for all the centres combined, and not at the individual or centre level. Data is registered by employees at the centres in a data portal operated by Sentio Research AS on behalf of the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs. The Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs publishes the statistics annually on its own website. In addition, statistics on the crisis centres and the municipality's work with domestic violence are collected through KOSTRA. KOSTRA is an acronym for Municipal-State-

Reporting in Norwegian and provides management information on the use of resources, priorities and goal achievement in the municipalities.

The Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs collects data on the users of the Centres against Incest and Sexual Assault (sex, work situation, functional impairment, immigrant background, experience with abuse, etc.), as well as data on the centres (including the premises where the services are offered, the support services for victims of violence offered by the Centres against Incest and Sexual Assault, employees and competence). The user data reported includes sex, age, relationship to the perpetrator of violence, immigrant background, disabilities and degree of employment. The Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs generally receives the data at an aggregate level (i.e. information about distribution according to the aforementioned identity markers) for all the centres combined, and not at the individual or centre level. The statistics are produced and published in the same manner as for the crisis centre service (see above).

The helpline for sexual abuse victims collects data about age, sex, why one has called, county one has called from, where the caller has found information about the hotline, gender of the abuser and whether it was a first-time inquiry. The figures are published in separate annual reports, and some are published on the website of the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir.no) together with the statistics from the Centres against Incest and Sexual Assault.

The Violence and Abuse Helpline, which is operated by the Crisis Centre Secretariat and Oslo Crisis Centre register information about who makes contact (victims, relatives, help services, sex of callers, where in the country the call is from, whether there has previously been contact with any help services, type of violence, what help is requested and which agencies are referred to. In addition, the number of callers and the proportion who are answered, the time of the call and the length of the call are registered. This information is published in the Violence and Abuse Helpline's annual reports and will also be included in the status reports for the new Action Plan against Domestic Violence (2020–2024), which will be published annually on the Government's website.

The Child Welfare Service has a mandate to help the victims and prevent violence, and data is collected at both the municipal and state level. Through the municipalities' reporting, the reason for measures from the municipal child welfare service is registered. Age, sex and the municipality of residence, as well as violence against a child or a child witnessing violence are registered. This is information that is registered in the municipal enterprise systems and is published as statistics by Statistics Norway. However, the current registration practices entail that the statistics do not provide a representative picture of the number of children participating in measures due to violence or witnessing violence. Data from the municipal child welfare service has been collected through digital journaling systems. The municipalities report to Statistics Norway, which presents the figures on [ssb.no](http://ssb.no).

From 1 January 2016, the WHO introduced a new code for female genital mutilation. This change was incorporated at the same time into the Norwegian edition of the ICD-10. In the specialist health service, the ICD-10 is used to report diagnoses and reasons for contact to

the Norwegian Patient Register. The codes are also used in health registers and in national quality indicators. The statistics show a low but increasing number of patients receiving medical care in the specialist health service. In 2016, 32 patients with female genital mutilation as the main condition were registered. In 2019, the number was 55. The number of patients where female genital mutilation was registered as a secondary condition was 82 in 2016 and 125 in 2019.

The Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs publishes the number of requests to the interagency Expert Team against forced Marriage, Female Genital Mutilation and Negative Social Control (the Expert Team) annually. The main challenge, sex, age and national background are reported.

The Expert Team's annual report also includes the annual occupancy rate for residential and support programmes for persons subjected to forced marriage and honour-related violence. The data is aggregated so that privacy and anonymity are safeguarded and mentions the number of residents, main challenge, sex and age.

The Directorate of Integration and Diversity publishes an annual overview of the number of new cases for minority advisers at schools and integration advisers at foreign service missions, and the development over time, cf. Chapter 3 D. The cases are classified by the main challenge, sex, age and national background.

Health personnel have a statutory duty to record relevant and necessary information about the patient and the medical care provided, as well as the information necessary to fulfil the duty of reporting or disclosure established by law or pursuant to law, cf. sections 39 and 40 of the Health Personnel Act. The Patient Medical Records Regulations specify in greater detail what information it may be relevant and necessary to record, and includes, for example, information on symptoms, observations and examination findings, diagnostic considerations and assessments, cf. section 6 (c) of the Regulations. If an injury from violence is identified, it may be relevant and necessary that this be recorded in the medical records. For medical care of children, it may be relevant and necessary to record information about the parents or other caregivers that are of importance to the child's treatment situation, cf. section 8 (c). Under the circumstances, this may be information that the mother or father is a victim of violence or perpetrates violence.

The duty of health personnel to record relevant and necessary information in the medical records applies regardless of the data subject's consent. The information is subject to rules of confidentiality and may only be disclosed in accordance with the rules established by law or pursuant to law. However, the duty of confidentiality does not prevent information from being disclosed when the need for protection must be considered as safeguarded by the omission of individualising characteristics. The information may also be used for research, by exemption, cf. Section 29 of the Act. The authority to grant exemption is delegated to the Regional Committee for Medical and Health Research Ethics.

Registered information about violence and injuries from violence in a patient's medical records may be registered in the Norwegian Patient Register or the Municipal Register of Patients and Users in accordance with the detailed provisions of the Norwegian Patient

Register Regulations and the Regulations for the Municipal Register of Patients and Users. The regulations are pursuant to the Health Register Act, the purpose of which is defined in section 1 as facilitating the collection and other processing of medical information, to promote health, prevent disease and injury and provide better health and care services. The Act shall ensure that the processing of data is carried out in an ethically justifiable manner, safeguards the individual's privacy and is used in the best interests of the individual and society. Pursuant to the Health Register Act, separate regulations on population-based health surveys have also been issued.

The Norwegian Institute of Public Health (NIPH) is a professional body under the Ministry of Health and Care Services. The NIPH's social mission is to produce, summarise and communicate knowledge to contribute to good public health work and good health and care services. This also includes the processing of health information regarding violence against women and domestic violence. For this work, the NIPH may collect data from various sources, which include data from the health and care services and health records, as well as data from actors outside of the health and care services, such as crisis centres etc. According to the NIPH, the surveys below have<sup>4</sup> collected data from specific surveys of violence and health and living conditions surveys.

Health and living condition surveys that include questions about violence<sup>5</sup>:

- Health Survey in Nord-Trøndelag (HUNT), NTNU
- Youth Part of the Oslo Health Study, Norwegian Institute of Public Health
- Young in Norway, NOVA
- Norwegian Mother and Child Survey (MoBa), Norwegian Institute of Public Health
- Survey of Living Conditions, Statistics Norway

#### **F. Research conducted or supported by the Government**

In recent years, the Government has focused extensively on domestic violence research. From 2014 to 2019, a total of EUR 7.34 million was appropriated to a five-year research programme under the auspices of the Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies and the Social Research Institute NOVA at Oslo Metropolitan University. The causes, scope and consequences of domestic violence, the work of the police and welfare services and the victims' meetings with these services, as well as the work of non-governmental organisations in this area, are some of the topics that have been included in the programme. In addition, the programme has also addressed the topics of violence and abuse experienced among young people, various effects of violence and abuse, sexual violence, violence in minority and majority families, and how victims of violence encounter the systems and services, as well as negative social control, forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

The domestic violence research programme at NOVA and the Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies has been continued for a new five-year period (2019–2024). As part of the programme, the Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies will conduct a new national prevalence study on domestic violence and sexual assault, and it will

---

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.fhi.no/nettpub/hin/skader/vold/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.fhi.no/nettpub/hin/skader/vold/>

also study sexual violence in young people's close relationships, violence in couple relationships related to gender, equality and power, and domestic violence in Sami communities. NOVA will, among other things, study sexual violence in domestic relationships, intimate partner violence in various family contexts and strategic legal challenges in work against domestic violence.

The Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies was established in 2004 and is an autonomous and professionally independent centre that develops and spreads knowledge and expertise about violence and traumatic stress. The aim of the centre is to help prevent and reduce the health and social consequences that violence and traumatic stress may entail. The Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies is mainly funded by the Ministry of Health and Care Services, Ministry of Justice and Public Security and Ministry of Children and Families, with the Ministry of Health and Care Services as the largest contributor. In 2020, EUR 4.3 million were allocated as a basic grant to the centre over the budgets of these three ministries.

In the last few years, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security has commissioned several evaluations of the police protection measures, including restraining orders (NOVA, 2019) and the use of restraining orders against contact with electronic control – so-called reverse violence alarms (NOVA, 2020). In 2020, the use of the protective measure unlisted address (code 6) will also be evaluated. In addition, an evaluation of the Norwegian Children's House is to be completed in July 2021, and the Support Centres for Crime Victims will be evaluated in 2021. These evaluations provide important information that is used in the development of policy and measures.

In the period 2018–2020, the Ministry of Education and Research has funded several research reports.

The Government supports various research programmes through the Research Council of Norway. One of these is the Programme on Health, Care and Welfare Services Research (HELSEVEL). Research and innovation activities are to improve quality, expertise and efficiency in the health and care services, the labour and welfare services, and child and family welfare services. In this programme there is a large study on violence against the elderly in nursing homes: Elder abuse in Norwegian nursing homes: a cross-sectional exploratory study.

The Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies has conducted several studies highlighting the health consequences of being subjected to violence and abuse. Studies have also been conducted on the work of health and care services with domestic violence, including female genital mutilation. The Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies has further, in cooperation with the Norwegian Institute of Public Health, prepared an overview of what knowledge exists on the treatment and follow-up of victims and perpetrators of violence and sexual assault. The centre also researches treatment and assistance offers for people who perpetrate violence and abuse, including children and young people with problematic or harmful sexual behaviour.

Over several years, the Ministry of Health and Care Services has appropriated funds in the Government budget to the Centre for Sami Health Research. The SAMINOR surveys conducted by the centre have provided an important statistical basis for the incidence of violence in Sami communities. The SAMINOR II survey, for which data was collected from 2012 to 2014, contains a number of questions about violence. The data can, for example, be broken down by sex, type of violence (physical violence, psychological violence, sexual violence and parental neglect), ethnicity (Sami/non-Sami), who the abuser is (stranger, domestic partner, family/relative and other known persons) and when the violence occurred.

In 2019, a knowledge overview of the municipalities' crisis centre offerings prepared by Nordland Research Institute was published. In 2020, the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs has announced a research project on how the municipalities fulfil their responsibilities pursuant to the Crisis Centre Act, including the follow-up of users of the crisis centres' programmes during the re-establishment phase and the experiences of the users (both children and adults).

In recent years, the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs has conducted studies of the Family Counselling Service's work with domestic violence (cf. NOVA Report No. 7/20) and the Child Welfare Service's work with children and young people who have experienced domestic violence and abuse (cf. NTNU report 2020).

As a measure in the Escalation Plan Against Violence and Abuse (2017–2021), the directorates, under the direction of the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs, will investigate further research needs in this area.

### **G. Population based surveys**

In recent years, the Government has appropriated funds to conduct a number of scope studies on violence and abuse. The studies give us estimates of the scope of violence and abuse, where victimisation that is not reported to police or support services is also identified.

In 2014, the Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies conducted a national prevalence study on domestic violence and sexual assault. The study is a cross-sectional survey of Norwegian men and women between the ages of 18 and 75 years. The study included questions about violence and abuse in childhood, and violence and abuse in adulthood, as well as mental health and socio-demographic conditions. The results of the study showed that men reported to the same extent as women that they were subjected to "less serious" intimate partner violence during their lifetime, but that women were subjected to a much greater extent than men to gross violence by intimate partners, 8.2 per cent versus 2 per cent, respectively. Women are also subjected to sexual assault to a greater extent than men. 9.4 per cent of women and 1.1 per cent of men in the survey had experienced sexual assault during their lifetime. The results of the study have been included in a report published by the Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies and can be downloaded for free from their website. The national prevalence study on

domestic violence and sexual assault will be repeated in 2021 as part of the Research Programme on Domestic Violence.

In 2017, the Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies launched a national prevalence study on violence against the elderly. The survey is a cross-sectional study, in which 2,463 people between the ages of 66 and 90 (1,232 men and 1,231 women) answered a postal questionnaire. Questions were asked about physical violence, sexual assault, mental violence and financial abuse. In addition, there were questions about socio-demographic conditions, health, lifestyle and assistance needs, contact with the support services and reporting to the police. The study indicates that between 56,500 and 76,000 elderly persons living at home have been victims of violence or abuse after attaining the age of 65. The total incidence of violence and abuse against elderly persons living at home after attaining the age of 65 was between 6.8 and 9.2 per cent. There were no significant differences between the genders. Most of those who had been victims of violence and abuse reported mental abuse, followed by physical violence, sexual assault and financial abuse. In most cases, the perpetrator was closely related to the victim. The results of the study have been included in a report published by the Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies and can be downloaded for free from their website.

In 2019, the Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies launched a national prevalence study on violence and abuse experiences among young people between the ages of 12 and 16 (the UEVO study). The survey shows that 1 out of 5 young people have experienced mental violence from their parents (20 per cent of girls and 15 per cent of boys). As many as 1 out of 20 have experienced serious physical violence and 1 out of 5 have experienced less serious physical violence from their parents or caregivers. Boys and girls report the same amount of physical violence. As many as 6 per cent have experienced sexual assault by adults at least once, while 4 per cent have experienced sexual assault repeatedly. Almost twice as many girls as boys have been subjected to sexual assault. Over 1 in 4 girls with at least one parent born outside Europe experience negative social control, such as not being able to choose their boyfriend. Most of them who have been victims of one type of violence or abuse have also experienced other forms of abuse, girls to a greater extent than boys. The results of the survey have been published at several conferences and through press releases and newspaper articles. The study can also be downloaded for free from the website of the Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies.

Based on the experiences from the UEVO study, in the period 2020-2022 the Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies will conduct a study of what impact COVID-19 has had on vulnerable children and young people, including the risk of violence and abuse. The study shall also shed light on how future preparedness should be organised to best safeguard vulnerable children and young people in a social crisis.

The Social Research Institute NOVA/Oslo Metropolitan University has conducted national surveys of violence and abuse against children and young people in 2007 and 2015. The studies have been conducted as representative national surveys among third-year students in the upper secondary school. The reports discuss three forms of violence that children and young people may experience: physical violence from their parents, witnessing violence

against their parents and sexual violence – inside and outside of the family. The surveys show that there has been a reduction in "mild" violence (pulling hair, pinching, pushing and striking with an open hand) during this period, especially by the mothers. On the other hand, the scope of gross violence by parents has been stable. The results of the survey have been included in a report published by NOVA, which can also be downloaded for free from their website.

The second health and living condition survey in areas with Sami and Norwegian populations (SAMINOR 2) was conducted during the period from 2012 to 2014. Data from the survey shows that Sami women in particular report higher incidents of physical, mental and sexual violence than persons with non-Sami backgrounds in the same geographical area. In the survey, 49 per cent of Sami women and 35 per cent of non-Sami women reported being subjected to violence. In addition, 22 per cent of Sami women reported sexual violence, while 16 per cent of non-Sami women reported the same. Sami men also reported a higher incidence of experiencing violence (40 per cent) than non-Sami men (23 per cent). The survey showed that 80 per cent of those surveyed knew the perpetrator of the violence. A third SAMINOR survey will be conducted, where violence and abuse will also be included as topics.

### **3. Prevention**

#### **A. Campaigns and programmes**

The Government assumes that information measures and campaigns can help create greater transparency for violence against women and domestic violence, reduce feelings of shame, increase knowledge of the services offered and lower the threshold for seeking help. It is a goal that campaigns and information programmes also contribute to changes in attitudes.

Since 2015, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security has allocated EUR 0.66 million annually to measures to prevent domestic violence. EUR 0.12 million of these funds have been earmarked the Central Administration of the National Mediation Service, among other things, for arranging an annual conference on the prevention of domestic violence. In 2020, the funds will be used, among other things, for the annual conference related to the Istanbul Convention on the anniversary of Norway's ratification of the Convention on 1 November and the operation of the Violence and Abuse Helpline.

On behalf of the Ministry of Justice and Public Security, the Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies is conducting a campaign on the duty to avert violence and abuse in 2019 and 2020. In 2019, the campaign focused on health personnel and employees at schools and day care centres. In 2020, the campaign will focus on the general population. Targeted social media advertising will link to the campaign's website [plikt.no](http://plikt.no) (duty). On the [plikt.no](http://plikt.no) website, there will be information about the duty to avert (section 196 of the General Civil Penal Code, cf. Chapter 5), when the duty to avert applies and how one can avert offences. The website will also provide an overview of violent and sexual offences that one may have a duty to avert.

The ung.no website plays a central role in the public information work aimed at young people between the ages of 13 and 20. The website provides information about rights, obligations and opportunities and has information on topics related to violence and abuse. A project, DIGI-UNG, has been launched, which will coordinate and further develop digital information and digital services from several services for young people between the ages of 13 and 20.

Information measures among immigrants and refugees may help counteract distrust of services such as the police, child welfare and family counselling. An active effort is being made to reach out with information to persons who are new in Norway through the services they encounter where they are: reception centres, introduction programme and adult education. In the introduction programme for immigrants, both gender equality and society's views on violence and sexual assault are topics that are covered. The Directorate of Immigration provides information about domestic violence on its website and has prepared its own information brochure in several languages.

The information on negative social control, forced marriage, female genital mutilation has been enhanced, and during the period 2018–2019, several campaigns against negative social control, involuntary residence abroad and forced marriage have been conducted on social media, including the Directorate of Integration and Diversity's campaign "Your Own Choice" and the Red Cross Hotline's campaigns #stopextremecontrol, which are supported by the Directorate of Integration and Diversity. In 2019, the Directorate of Integration and Diversity launched the portal "Nora", which addressed negative social control, for both young people and employees in the assistance services.

Examples of other campaigns that the authorities have conducted in recent years include "How little should you tolerate?" and "Great Guy", developed by the police and aimed at violence in couple relationships and party-related sexual assault, respectively. The ung.no website has conducted campaigns in 2014, 2017 and 2018 under the concept of "#notokay.no", with the goal of spreading information about violence, abuse and offences to young people. The campaign has used channels such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Snapchat, in addition to the ung.no website.

The Ministry of Justice and Public Security has allocated funds to the Sami Reindeer Herders' Association of Norway to prepare an information campaign aimed at the Sami population. In 2019, the campaign consisted of a podcast series on domestic violence.

In 2020, a campaign will be launched to reach the target group for a new nationwide anonymous low-threshold service, "Help is Available," which will guide and provide a treatment option for persons who are at risk of perpetrating sexual abuse of a child.

Through various grant schemes, the Government also provides support for information and attitude-changing work under the auspices of non-governmental organisations, cf. Section II.

## **B. Inclusion of teaching material in formal education curricula**

School is an arena that encompasses all children and young people. Therefore, there are also good opportunities for working with prevention and changing attitudes in schools.

Knowledge of boundaries, respect and rights, and the ability to reflect on various situations

is important for the development of one's own autonomy and respect for others. Topics related to body, boundaries and sexuality are included in several subjects.

All the curricula in the primary and lower secondary education is being renewed from autumn 2020. The goal is to establish curricula that facilitate in-depth learning through clearer content, progression and coherence in and between the subjects. Three new interdisciplinary subjects will also be introduced through the renewal of subjects. One of these will be Public Health and Life Mastery. Relevant areas within this subject are physical and mental health, living habits, sexuality and gender, drugs and alcohol, media use, consumption and personal finance. Value choices and the importance of the meaning of life, interpersonal relationships, being able to set boundaries and respect the boundaries of others, and the ability to manage thoughts, feelings and relationships also belong under this subject.

“I Know”<sup>6</sup> is a digital learning resource for life mastery and violence prevention training at day care centres, primary and lower secondary schools. This resource has been developed by the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs. I Know shall contribute to all children and students acquiring knowledge of what violence is, their own rights and where they can find help. This resource is anchored in the school’s curriculum and framework plan for day care centres. A research project has been launched to provide more knowledge about the effects of, and experiences with, the use of this learning resource.

The education programme for adult immigrants for Norwegian and social studies has been reinforced. Skills Norway has updated the education programme with the new title “The Right to Decide over One’s Own Life. A learning resource for newly arrived immigrants for negative social control, domestic violence, forced marriage and female genital mutilation”. The participant booklet has been translated into 23 languages.

Through various grant schemes, the Government provides support for information and attitude-changing work under the auspices of non-governmental organisations, also in primary and secondary school, cf. Chapter 3 D.

The Ministry of Children and Families has issued a guide for elders in religious communities. The guide provides information on the duties and responsibilities of religious communities pursuant to the Religious Communities Act and regulations pursuant thereto. In this guide, the provisions of the General Civil Penal Code regarding abuse in close relationships, section 283, and the duty to avert, section 196 (in addition to female genital mutilation, section 284) is highlighted. The duty to avert also applies to religious leaders even if as such they are bound by the duty of confidentiality. (The guide will be revised in connection with the new Act on Religious Communities and Life Stance Communities (Proposition 130 L (2018–2019), which enters into force on 1 January 2021.) The elder guide also contains information about [dinutvei.no](http://dinutvei.no), cf. Section xx.

Many religious communities and life stance communities have, on their own initiative, actively distanced themselves from violence and sexual assault. The Church of Norway has

---

<sup>6</sup> [www.jegvet.no](http://www.jegvet.no)

had equality and the prevention of violence against women and domestic violence on its agenda for several years. It follows from the new strategy plan for gender equality in the Church of Norway that an active effort shall be made to prevent physical and mental abuse. In 1996, the Christian churches in Norway joined forces to establish the Church Resource Centre against Violence and Sexual Abuse. The foundation offers education and counselling, assistance in handling abuse cases and support for the processing of abuse and assault experiences.

Several other religious communities and organisations have also engaged themselves in the fight against domestic violence, including an interdenominational commitment against gender-based violence. For example, the Islamic Council of Norway, together with the Church of Norway, is a member of the Red Button Alliance “Stop Violence against Women”.

The new Act on Religious Communities and Life Stance Communities will include a provision that religious or life stance communities can be denied grants if the community, or individuals acting on behalf of the community, perpetrate violence or coercion, make threats, violate the rights of children, violate statutory prohibitions on discrimination, or otherwise seriously infringe on the rights and freedoms of others.

Religious and life stance communities that receive grants shall report on the equality situation in the community, including on the status and measures with regard to gender, and on access to activities, governing bodies, offices and positions on all grounds, and in particular then on gender and sexual orientation.

The Act also allows the supervisory authorities to request information about preventative work against violence and abuse in the religious and life stance communities in their reporting.

### **C. Initial training of professionals**

Training of professionals dealing with victims and/or perpetrators of acts of violence covered by the Convention is essential to the work of the Norwegian authorities. In order to improve the competence of the services, a cross-sectoral strategy on violence and abuse shall be prepared, as part of the follow-up of the Escalation Plan Against Violence and Abuse (2017–2021). Among other things, the Strategy shall paint a picture of what competence is required in the work and how the competence will be raised for which actors. The Nordic Institute for Studies in Innovation, Research and Education (NIFU) has conducted an initial mapping of available guidance, competence measures and competence needs in the services that combat violence and abuse (cf. Report of December 2019). This mapping will form the basis for developing the Strategy. The mapping shows that competence is needed both within the individual sectors/professions and between the various services. There is a particular need for action and interaction skills, so that professionals can act on the basis of their suspicions or knowledge of violence and abuse as well as participate in or coordinate interagency cooperation.

Knowledge of violence and abuse is included in the framework plans for various professional education programmes. In the framework plans for teacher education programmes, it has been pointed out that the candidates should have knowledge of bullying, violence and

sexual abuse, and be able to identify signs that children/students/young people have been victims of violence and abuse. On the basis of professional assessments, the candidates shall be able to quickly implement the necessary measures and establish cooperation with the relevant professional bodies.

In the autumn of 2017, the Ministry of Education and Research established regulations for a common framework plan for health and social care education programmes. Section 2 of the regulations on common learning outcomes states that the candidates, after completing a health and social care education programme, must have knowledge of social and health-related problems, including parental neglect, violence, abuse, drug and alcohol problems, and socio-economic problems, and be able to identify and follow up people with such challenges. The candidate shall also be able to implement the necessary measures and/or treatment, or make a referral elsewhere if necessary.

Efforts are now being made in the university and university college sectors to further develop cooperation between health, social care, police and teacher education programmes and special education programmes in the field of violence and abuse. The aim is for the services and the school to talk better together and to subsequently provide a better offering to those who are victims of violence and abuse. Students shall obtain better insight into each other's areas of responsibility and competence, even as they are being educated. A website has been established with resources that all the educational institutions can use for teaching. The University of South-Eastern Norway (USN) is updating and further developing the website.

A management system, RETHOS, has been established, which encompasses the basic health and social care education programmes, among others. The Common Framework Plan Regulations, which specify common learning outcomes for these education programmes, state that the candidates shall have knowledge of social and health-related problems, including parental neglect, violence, abuse, drug and alcohol problems, and socio-economic problems, and be able to identify and follow up people with such challenges. The candidate shall be able to implement the necessary measures and/or treatment, or make a referral elsewhere if necessary. The regulations apply to the child welfare officer, bioengineer, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, radiographer, social worker, nursing and social educator education programmes as of the 2020–2021 academic year. As of the 2021–2022 academic year, they will also apply to the audiologist, pharmacist, clinical nutrition physiologist, medicine, optician, orthopaedic engineer, alternative medicine, psychologist, dentist, dental hygienist and dental technician education programmes.

The Norwegian Police University College has reinforced its capacity for continuing and further education concerning violence and sexual assault, corresponding to one authorised position. The Norwegian Police University College offers education that provides special competence in conducting 1) facilitated interrogations of high quality of children between 6 and 16 years, and 2) facilitated interrogations (including sequential interrogations) of high quality of particularly vulnerable persons (children under 6 years and persons with developmental disabilities). The educations emphasize theoretical understanding, but also practical skills training.

#### **D. In-service training of professionals**

Health personnel have a statutory duty to perform their work in accordance with the requirements for professional reliability and caring assistance that can be expected based on their qualifications, cf. section 4 of the Health Personnel Act. It is a managerial responsibility that the services are organised so that health personnel are able to perform their statutory duties, and that the personnel have sufficient competence.

Managers and employees in the health and care services shall have the competence to identify, prevent and handle violence and abuse. There is a targeted effort to raise competence in the health and care sector. Competence Boost 2020 is the Government's plan for recruitment, competence and professional development in the municipal health and care services. The plan includes a number of measures that will contribute to a professionally strong service and ensure sufficient and competent staffing, including grants for courses in emergency medicine and handling violence and abuse. A new competence boost will be presented in the Government's budget for 2021..

The Emergency Medicine Regulation requires that everyone who works in a casualty clinic shall complete a course on violence and abuse.

The National Centre for Emergency Primary Health Care has prepared an online course in handling violence and abuse. The online course provides knowledge of how to help identify violence, protect and keep patients safe, and document injuries. Doctors and health personnel in casualty clinics must complete the course by 1 May 2021. As of 2019, 3,471 persons have successfully completed the National Centre for Emergency Primary Health Care online course in handling violence and abuse for casualty clinic personnel.

The National Centre for Emergency Primary Health Care is responsible for competence development etc. in health service offerings for victims of violence and abuse in the municipal health and care services (casualty clinics) and in the specialist health service (sexual assault reception centres). In 2019, the following competence-raising measures were carried out:

- Basic course for medical personnel at Norway's sexual assault reception centres, Bergen (54 participants)
- About documenting for the court – a working and development seminar, Oslo (32 participants)
- Seminar on medical and psychosocial follow-up at sexual assault reception centres, Oslo (34 participants)

In 2019, 229 persons had successfully completed the National Centre for Emergency Primary Health Care online course for regular general practitioners or casualty clinic doctors on domestic violence.

Since 2016, the Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies has been responsible for the implementation of knowledge-based trauma treatment for adults. Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing Therapy (EDMR) and cognitive therapy treatment methods for PTSD (CT-PTSD) have been implemented at 19 outpatient clinics in 17

regional psychiatric centres. More outpatient clinics will be recruited into the project in 2020.

Since 2012, the Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies has been responsible for the implementation of trauma-focused cognitive behavioural therapy (TF-CBT) at Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Outpatient Clinics on behalf of the Norwegian Directorate of Health. TF-CBT is a knowledge-based treatment method for children and adolescents who have experienced trauma and who are struggling with post-traumatic stress. About three-quarters of Norway's Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Outpatient Clinics now offer TF-CBT.

The Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies has prepared an electronic guide for the work of health and care services on domestic violence. The guide shall contribute to increasing the level of knowledge and reinforcing the action skills and preparedness of employees in the health and care services. The guide provides recommendations for how health and care personnel can detect violence and assess any risk of future violence, as well as provide decision support for how abuse cases can be handled. The guide has been divided into the following subject areas: violence and abuse against children, persons who perpetrate violence, violence and abuse of adults and the elderly, and honour-related violence, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

There are a number of continuing and further education offerings on the subject of violence and sexual assault at Norwegian university colleges and universities.

Five Regional Resource Centres for Violence, Traumatic Stress and Suicide Prevention have been established. These centres shall provide education, guidance, information and network building related to violence, trauma and suicide prevention. The centres shall support and assist the preventive efforts in the municipal health and care services, the specialist health service and other relevant sectors and services. The centres also receive earmarked funds for work against negative social control, forced marriage and female genital mutilation, as well as for work against human trafficking.

The "Talk Together" training tool<sup>7</sup> was launched in April 2018 and has been developed by the Regional Resource Centres for Violence, Traumatic Stress and Suicide Prevention on behalf of the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs. "Talk Together" is a digital training platform that aims to make adults more secure when they are addressing important subjects with children they are concerned about. The core content of "Talk Together" is a simulation game that can be used by employees in day care centres, schools, health services, students, etc., to practice talking to children and young people about difficult subjects, especially conversations when there is concern that the child has been a victim of violence or abuse. "Talk Together" has been implemented in the municipalities and research has been launched to provide knowledge about how the resources are experienced and used by the target groups.

---

<sup>7</sup> <https://snakkemedbarn.no/>

In recent years, the Family Counselling Service has reinforced its work and competence on domestic violence. Today, all offices should be able to identify and handle violence issues when meeting with families. The Family Counselling Service has established a centre of expert knowledge on domestic violence, which offers professional guidance and training for employees in the Family Counselling Service.

Many cases brought to the Child Welfare Service's attention, concerns families where violence and/or abuse may be an issue. The majority of measures offered to families are voluntary help, but in severe cases of neglect or violence the child welfare authorities must consider to issue care order for protection of the child, and place him or her in alternative care. This would be decided by the County Social Welfare Board, a state body that serves as a tribunal. Decisions made by the board are impartial and pursuant to the Child Welfare Act, and may be appealed to the ordinary courts. Competence on violence and abuse is part of the basic education of employees in the Child Welfare Service. Unfortunately there are evidence of deficient competence amongst some, which has been thoroughly documented in an official report issued by a Government appointed committee.<sup>8</sup>

As part of the competence strategy for the municipal Child Welfare Service, the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs has developed training for the entire Child Welfare Service. The training programmes are aimed at the day-to-day work of the Child Welfare Service, as well as how to approach ethnic minorities in a sensitive way that takes culture, language and religion into consideration. The aim of the aforementioned training programme is to improve the work of the Child Welfare Service. This could potentially improve the ability of the services to identify and implement measures related to domestic violence. The training programme for working with children and families with minority backgrounds addresses child-rearing violence, among other things.

Exposure to violence may have major health, social and safety consequences, which in turn can affect the opportunity to participate in education and working life. In order to provide a good and proper work-oriented follow-up, employees in the Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV) must therefore have knowledge of domestic violence. A guide has been prepared to ensure and raise the competence of NAV employees regarding domestic violence. The guide provides training with an emphasis on understanding the phenomenon. The guide is available on NAV's website, and also serves as information to NAV users. In addition, it is planned that a national resource centre will be established to develop learning tools for domestic violence, in addition to being able to provide advice and guidance to NAV offices.

A comprehensive reform of the Norwegian police is being implemented, where the aim of the reform is to develop a police force with a more targeted effort on prevention, investigation and preparedness. With regard to the investigation of violence and sexual assault, all the police districts have established their own teams/units/sections with dedicated personnel. There is a general increase in more specialised investigators and prosecuting lawyers. This can help reduce the turnover rate of employees, which has been a challenge for cases of this type.

---

<sup>8</sup> Official Norwegian Report (NOU) 2017:12 *Failure and Again Failure*

A national action plan to boost investigations was presented by the Director General of Public Prosecutions and the National Police Directorate in 2016. The aim of the action plan is to raise the quality of investigations and prosecution work throughout Norway and contribute to more uniform practices. An effective high quality chain of criminal cases with progress at all levels is a necessary prerequisite for achieving the best possible preventive effect, due process protection for those involved and better crime fighting. Criminal case proceedings shall be goal-oriented, effective and of high quality. They shall safeguard due process protection and basic human rights. This also applies to cases of domestic violence and violence and sexual assault against children, which are also priority cases.

Public prosecutors do not receive any special training on the subjects mentioned in Article 15. The common training that new public prosecutors receive is of a more general nature. Nevertheless, there is regular and ongoing training in the field through seminars, prosecution meetings, directives, etc. In 2016, the first national quality survey of the investigation and prosecution of criminal cases was conducted. The types of cases that were investigated were cases of domestic violence and sexual assault cases. Hundreds of cases were reviewed by the regional public prosecutors' offices and assessed against pre-determined, national quality indicators. The results were summed up in a national report that has been distributed, reviewed and followed up by the public prosecutors' offices and the police districts, providing significant learning for the entire prosecuting authority. The survey was repeated for sexual assault cases in 2019 and will also be repeated for cases of domestic violence, so that developments can be followed.

The Constitution of Norway states that Norwegian courts are independent. It is the National Courts Administration that determines which competence-raising measures should be implemented in the courts.

Norwegian judges are generalists, and the degree of specialisation is low. Professional judges in the Norwegian courts are primarily experts in procedure. The prosecuting authority and lawyers will contribute through the individual cases to the judges being given the necessary knowledge of the subject in question and the individual issues each case brings up.

An introductory programme is arranged for judges and deputy judges, as well as annual judge seminars, at which just over 92 per cent of the judges participate. The seminars have a general approach to the role of a judge. No courses etc. are arranged that are specifically aimed at violence and abuse. On the other hand, the subject is touched on in videos that are shown and through discussions on more general topics, such as assessment of evidence, witness psychology and protecting particularly vulnerable witnesses/victims.

The National Institute on Intellectual Disability and Community has prepared a handbook and other resources on prevention and the handling of violence and abuse for employees working with persons with intellectual disabilities.

The Expert Team against Forced Marriage, Female Genital Mutilation and Negative Social Control has been commissioned by its mandate to raise the competence of the first-line services. Regional competence measures for negative social control, forced marriage and female genital mutilation are carried out under the auspices of the Regional Resource

Centres for Violence, Traumatic Stress and Suicide Prevention. The Directorate of Integration and Diversity has 49 minority advisers at upper secondary schools that raise the competence of the employees in the schools and adult education, as well as in combination and introductory classes.

The integration advisers deployed at four Norwegian foreign service missions provide consular assistance for persons who are subjected to negative social control, forced marriage, female genital mutilation and honour-related violence. They shall also contribute to raising the competence of the service apparatus in Norway through advice and guidance in individual cases and lectures/courses.

The Crisis Centres and the Centres against Incest and Sexual Assault are also engaged in externally oriented information and teaching assignments for employees in the relevant services with regard to domestic violence and sexual assault. All the crisis centre offerings for women were engaged in externally oriented information in 2018. Of all the crisis centres, 42 out of 46 had visited or informed other support services. In 2018, the Centres against Incest and Sexual Assault in Norway had a total of 2,621 teaching assignments for domestic violence and sexual assault. Of these assignments, 106 were for employees at day care centres, 239 were for primary and lower secondary school employees, 21 were for employees at upper secondary schools and 98 were for higher education institutions.

#### **E. Support programmes for perpetrators**

During the last decades there has been an increasing focus on help and treatment for perpetrators of violence and sexual abuse. Adequate help in addition to criminal sanctions can have a preventive effect. Help and treatment for perpetrators is therefore a high-priority area for the Government, and is part of the integrated efforts to combat violence and abuse.

The Regional Resource Centres for Violence, Traumatic Stress and Suicide Prevention have, in cooperation with St. Olav's Hospital, Department of Brøset, responsibility for contributing to the municipalities having competence in anger management and work with perpetrators of violence. The anger management model has established treatment options for perpetrators of violence in all regions. The education programme has a duration of 100 hours, divided into six gatherings over two semesters. Therapists are trained through Norway's family counselling offices, mental health care/Regional Psychiatric Centres and the municipal service apparatus. Training is also offered to the Norwegian Correctional Service. EUR 140,838 is allocated for the purpose of spreading the anger management model in the budget of the Ministry of Health and Care Services. Research is being conducted on the treatment model through a PhD study initiated by the Brøset Competence Centre.

The Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies receives earmarked funds through the Government budget (EUR 534,861 in 2020) to study the knowledge base for the treatment and course for victims and perpetrators of violence. The Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies has prepared an electronic guide for the work of the health and care services with domestic violence. The guide contains a separate section about persons who perpetrate violence and abuse.

In 2020, the Ministry of Health and Care Services appropriated funds to general strategy work for the comprehensive and planned development of the work aimed at perpetrators of violence and abusers. In addition to Brøset and the Regional Resource Centres for Violence,

Traumatic Stress and Suicide Prevention, the Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies and Alternative to Violence could be important contributors to this strategy work.

The Family Counselling Service also offers a programme for families with challenges related to violence, cf. discussion under Section D. Family counselling offices can be found throughout Norway, and at the start of 2020, there was a total of 49 family counselling offices.

Government grants are also allocated to the private foundation Alternative to Violence (ATV). Within the framework of the allocation, ATV shall provide treatment options for perpetrators of domestic violence and their families. The state grant in 2020 was approximately EUR 6.55 million. Most ATV offices also receive funding from the municipalities. In 2019, the state operating subsidy was approximately EUR 5,73 million, and the municipal operating subsidy was approximately EUR 2,87 million.

ATV provides low-threshold treatment without any requirement of a referral. As of August 2020, there was a total of 14 ATV offices spread across most of Norway. A new office will be established in Trondheim in 2020. ATV cooperates with other services, such as the Child Welfare Service, Family Counselling Service, public health service, crisis centres, schools and the police. A total of 1,649 clients received treatment from ATV in 2019, compared with 1,442 in 2018.

In co-operation with ATV, the Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies is conducting a study of process and outcome of therapy of men who seek help for their use of violence. The study will investigate to what extent the treatment (group or individual) provided by ATV leads to a positive change in perpetrators of violence. The study is ongoing (2009-2020).

#### **F. Support programs for sex offenders**

BASIS is a voluntary nationwide treatment option for persons who have been convicted of a sexual offence and are serving their sentences, and who are assumed to have a heightened risk of committing new sexual offences. The aim is to provide medical care to inmates who are believed to be in particular need of specialised sexual offence treatment. The treatment will be followed up after their sentence has been served.

In 2020, public low threshold and comprehensive treatment options will be established for persons who are at risk of committing child sexual assault ("Help is Available"). The options will be established in the South-Eastern Norway Regional Health Authority and Western Norway Regional Health Authority in 2020, and in the Central Norway Regional Health Authority and Northern Norway Regional Health Authority in 2021. The primary target group for the low threshold service and for treatment in outpatient clinics are persons from the age of 18 who have a sexual interest in children and/or are at risk of committing child sexual assault. They have a self-identified risk, are help-seeking and want to avoid acting on their sexual attraction. Arrangements shall be made so that persons can make direct contact, either by anonymous chat, phone or outpatient clinic, in order to get an appointment for treatment.

The Western Norway Regional Health Authority is managing the efforts to strengthen the competence and establish treatment options in all the health regions for children and adolescents with problematic or harmful sexual behaviour. In 2020, EUR 487,106 was allocated to this purpose.

A national clinical network has been established to build up knowledge-based research and treatment competence in the specialist health service for children and adolescents with problematic or harmful sexual behaviour. Betanien Hospital is managing the network on behalf of the Western Norway Regional Health Authority.

Regional Resource Centres for Violence, Traumatic Stress and Suicide Prevention receive earmarked funds through the state budget to strengthen the efforts to improve the treatment options for abusers. The funds in 2018 were mainly used to raise the competence of the services in their work with children and young people with harmful sexual behaviour. The centres have collaborated with Resource Unit V27 at Betanien Hospital on the distribution of the AIM (Assessment, Intervention, Moving on) tools. A practice module related to problems in the digital training programme "Talk Together", has also been developed, cf. Chapter 3 D.

#### **G. The private sector and the media**

One of the most important tasks of the media in a democracy is to conduct independent and critical oversight of the exercise of public authority. It is therefore a key political objective to safeguard the editorial independence of the press from the state authorities. For editor-controlled media, this implies that the content of what is published is the sole responsibility of the editor, and something that is regulated through the media making its own ethical rules.

Traditionally, the Norwegian authorities are very reluctant to exert pressure or influence directly aimed at the media's editorial content and profile or the media's rules of ethical journalistic practice. In principle, it is up to the press itself and the bodies of the press to establish relevant guidelines and self-regulatory standards.

The Government assumes that the press has on its own initiative established mechanisms that safeguard the intentions of the Convention in this area, and that there is no need for state initiatives that risk weakening confidence in the role of the press and editorial independence.

Researchers at the research program on domestic violence, which is funded by the Government and carried out by the welfare research institute NOVA at Oslo Metropolitan University, has entered into a collaboration with the journalism education at Oslo Metropolitan University for the second period of the research program (2019-2024). The background is that there is great news interest in the research field, at the same time as violence in close relationships, rape etc. can be difficult cases to write about, and requires extra caution from journalists. The idea of the collaboration is to help future journalists become aware of the topic, and better equipped to write about it.

The Marketing Act stipulates that advertisers and advertising designers shall ensure that the advertising is not contrary to gender equality, and that it does not exploit the body of one gender or give the impression of an offensive or derogatory assessment of women or men. The Act also has special provisions on the protection of children. The Act is enforced by the Consumer Council of Norway and the Market Council.

It follows from the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act that employers in private enterprises shall, within their activities, work actively, purposefully and methodically to promote equality, prevent discrimination on grounds of gender (among other grounds), and seek to prevent harassment, sexual harassment and gender-based violence. Employers shall document this work.

Section 3-3 c of the Accounting Act sets out rules for the corporate social responsibility reporting duty. The statutory provision sets out that large enterprises shall report what the enterprise does to integrate consideration of human rights, worker rights, equality and non-discrimination, among other things, into their business strategies, in their day-to-day operations and in relation to its stakeholders. The report shall at least contain information about the guidelines, principles, procedures and standards used by the enterprise to integrate the aforementioned considerations into its business strategies, in its day-to-day operations and in relation to its stakeholders.

Information materials and campaigns are developed in cooperation with the private sector/advertising agencies. The Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs has supported various video projects initiated by media and production companies, such as the television series "I Own My Body". The video projects highlight violence against children, bullying and sexual assault in various ways, and they have been published in connection with the Norwegian Public Broadcaster children's channel, NRK Super's, theme weeks about sexual assault in 2017 and about violence in 2019.

#### **H. Self-regulatory standards (for the ICT sector and the media)**

In Norway, the press has set ethical standards in the Code of Ethics of the Norwegian Press, which all editor-managed enterprises shall use as the basis for their activities. The Code of Ethics states that it is the duty of the press to protect individuals and groups from abuse or neglect by the public authorities and institutions, private enterprises or others. It sets out a duty to show respect for people's uniqueness and identity, private life, ethnicity, nationality and life stance. The Code of Ethics further states that the media should be cautious about using terms that may be stigmatising.

The Norwegian Press Complaints Commission has been established by the Norwegian Press Association, and its purpose is to promote the ethical and professional standard of the Norwegian press. The Commission consists of seven members. Three of them come from the general public and four from the press. The Commission deals with complaints against the press in matters of press ethics.

The media organisations conducted a comprehensive #metoo-related survey among their members in 2017. On the basis of the survey, the Secretariat of the Association of Norwegian Editors prepared the guide How to Prevent Sexual Harassment in 2018. Among

other things, the guide included a definition of sexual harassment, a review of relevant legislation and the responsibility of top executives, and a guide to the preparation of internal guidelines, as well as ten specific pieces of advice to Norwegian editors.

#### **I. Measures to encourage protocols or guidelines**

Reference is made to the discussion under Introduction A, General Principles of the Convention.

#### **J. Other taken or planned measures to prevent violence against women**

In addition to the information under Sections A–I above, the authorities have implemented a number of other measures designed to help prevent violence against women and domestic violence. Several of the measures safeguard the obligations of both Chapter III on prevention and Chapter IV on assistance and protection.

“TryggEst” is a model that is designed to help prevent, identify and handle violence and abuse against adults who are scarcely or not at all able to protect themselves. The model has been tested out in 10 municipalities and contains proposals for the organisation of work against violence and abuse in a municipality, and for several tools that can be used in this work. Of the notices of concern the 10 pilot municipalities have received and dealt with during the pilot period, 70 per cent are about violence against women. Most of the cases are violence against vulnerable elderly women, and women with cognitive challenges. The municipalities have identified and handled on average six times as many cases of violence with “TryggEst” than before the introduction of the project. New municipalities are now being invited to start using “TryggEst”.

In 2016, 11 persons from the Municipality of Tysfjord in Nordland County appeared in a national newspaper as victims of sexual assault. As a result of the exposure of these abuse cases, the Nordland Police District launched a broad investigation into the cases in 2016. With funding from the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation, a follow-up project entitled “JASSKA/Trygg” (Safe) was launched. The project is particularly concerned about preventive measures. The project was coordinated by the County Governor of Nordland, and a separate steering committee was established with the municipalities of Tysfjord and Hamarøy, Árran – Lule Sami Centre and Nordland Police District. The aim of the project has been to establish locally anchored and permanent cooperation projects to prevent and combat domestic violence, thus entailing extensive knowledge building and development work at the system level.

The Public Health Act requires that the municipalities have an overview of their public health challenges. This overview shall provide a basis for setting goals and measures to meet these challenges. The Programme for Public Health Work in the Municipalities is a ten-year initiative from 2017–2026, and a collaborative effort between the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities, Norwegian Institute of Public Health, Norwegian Directorate of Health and the Ministry of Health and Care Services. Within the framework of this programme, Vestfold and Telemark county authorities have received funding to ensure the development of measures to prevent violence and abuse, as well as to acquire new knowledge about what measures are effective from a public health perspective.

The dental health service shall pay particular attention to the fact that patients may be exposed to, or may be at risk of being exposed to, violence or sexual assault (section 1–3c of the Dental Health Services Act). The county dental health service is responsible for children and young people up to the age of 18 years and young people who attain the age of 20 in the treatment area. They regularly call in the children and young people based on their individual risk of developing cavities. The county dental health service is among the health services that send the most notices of concern to the Child Welfare Service.

Violence against animals is often part of the violence in families. In homes with domestic violence, animals are also at risk. Studies from the US, UK, Netherlands and Sweden have shown that there is a link between violence against animals and domestic violence. In families who have pets, violence against or killing the animal, or threats to this effect, may have a traumatising effect. Threats of violence against pets may prevent or postpone women from seeking help for themselves and their children at crisis centres, and children may put themselves at great risk to protect their pets from violence.

The link between violence against animals and violence against humans is stronger in the case of serious and repetitive forms of violence. Sadistic animal violence perpetrated by children is a strong marker of future violent behaviour. This means that there is a need for both the police and other professional groups working with victims and perpetrators of violence to have knowledge of the connection between violence against animals and humans, and know who to be notified of what. This requires interdisciplinary and interagency cooperation.

Due to the connection between violence against animals and domestic violence, the Norwegian Food Safety Authority's inspectors or other veterinarians may be the first to suspect the neglect or abuse of children, or other forms of violence in the family. Correspondingly, employees in the Child Welfare Service, public health service or the police may be the first to discover that animals are subjected to abuse. There is therefore a great need for these professions to have knowledge of what to look for and how to deal with suspicions. They must have good knowledge of the legal aspects, such as the duty of confidentiality and notification requirements or rights, as well as the duty to avert, so that the appropriate agencies are notified without undue delay. Pursuant to section 14 a of the Animal Welfare Act, it is forbidden to perpetrate violence against animals. Section 23 (5) of the Health Personnel Act entitles regular general practitioners, home care nurses and other health workers to notify the Norwegian Food Safety Authority or the police about animal cruelty.

The Crisis Centre Secretariat, Research Group for Animal Welfare at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Norwegian University of Life Sciences, and the Norwegian Society for Protection of Animals started the project "See the Connection" in 2018 to raise awareness of the connection between violence against animals and domestic violence. The aim is closer cooperation between the public health service, Child Welfare Service, police, Norwegian Food Safety Authority and veterinarians on identifying and handling violence. Several crisis centres ensure that those seeking refuge have a place to place their pets. Fear that the pet will be abused can lead to victims of violence moving back to the perpetrator.

At the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, courses are arranged to make students and veterinarians aware of the connection between violence against animals and humans, since veterinarians are often the ones who uncover violence against animals.

There is still little knowledge of this, and there is little research on this subject in Norway. Increased awareness and a systematic approach, in which a survey of the care for animals and threats against animals is included in the investigation of the life situation and threat picture, as well as help for the placement of any animals, are therefore important in order to be able to protect victims of violence. To identify how prevalent the phenomenon is, questions about animal cruelty will be included in the Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies' new prevalence study of domestic violence and sexual assault to be conducted in 2020. The statistics forms for the crisis centres and the Centres against Incest and Sexual Assault will also include questions about violence against pets/service animals from 2020.

Prevention of domestic violence, including violence against children, is part of the background for and purpose of the efforts in recent years against animal crime and the establishment of animal crime projects (also referred to as the animal police). Close cooperation has been established between the Norwegian Food Safety Authority and the police concerning serious animal welfare crime in the form of animal crime groups in Trøndelag, Rogaland and Østfold. In addition, corresponding projects are in the start-up phase in the Western Police District and Inland Police District, and funding for a new project in Troms has been allocated in the budget for 2020.

Domestic violence is a priority area for the police. The joint boost to investigations by the National Police Directorate and the Director General of Public Prosecutions in the years 2016 to 2018, which is discussed in greater detail under Section 3 C, has also benefited these cases, which represent a significant proportion of the cases that are investigated and prosecuted.

Sexual offences and domestic abuse are a priority area in the police districts' performance agreements for 2020. Priority measures include reducing the processing time for sexual assault and domestic abuse cases, while maintaining the level of quality at the same time.

Crime prevention is the main strategic aim of the police. Cooperation and interaction across disciplines in the police and with other actors is of key importance. All police districts shall work preventively in the area of domestic violence. There is local and central training and interaction and cooperation internally and across police districts, as well as risk assessments related to intimate partner violence and honour-related violence. During the corona pandemic, domestic violence and abuse has been given high priority and preventive efforts have been closely monitored through weekly meetings between the districts and the National Police Directorate.

## 4. Protection and support

### A. Information on support services and legal measures available to victims

As an element of the Government's Action Plan against Domestic Violence (2014–2017), the Government created a new online portal for domestic violence and sexual assault, *dinutvei.no* (your way out), in 2015. The purpose of *dinutvei.no* is to ensure that victims, perpetrators, support services and the general public have broad, quality-assured information about rights and assistance measures. The portal provides information about the forms of assistance available in each individual municipality and contact information for these services. The portal also includes a question and answer service. Some of the information in the web portal has been translated into 13 languages, including Northern Sami. The portal contains several promotional and public information videos about various help services and how victims are met by the various services, including the police. *Dinutvei.no* is managed by the Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies, and financed by the Ministry of Justice and Public Security. Extra funding is set aside for marketing of the website.

The municipalities are obligated to actively provide information about their services (section 4 of the Local Government Act), including the crisis centres, to victims and perpetrators of domestic violence, and for employees who meet persons affected by violence in their work. Most crisis centres have information about the services they provide on their own website or as part of the municipality's website, and in 2018 about half of this information was available in several languages.

On the website of the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs, *Bufdir.no*, you will find information about the *Centres against Incest and Sexual Assault*, and who the target group is, services provided by the centres, an overview of the various centres, funding and a reference to statistics. According to the statistics from 2018, 23 out of 24 centres had their own website, but only three centres responded that their website was accessible to the visually impaired. Of the users who were victims of sexual assault, 31 per cent became aware of the centre through the internet or the centre's website. An overview of all the Centres against Incest and Sexual Assault is available on the website of the *Community against Sexual Abuse*, an umbrella organisation for these centres.

On the *Bufdir.no* website, information about the *Family Counselling Service's* offerings for families with various challenges can be found. The Family Counselling Service is a preventive low threshold service that can help with less serious relationship problems where violence can be part of the problem complex.

The *vernmotovergrep.no* website has employees who work with persons with disabilities (physical impairments) or intellectual disabilities as their target group, and it has become known through professional days, conferences, advertisements, articles, etc. Use of the website has also been evaluated by NOVA. The website is perceived as relevant and helps the municipalities that use it. There is also some cooperation with organisations regarding use of the website.

*Ung.no* is the state information channel for young people between the ages of 13 and 20. On the *ung.no* website, young people receive quality assured information and guidance adapted to the target group on a number of subjects that concern them, including information about violence, offences, relationships, sex and sexual abuse. The website also has an inquiry service where young people can ask whatever they are wondering about and receive answers from experts. *Ung.no* is well-known by the target group and has very many users.

Pursuant to the Patient and User Rights Act, patients are entitled to the information that is necessary to gain insight into their state of health condition and the content of their medical care. The information shall be adapted to the recipient's individual prerequisites, such as age, maturity, experience and cultural and language background.

The *helsenorge.no* website contains information about violence and abuse and where help can be sought or violence can be reported. The page has been translated into English.

The *zanzu.no* website provides information for persons with a short period of residence in Norway about sexual and reproductive health and rights, including domestic violence and where help can be sought. The website contains some images and the text is written in simple Norwegian, but it has also been translated into eight languages. The website also contains information about female genital mutilation and health rights.

Guidance materials have been prepared and are available at the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration's website, *nav.no*. These are materials that inform both about rights, and which central agencies can be contacted for advice, guidance and follow-up.

The Action Plan against Negative Social Control, Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation is the measure that will strengthen local and regional coordination and cooperation in the work against negative social control and female genital mutilation. The Directorate of Integration and Diversity allocates EUR 112,782 annually to the competence-raising work of the Regional Resource Centres for Violence, Traumatic Stress and Suicide Prevention under this measure.

The Norwegian Directorate of Health allocates EUR 281,162 to the Regional Resource Centres for Violence, Traumatic Stress and Suicide Prevention as part of the main appropriation to the centres, for the prevention of female genital mutilation, negative social control and forced marriage. This appropriation is allocated, among other things, to information work, increased knowledge and competence of health personnel and other affected actors through activities under the auspices of the Regional Resource Centres for Violence, Traumatic Stress and Suicide Prevention and any other relevant agencies.

Information on the health consequences of female genital mutilation and information about the right to medical care, aimed at the vulnerable groups, is anchored in the Norwegian Directorate of Health's brochure on the health consequences of and medical care for female genital mutilation. The national professional guidelines for the Public Health Centre and School Health Services has been updated with a description of what should be done when persons from countries where female genital mutilation is practised are encountered.

The Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress has revised the Female Genital Mutilation Guide and updated the brochures on female genital mutilation aimed at persons in the affected environments. The brochure *Your Body is Naturally Perfect – and You Are the One Who Decides over It* (2019) has young girls at risk of female genital mutilation as its target group. Female genital mutilation is included as a separate subject in the standardised elements of the introduction programme, under life mastery, parental guidance and services during parental leave for child care. The course is mandatory for anyone participating in the introduction programme.

The Directorate of Integration and Diversity is the national specialist directorate for the use of interpreters in the public sector. A new revised interpreter register opened on 25 May 2020. All the public users of interpreters can find qualified interpreters there. Information and guidance on the use of interpreters can be found on the website of the Directorate of Integration and Diversity. Draft legislation on the responsibility of public agencies for the use of interpreters etc. (the Interpreters Act) was circulated for consultative comments in March 2019. The Ministry of Education and Research is following up the consultative comments. A prohibition on the use of children as interpreters was introduced to the Public Administration Act on 1 July 2016. In accordance with this provision, children shall not be used for interpreting or other dissemination of information between public service providers and persons who do not have sufficient language skills. Increased emphasis on the importance of using competent interpreters in public sector services, in addition to clarification of the right to an interpreter through the Interpreters Act, contributes to the communication of grievances and needs by victims of violence.

Anyone who contacts the police in domestic violence and abuse cases will receive the necessary information and offer of legal representation for victims. The police have established cooperation with the municipalities and NAV to ensure that victims receive information about their rights and who they should contact.

All police districts have their own Support Centres for Crime Victims, which help victims of violence, sexual assault or offences with information and guidance, support from when a case is reported until it is settled, witness support and help to apply for compensation for victims of violent crime. The centres are located in 15 cities in Norway and have brochures in English, Arabic, Urdu, Polish, Russian and Somali, among other languages.

Police websites contain general information and advice for persons subjected to domestic violence.

### **B 1. General support services**

Ensuring that the whole population has access to equal services, regardless of gender, age, sexual orientation, ethnic background, functional status etc. is an important part of the Government's efforts to combat violence against women/domestic violence. The last couple of decades the range and quality of the help and support available to victims of violence and abuse have steadily improved. A sound structure has been built up for national, regional and local efforts to combat violence and abuse, and we have largely succeeded in constructing a nation-wide service for helping and supporting victims. The Government's overall objective

is that all victims of violence and abuse should have access to help and support that is adapted to their needs.

However the need to strengthen and institutionalise coordination between supporting actors on the operative level across the country has been identified as a field for improvement. Enhanced coordination is an important objective in the years to come and will be addressed in the new action plan to prevent and combat domestic violence for the next four year period.

As an indigenous people of Norway, the Sami people are protected by international conventions and the Constitution of Norway. Chapter 3 of the Sami Act states that residents within the Sami language management area have an expanded right to be served in the Sami language when encountering the public service apparatus. There is therefore a need for a broad focus on the recruitment and training of professionals in the development of the Sami service offerings. Research shows that Sami women are more exposed to abuse and violence than Norwegian women. In a lifetime perspective, 49% of Sami women report that they have experienced violence.

The Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation is considering various measures to ensure public services in the Sami languages, based, among other things, on the Official Norwegian Report (NOU) 2016:18 *The Heart Language – Proposed Legislative Measures and Schemes for the Sami Languages*.

An important instrument for the Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV) in its work with users who experience violence and abuse is information, advice and guidance, which are authorised by section 17 of the Social Services Act. The service encompasses qualified professional social guidance to prevent or solve social problems. The purpose of the service is to provide help for self-help, and to contribute to mastery of one's own life situation. Information, advice and guidance are an important tool for work with close individual follow-up, and for preventing or limiting social exclusion and marginalisation. An important objective is to contribute to uniform and coordinated service offerings.

Another instrument for working with users who require long-term and coordinated services is the qualification programme, which is authorised by section 29 of the Social Services Act. The aim of the programme is to promote a transition to work, social inclusion and active participation in society, by means of closer and more committed assistance and follow-up.

Through the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration Act and coordinated use of the Labour Market Act, National Insurance Act, Social Services Act and other acts administered by the Labour and Welfare Administration, the overall regulations are considered sufficient in order to implement adequate measures for persons who may require assistance for shorter or longer periods, including victims of domestic violence. This also entails cooperation with other agencies, such as schools, health care, correctional services, crisis centres, the Child Welfare Service, etc.

The Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV) has a responsibility to provide individual follow-up with advice and guidance related to the overall life situation, such as

housing, finances, violence, drug and alcohol abuse problems, loneliness or poverty. NAV is particularly aware of users in vulnerable transitional phases. In an emergency situation, the social services under NAV can assist in obtaining temporary housing for those who cannot manage to do so themselves, as authorised by section 27 of the Social Services Act. If a person is completely without his or her own resources for necessary subsistence, or to get through a difficult life situation, he or she may be entitled to financial social assistance. This is authorised by sections 18 and 19, respectively, of the Social Services Act.

## **B 2. Health care and social services**

Patients and users are entitled to immediate assistance and the necessary health and care services from the municipality. In addition, patients are entitled to both immediate and necessary medical care from the specialist health service. Services to victims of violence and abuse shall primarily be part of the ordinary services. Persons who are victims of domestic violence will normally be cared for by the municipal casualty clinic service.

The casualty clinic will treat the acute conditions and refer further based on the needs and consideration of responsible conduct. After the acute phase, most of the medical and psychosocial follow-up will take place locally.

### *Regular general practitioners*

All the residents of a Norwegian municipality are entitled to a regular general practitioner. The regular general practitioner is responsible for all the general practitioner tasks in the area of somatic health, mental health and drug and alcohol abuse for the residents on their list, unless otherwise specified, including medical care related to violence and abuse, cf. section 10 of the Regular General Practitioner Regulations. Regular general practitioners shall help prevent, identify and avert violence and abuse and follow up and potentially treat persons who have been victims of violence and abuse. Regular general practitioners are well-acquainted with their patients. They can also make referrals to the specialist health service if necessary, or provide information about other options in the municipality, for example. The regular general practitioner also has a responsibility to prevent, identify and avert that persons subject anyone to violence and abuse, and refer those who subject anyone to violence and abuse for follow-up and treatment. In order to strengthen the regular general practitioners' competence in domestic violence, the National Centre for Emergency Primary Health Care has developed an e-learning course for regular general practitioners. It consists of 10 modules and encompasses the prevention, identification and follow-up of domestic violence.

### *Physiotherapists*

Physiotherapy is a statutory service in the municipalities. Many municipalities have physiotherapists with special expertise in psychomotor physiotherapy who treat patients who have been victims of violence. They cooperate closely with regular general practitioners, psychologists and the specialist health service.

### *Causality clinics*

Many cases of violence and abuse initially encounter the public health service in the causality clinic. Competence is key to prevention work and being able to identify violence and abuse. The Emergency Medicine Regulations set out requirements for the competence of doctors in casualty clinics. One of the competence requirements is that doctors and health

personnel must complete courses on handling violence and abuse. The course requirements must be met by 1 May 2021.

#### *Prompt Mental Health Care*

A total of 62 municipalities and city districts have now established Prompt Mental Health Care, a low threshold mental health care service without long waiting times or requiring a referral from a doctor.

#### *Psychologists in the municipal health and care services*

From 1 January 2020, it became mandatory for all local authorities in Norway to provide access to qualified psychologists in the municipalities. As part of the municipal service apparatus in the area of mental health and drug and alcohol abuse, psychologists play an important role in preventing and identifying violence and abuse and in working with other specialist groups for good follow-up.

#### *Stepped Care TF-CBT*

In order to reinforce the municipal services for children subjected to violence who need help but do not necessarily need specialist treatment, the “Stepped-Care TF-CBT” model is being tested in ten municipalities. The aim is to strengthen the municipalities' competence in the follow-up of children subjected to violence and caregivers, so that they can offer help to more children subjected to violence, provide assistance at an early stage and arrange for good cooperation with the specialist health service.

#### *Public Health Centre and School Health Services*

The Public Health Centre and School Health Services meet almost all the children and young people and their guardians, and are therefore in a special position to avert and identify violence, abuse and neglect. This is also evident from the object clause for the service. The vast majority of children participate in the public health centre programme, and the national professional guidelines provide clear recommendations for how public health nurses, doctors, physiotherapists, midwives and other personnel at the public health centres should be aware of conditions that may indicate that the child is the victim of violence, abuse or neglect, and observe the child and the family in order to avert and identify such conditions during consultations in the public health centre programme. When there is reason to believe that children have been abused in the home or subjected to other forms of serious neglect, or when the child shows persistent and serious behavioural difficulties, the personnel at the public health centre shall report this to the Child Welfare Service.

#### *Maternity care*

In the guidelines for maternity care, it is recommended that health personnel ask all pregnant women about violence, both their current and past experiences. It is recommended that one or more consultations shall be conducted without the partner being present. Health personnel should give referrals to and/or arrange for the appropriate assistance for pregnant women who are victims of violence. Health personnel should cooperate with professionals with special expertise in violence to make specific assessments and for safety. The same guidelines also establish guidelines that pregnant women who have been exposed to genital mutilation should have a conversation and be given information about what help they may receive to prevent complications that may occur at birth.

### *Specialist health service*

The specialist health service shall provide diagnostics, treatment and follow-up for patients with acute, serious and chronic diseases and health problems, and it fills an important function in a comprehensive treatment chain. This also encompasses handling violence. Persons who are victims of domestic violence can be treated in all parts of the specialist health service. The specialist health service encompasses services both inside and outside hospitals, including somatic and psychiatric hospitals, outpatient clinics and treatment centres, training and rehabilitation institutions, institutions for interdisciplinary specialised treatment for drug and alcohol abuse, pre-hospital services, specialists in private practice, and laboratory and X-ray activities. To be treated in the specialist health service, a referral from the primary health service is normally required, unless one is admitted on an emergency basis. From 2016, the specialist health service has been responsible for the services for children and adults who are victims of sexual assault.

### *Mental health care*

Adults who have been subjected to stressful incidents such as domestic violence shall in principle be followed up in the primary health care service. Persons who have experienced violence and abuse and have symptoms of anxiety or depression are often referred to Regional Psychiatric Centres in the specialist health service and should be assessed on the basis of these symptoms. In case of the suspected development of PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder) or other underlying trauma disorder, the specialist health service should investigate and initiate treatment and/or provide guidance to the primary health service.

In order to increase the overall trauma competence in the services, the Regional Resource Centres for Violence, Traumatic Stress and Suicide Prevention have completed training and courses at a number of health trusts.

### *Clinical pathways for mental health and drug and alcohol abuse*

Mapping experiences with violence is part of all the Norwegian Directorate of Health's clinical pathways for mental health and drug and alcohol abuse. It is recommended that questions are asked about violence, abuse and other traumatic experiences already during the initial conversation. In addition, the need for immediate measures and any need for an emergency plan or safety measures shall be assessed, as well as whether there is a need for coordinated services and cooperation with other actors, such as Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV), the Family Counselling Service and the Child Welfare Service.

### *Female Genital mutilation*

In the Action Plan against Negative Social Control, Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation, there are also measures to reinforce the treatment options for victims of female genital mutilation. All the health regions in Norway offer opening operations. Extra complicated cases will lead to a referral to a university hospital in some places. In order to identify girls and women who have been subjected to female genital mutilation, a conversation and voluntary gynaecological examination shall be offered in accordance with the Norwegian Directorate of Health's guide for health services for asylum seekers, refugees and members of reunified families to girls and women, who themselves come from or have parents who come from areas where female genital mutilation is practised. The municipality is responsible for offering this within one year of their arrival in Norway. The Public Health Centre and School Health Services should also offer a conversation on female genital

mutilation to the parents and girls in different years in the primary and lower secondary schools. The Norwegian Directorate of Health's guide "Prevention and Treatment of Female Genital Mutilation" provides information and professional recommendations to health personnel who meet circumcised women.

The national professional guidelines for maternity care recommend that pregnant women shall be asked whether they have been subjected to genital mutilation, in order to prevent complications at childbirth. It is also recommended that women who have been circumcised be identified as early as possible in their pregnancy and referred to the gynaecological outpatient clinic for an assessment and potential opening procedure well in advance of childbirth. The midwife or regular general practitioner must make the maternity ward aware of pregnant women who have been genitally mutilated as early as possible so that the birth can be planned. Referral to a hospital/centre with special expertise in the area is recommended.

In 2017, the Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies initiated a research project on the health services for girls and women who have been subjected to genital mutilation. The results from this project will provide more knowledge about how the health services can adapt to the need for health services among girls/women who have been genitally mutilated.

#### *Child Welfare Service*

The primary purpose of the Norwegian Child Welfare Act is to ensure that children living in conditions that may be harmful to their health and development receive needed help, care and protection and are raised in a safe and secure environment. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child has been incorporated into Norwegian law. The convention underlines that the State has a duty to protect all children within its jurisdiction, without discrimination. The best interest of the child shall be a primary consideration in all actions concerning children. All children in Norway, regardless of their background, resident status or citizenship, are entitled to necessary help and protection in accordance with the Child Welfare Act. When considering and applying child welfare measures, decisive importance shall be attached to framing measures which are in the child's best interests.

The Child Welfare Service shall ensure that children and young people living under conditions that may harm their health and development receive the necessary assistance, care and protection at the right time. Placing a child in alternative care without the consent of the parents is always a measure of last resort. However, in cases when adequate care for a child cannot be guaranteed at the child's home, it may be necessary to place a child in foster care or in an institution.

The legal threshold for issuing a care order is that a child must suffer serious neglect, maltreatment, violence, abuse or other serious deficiencies in the everyday care. Before issuing a care order, the Child Welfare Services must conduct a comprehensive assessment of all the relevant aspects of a case, and voluntary steps by the parents or other responsible adults must be deemed insufficient. Furthermore, a care order must be considered to be necessary and in the best interest of the child.

### *Family Counselling Service*

The Family Counselling Service shall provide an offer of treatment and counselling when there are difficulties, conflicts or crises in the family. The family counselling offices shall conduct mediation pursuant to the Marriage Act and the Children Act. The service is a free low threshold service available throughout Norway. The Family Counselling Service often comes into contact with families where one or more of the members perpetrate violence. The service provides these families with follow-up and treatment offers. The work of the Family Counselling Service against violence has been reinforced in recent years by a centre of expert knowledge on domestic violence, among other things.

### *Housing*

Ensuring that persons who have been subjected to violence have a safe and stable housing situation represents important social work. The national strategy for social work related to housing "Housing for Welfare 2014-2020" sets the targets and resources for social work related to housing across the various sectors and administrative levels. Social housing work includes both providing housing for the disadvantaged in the housing market and strengthening the individual's ability to master the housing relationship. The disadvantaged in the housing market are people or families who do not have the opportunity to acquire or maintain a satisfactory living relationship on their own. They may be without their own home, be in danger of losing their home or live in an unsuitable home or living environment. It is the municipalities that have the main responsibility for helping those who are unable to obtain a suitable home and keep it. Good and safe transitions from crisis centres or other institutions for victims of violence to their own housing are an important part of the municipalities' social housing work. In 2020, the Government will submit a report to the Storting on social policy related to housing. In the report, we will discuss how the strategy, experiences and established structures for social work related to housing will be followed up further.

Reporting from the crisis centres shows that many victims of violence have difficulties finding suitable housing after staying at a crisis centre. Pursuant to the Act on Social Services in the Labour and Welfare Administration, the municipalities shall contribute to providing housing for the disadvantaged who cannot take care of their own interests in the housing market. The Housing Bank's start-up loans and loans and subsidies for rental housing contribute to the municipalities being able to assist victims of violence in finding a suitable home after a stay at an institution. The state housing benefit scheme is a rights-based financial support scheme that is intended to ensure that people with low incomes and high housing expenses receive, and can retain, suitable housing. It follows from the Crisis Centre Act that the municipalities shall ensure that victims of violence receive follow-up during their re-establishment phase, cf. also the discussion of the crisis centre service under section D, Specialist women's support services.

Reference is made to the discussion of the labour and welfare administration under B1.

### **B 3. Number of women victims of violence assisted by health and social services**

#### *Crisis centres*

The users of crisis centres are divided into residents and day users. There may be some overlap between the groups, since many day users have previously been residents at the crisis centres. In 2019, 1,650 women, 147 men and 1,450 children lived in crisis centres. In the centres, 2,399 women and 231 men were day users.

#### *Centres against Incest and Sexual Assault*

The Centres against Incest and Sexual Assault had 2,870 users in 2019. Of these, 84% were women, cf. also discussion of the centres under Section D Specialist women's support services.

#### *Family Counselling Service*

The Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs does not have figures for how many women receive help annually because they are victims of violence. In 2019, the Family Counselling Service concluded 3,052 treatment cases for intimate partner violence and 2,136 mediations where the mediator had registered that there had been violence in the family. At the same time, women may have received help in many other cases, where the therapist has not registered this as the main topic in the case.

#### *Child Welfare Service*

Provided that help is defined as measures from the Child Welfare Service, Norwegian child welfare statistics do not include figures on violence. Four violence variables can be found in the child welfare statistics of Statistics Norway:

- "Domestic violence/witness to domestic violence"
- "Children subjected to physical abuse"
- "Children subjected to mental abuse"
- "Children subjected to sexual assault"

Only the figures on the number of completed investigations each year where the decisions are measures from the Child Welfare Service include the aforementioned variables. However, these figures are not differentiated by gender. Figures from Statistics Norway that are both differentiated by gender and include the variables on violence are limited to statistics on the investigations that the Child Welfare Service launches each year.

Figures from the Norwegian Patient Register (NPR) show that 3,746 injuries were reported due to violence or assault in 2019. Figures on personal injury are retrieved from the activity data from the somatic sector. There was a higher proportion of men who were subjected to violence and assault, but the figures do not distinguish between domestic violence and other types of violence. Injuries due to violence and assault occurred most often in the age group 20–39, and that proportion decreased with increasing age.

### **C. Information on complaints mechanisms**

In Norway, persons who are victims of violence are entitled to a legal representative for victims. This legal representative also assists in connection with the right of appeal. The police advise of the right to a legal representative through both investigations and their own Support Centres for Crime Victims, localised with the police. The support centres also

provide free assistance in connection with applications for compensation as victims of violent crime.

#### **D. Specialist women's support services**

##### *Crisis centres and statistics for 2019*

Municipalities have a statutory duty to provide a crisis centres for women, men and children who are subjected to domestic violence or threats of domestic violence (the Crisis Centre Act). The Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs has developed a professional guide for the content and quality of the crisis centres, which is an important tool for the municipalities and crisis centre services in the follow-up of victims of violence.

1. There are 44 crisis centres for women. The crisis centres are distributed throughout Norway, but parts of the population are far from a crisis centre. For 24 women's crisis centres, the longest travel distance is over 100 km. In 2019, the crisis centres for women throughout Norway had over 969 permanent beds.
2. The crisis centres had a total of 546 employees and 392.7 full-time equivalents. Of these employees, 34 were voluntary watchmen.
3. There are 40 crisis centres that are staffed 24 hours a day. Three additional crisis centres were staffed 24 hours a day, with on-call personnel on occasion and one was not staffed 24 hours a day.
4. The Crisis Centre Act entails a duty to provide housing for women, men and children subjected to domestic violence. The housing for women and men shall be physically separate, and the offer shall be adapted to gender-specific needs. All crisis centres shall provide services to women with an immigrant background.
5. Number of crisis centres that offer accommodation (and consider offering accommodation in each case) to various groups of women:
  - a. Women with an unclear residency status in Norway: 38 (6)
  - b. Women without a valid residence permit in Norway: 27 (16)
  - c. Women subjected to human trafficking: 40 (6)
  - d. Women with known drug and alcohol abuse problems: 8 (27)
  - e. Women with known mental disorders: 8 (33)
  - f. Women with disabilities (physical impairments): 29 (15)
  - g. Women with intellectual disabilities: 10 (30).
6. See Chapter IV, B 3) above for the number of women and children who receive residential or day offers at a crisis centre. There is no registration of how many women seek help from a crisis centre and do not receive any help.
7. The municipalities are responsible for funding the statutory crisis centre services for their residents, and most municipalities cooperate with other municipalities on the financing and operations. The most common payment scheme is a grant per resident in the municipality/ies, and the annual budget for the crisis centres varies from less than EUR 95,510 to over EUR 2,8 million.
8. Of the 44 crisis centres for women, 13 were managed as intermunicipal companies. 16 were managed as municipal enterprises. 9 centres were foundations. 6 centres were voluntary/private enterprises.
9. In accordance with the Crisis Centre Act, protected accommodation and advice and guidance from crisis centres shall be provided free of charge. However, it is common for

residents to pay a small fee for food and sanitary articles at the centre, which is also permitted by the Act.

10. All the crisis centres participated in cooperation with the police, Labour and Welfare administration (NAV), Family Counselling Service and Child Welfare Service.

#### *Centre against Incest and Sexual Assault and statistics for 2019*

The Centres against Incest and Sexual Assault and Resource Centres against Sexual Assault shall be a supplement to the public support services, and they shall cooperate with public services in other support services, such as sexual assault reception centres and mental health care. The centres shall initiate cooperation with the Regional Resource Centres for Violence, Traumatic Stress and Suicide Prevention. Professional recommendations for the centres are under preparation by the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs, and cooperation with other relevant services will be one of the topics.

1. There were 23 Centres against Incest and Sexual Assault in Norway in 2019. The travel distance to the centres varies. The average longest travel distance in 2019 was 166 km. The centres have no maximum capacity for the number of users.
2. The Centres against Incest and Sexual Assault had 164 employees working 129.1 full-time equivalents.
3. A distinction is made between availability for visits and availability by phone. Four of the centres were open 24/7 for visits. Four of the centres were available by phone 24/7.
4. The Centres against Incest and Sexual Assault are a low threshold service for victims of incest and sexual assault and their close family members, regardless of gender. However, a large predominance of women make use of this service. Of all the users who had been subjected to sexual assault, 84 per cent were women.
5. The centres provide services for victims of incest and sexual assault, and their close family members. The offer is primarily for adults, both women and men, but some centres also provide services for children. Most of the centres indirectly provide a service for children by engaging in externally oriented information activities and teaching about sexual assault in schools and day care centres. Adapted services for persons with an immigrant background were available at 16 centres. Dedicated employees with special responsibility for working with children and young people were available at 13 centres. 8 centres were universally designed, and all the centres offered at least one form of adaptation for persons with disabilities. The most common forms of adaptation were handicap toilets (19 centres), wheelchair ramps (13 centres), step-free access (12 centres) and handicap parking (10 centres).
6. There is no registration of how many women seek help from the Centres against Incest and Sexual Assault and do not receive any help. For the number of women and children who were users in 2019, see Chapter IV, B 3.
7. The Centres against Incest and Sexual Assault are funded through municipal and state operating grants. Municipalities, county authorities and health trusts shall jointly cover at least 20 per cent of the operating expenses and receive a Government grant for up to 80 per cent. The Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs manages the state grant scheme.

8. 14 centres are managed as foundations, 4 are intermunicipal companies, 1 is a municipal enterprise, 1 is a voluntary organisation and 3 have stated that they have another form of organisation.
9. The Centres against Incest and Sexual Assault are a free service to everyone.
10. All Centres against Incest and Sexual Assault cooperate with the mental health care service or Regional Psychiatric Centres and the police. All but one of the centres cooperate with the Labour and Welfare administration (NAV), the Child Welfare Service and sexual assault reception centres. 19 centres cooperate with Children's Houses, and 20 cooperate with the Family Counselling Service. The most common form of cooperation is cooperation on individual cases.

#### *Expert Team against Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation*

The Expert Team against Forced Marriage, Female Genital Mutilation and Negative Social Control (hereinafter the Expert Team) plays a central role in giving case workers support, and ensuring coordination within the public sector services. The Expert Team consists of representatives from the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs, National Police Directorate, Directorate of Immigration, Directorate of Integration and Diversity, Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration and Norwegian Directorate of Health. In instances of forced marriages or female genital mutilation, when it proves necessary to return citizens to Norway from abroad for their protection, the Expert Team is the point of contact for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and for coordination with relevant agencies in Norway.

There is a housing and support offer for young people over the age of 18 subjected to forced marriage, honour-related violence, etc. in five municipalities, and this is an offer for persons who need protection and safe housing, where cooperation is required between different agencies in the municipality. It is the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs that allocates the places, and the police are involved with respect to the security assessments and measures. Non-governmental organisations also provide support services for the residents.

#### *Sexual assault reception centres*

There are currently 23 sexual assault reception centres throughout Norway, located either at a casualty clinic or hospital. The sexual assault reception centres offer medical care and counselling, including forensic examinations to safeguard evidence. Assistance will also be provided in connection with reporting criminal offences to the police and contacting a legal representative for victims. Six of these reception centres also accept patients subjected to domestic violence. In 2017, 2,000 patients were registered at the sexual assault reception centres in Norway.

#### *Adapted dental care*

Adapted dental care has been established for victims of torture and abuse and persons with severe anxiety for dental treatment (odontophobia) in the public dental health service in all counties of Norway. In 2019, there were around 60 treatment teams with a psychologist, dentist, dental health secretary and a dental hygienist in some places throughout Norway. Patients are referred to or contact these teams directly for an assessment conversation. Based on this conversation, it will be determined whether the person in question falls under the criteria for this free dental care. Persons who have experienced torture or abuse may often have other mental disorders as well, such as relationship problems where other

psychological methods must be used to establish trust and confidence in the therapist. There may be a need for cooperation with the patient's therapist in the public health service. After completion of the odontophobia treatment, the patients will be followed up with the necessary dental treatment. In 2020, approx. EUR 8.12 has been allocated to this programme. The programme will be evaluated in 2020.

#### *Project November, Oslo Police District*

Oslo Police District's "Project November": Interdisciplinary cooperation model in cases of domestic violence with close links between police protection measures, practical assistance and psychosocial follow-up. The purpose is better cooperation and follow-up of victims and their close family members in cases of domestic violence. Consists of an interdisciplinary staff of police/family violence analysts, psychologists and social work personnel who work together to prevent new incidents of violence in individual cases

The project period has now ended. The project has been incorporated into the organisation of the Oslo Police District, Unit East, and established as the Section for Risk Assessment and Prevention of Domestic Violence with two subsections. The section will have a total of 25 full-time equivalents and will cover 11.5 city districts in Oslo.

### **E. Telephone helplines**

#### *Violence and Abuse Helpline*

A state-wide round-the-clock telephone helpline free of charge was set up in 2019. The hotline is run by the Crisis Centre Secretariat and Oslo Crisis Centre and financed by the Ministry of Justice and Public Security. Around 1000 persons contacted the hotline during the first eight months of 2020. Around 20 percent of the callers had not been in contact with any other help service about their situation prior to the call.

#### *The helpline is for victims of sexual abuse*

The helpline is free, nationwide and open 24 hours a day. Employees have a duty of confidentiality and the caller can remain anonymous. The helpline is operated by the Centre against Incest and Sexual Assault in Vestfold, and the employees are continuously engaged in competence-raising measures. The helpline received 18,466 inquiries in 2018. Of the callers who were victims, 67 per cent were women over the age of 18, 23 per cent were men over the age of 18, 6 per cent were girls between the ages of 0 and 17 and 3 per cent were boys between the ages of 0 to 17. For 2019, the corresponding figures were 70 per cent, 22 per cent, 7 per cent and 1 per cent.

#### *Emergency Helpline for Children and Young People*

The Emergency Helpline is a free, nationwide helpline for children subjected to various forms of violence, abuse or neglect that is open 24/7. The Emergency Helpline is connected to the municipal Child Welfare Service, and privacy is therefore safeguarded through the provisions of the Child Welfare Act. The callers' phone number, name and address are displayed, provided they have not indicated that they do not wish to be listed in phone directories or have unlisted numbers. If the employees should nevertheless be concerned about a caller with an unlisted number, they can contact the police and request assistance to trace the number. The competence of the employees of the Emergency Helpline is related to child welfare; with regard to violence, it consists of training for all forms of violence against children under the age of 18. In 2018, 66 per cent of the callers were girls. If the caller

contacts the helpline due to concerns for a specific child, the sex of the child is not registered.

#### *The Expert Team against Forced Marriage, Female Genital Mutilation and Negative Social Control*

The Expert Team against Forced Marriage, Female Genital Mutilation and Negative Social Control is a national, interagency professional team that has an open telephone service Monday to Friday from 9:00 to 15:00 for employees in the first and second line services in individual cases. Victims over the age of 18 can also contact the service. Among other things, they provide advice on how to assess the victim's situation, how to talk with the victim, and/or the victim's parents/family, which (other) agencies should be involved in the case, risk assessment and security measures, and other follow-up the victim may require, such as psychosocial follow-up.

The Expert Team consists of representatives from the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs, Directorate of Integration and Diversity, Directorate of Immigration, Norwegian National Police Directorate, Directorate of Labour and Welfare and the Norwegian Directorate of Health.

#### *Red Cross Helpline for Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation*

The Red Cross Helpline for Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation is a free, nationwide helpline that is open from 9:00 to 16:00 on weekdays and offers individual calls, follow-up and assistance with contacting the support services.

#### *Protection for Elderly*

Protection for Elderly is a free, nationwide hotline for the elderly who are victims of violence. Anyone over the age of 62 who is a victim of abuse can call for advice, guidance and assistance. Close family members or others who suspect abuse of the elderly may also use this number. The phone line operates Monday to Friday between 9:00 and 15:00. It is operated by professionals who have knowledge and an understanding of what abuse and offences against the elderly entail. There were 102 messages registered in 2018 (down 25% from 2017). Seventy-five per cent of the inquiries are from women.

## **F. Rights and needs of child witnesses**

#### *Crisis centres*

The Crisis Centre Act (section 3) clarifies that the municipalities shall ensure that children are well cared for in a manner that is adapted to their particular needs, and they shall ensure that the rights of children are fulfilled in accordance with other legislation. Anyone who performs services pursuant to this Act also has a duty of disclosure to the Child Welfare Service (section 6).

The Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs' professional guide for the municipalities' crisis centre services encompasses guidelines for monitoring children at crisis centres, and deals with topics such as age-appropriate information and how to talk with children living in families with violence.

#### *Centres against Incest and Sexual Assault*

Centres against Incest and Sexual Assault that receive grants in accordance with the directive from the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs are covered by the

provisions of section 6-4 of the Child Welfare Act, which deals with the duty of disclosure. This entails that the centres shall of their own initiative, notwithstanding the duty of confidentiality, disclose information to the Municipal Child Welfare Service when there is reason to believe that a child is being abused in the home or that there are other forms of serious neglect, when a child has persistently exhibited serious behavioural difficulties, or when there is reason to believe that there is a risk of exploitation of a child for the purpose of human trafficking. The users shall be informed of the duty of disclosure. Some centres provide a service for children, and all of them provide indirect service by providing a service to close family members. The Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs is preparing professional recommendations for the services offered to children at the centres.

#### *Child Welfare Service*

If violence is indirectly or directly perpetrated against girls and boys under the age of 18, the Child Welfare Service will be responsible for assessing the child's safety and care situation. Pursuant to section 1-1 of the Child Welfare Act, the Act shall "ensure that children and young people living in conditions that may harm their health and development receive the necessary assistance, care and protection at the right time". In addition, the prosecuting authority and the police will be responsible for following up any criminal offences to which the child is subjected. The Child Welfare Act does not have any special rules aimed at girls; it applies equally to all children.

If the Child Welfare Service has reasonable grounds to assume that there are circumstances that may provide grounds for child welfare measures, for example, if domestic violence is reported, the Child Welfare Service has a duty to investigate the circumstances as soon as possible, cf. section 4-3 of the Child Welfare Act. A child can be removed from the home by an interim decision that must be sanctioned by the County Social Welfare Board within 48 hours. The question of alternative care must then be considered and a care order may be issued if certain conditions are met. The conditions for this are set out in section 4-12 of the Child Welfare Act.

#### *Health Centres and School Health Services*

The Government has significantly reinforced the Health Centres and School Health Services, which has also included the use of legal instruments. The Regulation on the municipalities' health promotion and preventive work in health centres and school health service set out that the purpose of the services shall include helping to prevent, identify and avert violence, abuse and neglect. The national professional guidelines for the service make a strong recommendation on how health centres should in practice follow this up, among other things, by having routines for following up parents and children who fail to appear for health check-ups and parents who repeatedly cancel or change appointments. Health personnel may, on the basis of an individual assessment, inform the parents that it may be relevant to send a notice of concern to the Child Welfare Service if they do not ensure that the child appears for its check-ups. The same guidelines also have strong recommendations that violence, abuse and neglect should be addressed during check-ups. At the same time, systems have been developed to reach vulnerable families and/or families who do not appear when they are called in. Health personnel are obligated to report to the Child

Welfare Service when there is reason to believe that a child is being abused or subjected to severe neglect. Amendments were made to the legislation regarding the duty of disclosure to the Child Welfare Service that entered into force in 2018. The purpose of these amendments was to clarify and simplify the provisions so that they are easier to understand and apply. In addition to the fact that individual health employees have an independent duty to act, a duty for the regional health authorities, municipalities and county authorities to contribute to preventing, identifying and averting violence and sexual assault in the performance of health and care services was established by law in 2018. The provisions entail responsibility for management at all levels, including the management of Health Centres and School Health Services, for paying particular attention to the fact that patients and users may be subjected to, or may be at risk of being subjected to, violence or sexual assault. In the letter of award for 2020, the county governors were requested to help ensure that all the municipalities received information about the Escalation Plan against Violence and Abuse and the relevant statutory provisions, as well as guidance in systematic work against violence in the municipal plans.

#### *Trauma treatment*

See review of mental health care and TF-CBT under 3 B.

#### *Norwegian Children's Houses*

Based on the best interests of the children, the first Children's Houses in Norway were established in 2007. In 2020, there was a total of 11 Children's Houses, three of them with sub departments. There is a Children's House for each police district, with the exception of the Finnmark Police District, which uses the services of the Kirkenes sub-department of the Norwegian Children's House in Tromsø.

The Children's Houses have been established to ensure that children and other particularly vulnerable groups who may have been victims of violence and sexual assault, and where the matter has been reported to the police, are not subjected to unnecessary stress and strain in connection with examination by the police and that they receive good, coordinated follow-up.

The Children's Houses join together the professionals involved in a single location, which helps reduce the need for the particularly vulnerable to tell their story repeatedly. In addition, the Children's Houses shall also help strengthen the protection of particularly vulnerable victims and the legal protection of witnesses. The Children's Houses shall facilitate questioning and medical examinations, offer treatment and follow-up of the target group, and ensure coordination of interdisciplinary and interagency interaction. In addition, the Children's Houses shall contribute to professional development of the policy field, as well as provide advice and guidance for public and private actors.

The implementation of specially adapted examination and the use of the Children's Houses are regulated by sections 239–239 f of the Criminal Procedure Act, Regulations on the Examination of Children and Particularly Vulnerable Victims and Witnesses (specially adapted examination), directives and guidelines from the Director General of Public Prosecutions, as well as the Common Guidelines for Norwegian Children's Houses.

## **G. Other measures**

Anyone who considers that it is certain or most likely that specific serious acts of violence will be committed, including abuse in intimate relationships, has a criminally sanctioned duty to avert the act through reporting it to the police or other means, cf. section 196 of the General Civil Penal Code. The duty to avert applies regardless of any duty of confidentiality.

The Ministry has proposed that the duty to avert pursuant to section 196 of the General Civil Penal Code be expanded to violation of section 253 of the General Civil Penal Code concerning forced marriage, section 262, second paragraph concerning marriage with anyone under the age of 16 and section 284 concerning genital mutilation, cf. Proposition 66 L (2019–2020).

Personnel providing health and care services have a statutory duty to notify the police if necessary in order to avert serious harm or injury to a person. Personnel providing health and care services shall, notwithstanding the duty of confidentiality, and on their own initiative, disclose information to the Child Welfare Service when there is reason to believe that a child is being abused in the home. The Child Welfare Service's duty of confidentiality pursuant to the Child Welfare Act does not prevent the Child Welfare Service from disclosing information to the police when this can promote the tasks of the Child Welfare Service or prevent a significant risk to life or serious harm to anyone's health, cf. section 6-7, third paragraph of the Child Welfare Act. If the Child Welfare Service finds upon a concrete assessment that disclosing information to the police is necessary to help protect the child, the Child Welfare Service shall notify the police. This will usually be the case in the event of such a serious concern as suspicion of violence or sexual assault against a child.

Use of a risk assessment tool (SARA) is required in all intimate partner violence cases, and a guide has been prepared for the assessment of honour-related violence (Patriarch). All police districts also have their own dedicated employees who make risk assessments in intimate partner violence and honour-related violence cases.

SARA (Spousal Assault Risk Assessment) – is a risk assessment tool that is used by the police in the preventive track in all cases of domestic violence in couple relationships. The aim is to provide the police with decision support for the assessment of protective measures to prevent any new incidences of violence from occurring. The tool shall be used in all the police districts to assess the level of risk for future violence and for the severity of the violence. All police districts have a dedicated SARA coordinator and SARA employees who follow up on such cases.

Patriarch (Assessment of Risk for Honour-Based Violence – PATRIARCH) – is a checklist or a guide that can be used as an aid for assessment of the risk for honour-related violence.

All police districts have family violence coordinators who will coordinate the police's overall efforts against domestic violence and contribute to good cooperation with relevant external cooperation partners and contribute to adequate follow-up of victims. In larger police districts, separate teams responsible for domestic violence have also been established.

Knowledge building and competence raising internally within the police (locally and centrally) related to domestic violence, and in relation to relevant cooperation partners, as well as internal and external interaction, contribute to a common picture of the situation and the implementation of measures to prevent and combat domestic violence, including violence against women.

## **5. Substantive law**

### **A. Legal framework**

The obligations that follow from Chapter V are first and foremost fulfilled through the General Civil Penal Code, but also the Criminal Procedure Act, Free Legal Aid Act, Damages Act, Compensation for Victims of Violent Crime Act, Children Act, Child Welfare Act and Marriage Act contain relevant provisions. In connection with the ratification of the Istanbul Convention, the national legislation was reviewed, and certain legislative amendments were proposed, cf. Proposition 42 L (2015–2016) Amendments to the General Civil Penal Code and Criminal Procedure Act (stalking, preparation for forced marriage, etc.).

Norwegian law contains a limited number of rules with wording that is solely aimed at violence against women. Norwegian criminal law is general and gender neutral by design. At the same time, it covers many crime categories that most often affect women.

Discrimination in the form of gender-based violence may fall under the general prohibition of discrimination on the grounds of gender in the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act. Moreover, gender-based violence may fall under the prohibition of harassment or sexual harassment in section 13 of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act. In addition to prohibiting harassment on the grounds of gender and sexual harassment, section 13 of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act requires employers and the management of educational institutions and organisations to prevent and seek to avert harassment and sexual harassment.

New rules on activity duties, which came into force on 1 January 2020, state that public authorities shall make active efforts to preclude sexual harassment and gender-based violence. Also employers shall seek to prevent sexual harassment and gender-based violence, see section 24 and 26 of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act.

### **B. Guidance on implementation of legal framework**

Rules for the protection of victims and their rights follow from the Criminal Procedure Act and the Prosecution Instructions (Chapter 7 A concerning certain special rights for victims and surviving relatives). Further directives and guidelines for handling cases of domestic violence are provided in the Director General of Public Prosecutions' Directive No. 3/2008 concerning family violence. Directive 3/2018 on quality requirements for the handling of criminal case proceedings within the police and prosecuting authority etc. (the Quality Directive), states that the degree of protection for victims is one of the quality markers.

Police and public prosecutors are expected to be aware of, familiarise themselves with and keep updated on the rules that apply to the performance of tasks. Relevant provisions are

also reviewed at prosecution meetings, seminars, etc. All public prosecutors acquire knowledge and experience in the policy field through continuously handling of individual cases.

In cooperation with the National Police Directorate and the Director General of Public Prosecutions, the National Criminal Investigation Service arranges a national professional seminar on domestic violence annually. Several police and public prosecutors attend this seminar.

Domestic violence and honour-related violence is part of the university college education of the police. In addition, further education is offered in this field. Training in the relevant legislation is part of the education programme.

The family violence coordinators (discussed under Chapter 4 G) provide guidance for work against domestic violence in their own districts, including guidance on the applicable legislation.

Professional days and training are arranged locally in the police districts.

### **C. Civil remedies**

#### *Damages/Compensation from a wrongdoer*

The conditions for damages from a wrongdoer follow from the Damages Act (ACT-1969-06-13-26) and the Criminal Procedure Act (ACT-1981-05-22-25). We do not have data on this.

#### *Compensation for victims of violent crime*

Anyone who has suffered personal injury as a result of a criminal act that violates the victim's life, health or freedom, or the victim's surviving relatives, is entitled to compensation for victims of violent crime from the State in accordance with the rules of the Compensation for Victims of Violent Crime Act (ACT-2001-04-20-13). As a general rule, compensation for victims of violent crime is only paid when the harmful act has taken place in Norway. It is stipulated as a condition that the criminal offence must be reported to the police and that the applicant has requested that the claim for compensation be included in any criminal case against the wrongdoer. In special cases, compensation may be paid even if these two conditions have not been met. It is not a condition that the wrongdoer is prosecuted and convicted criminally or in accordance with the law of damages for the offence. Compensation for victims of violent crime shall only be awarded when it has been established with a clear preponderance of evidence that the injured person has been subjected to a criminal act as mentioned.

The compensation shall cover the injury sustained, loss of future earnings and expenses that the personal injury is assumed to inflict on the injured person in the future. If the injured person has incurred a permanent or serious injury of a medical nature, then special compensation for permanent injury should be paid. The injured person may also be awarded restitution. The scheme is subsidiary to other benefits and other financial support the injured party is entitled to as a result of the injury. For each injury, compensation of no higher than 60 times the National Insurance basic amount, i.e. around EUR 560,000) will be

granted. This maximum limit for compensation for victims of violent crime may be waived in special cases.

Applications for compensation for victims of violent crime shall be decided on by The Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority. The application must be submitted before the limitation period for the compensation claim against the wrongdoer expires pursuant to the provisions of the Limitation Act. However, it is sufficient that the application is submitted before the limitation period for the criminal liability, if any, of the wrongdoer expires pursuant to the provisions of the General Civil Penal Code, or before the injured person attains the age of 21. Appeals are decided by the Compensation Board for Victims of Violent Crime, or by the Secretariat of the Board if the case does not present any significant doubt. The compensation shall be paid when an administrative decision has been made as to whether compensation shall be awarded. The applicant's claim against the wrongdoer or others who are liable for the injury passes to the state to the extent that compensation for victims of violent crime is paid. The Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority determines whether recourse should be sought.

*Number of women who have applied*

It has not been possible to present figures for how many of the applications received at The Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority were from women in 2018 and 2019, but 2,537 women were registered in the work flow management system for the first time in 2018 and 2,552 in 2019. It can therefore be assumed with certain reservations that this gives an indication of the number of applications received from women in these years.

*Number of applications from women processed*

There were 2,143 applications from women in 2018 and 2,819 applications in 2019 that were processed.

**Detailed overview of the number of applications processed by the type of offence:**

Criminal offence	Total 2018	Women 2018	Total 2019	Women 2019
Attempted sexual assault	14	13	26	26
Attempted murder	29	14	38	21
Attempted robbery	4	2	6	3
Sexual acts (Sections 200/297, 304-308)	205	169	432	251
Family violence (Sections 219/282, 283)	656	419	734	465
Threats (Sections 227/263, 264)	214	126	337	145
Robbery (Sections 267, 268/327, 328)	109	33	95	29
Murder (Section 233/275)	70	31	70	30
Sexual assault (Sections 192/291, 292, 293)	399	363	661	600
Sexual intercourse, dependent relationships (Sections 193-196/299, 301, 302, 295, 296)	424	345	538	389
Bodily harm (Sections 229, 229/271–274)	1,317	405	1,550	504

Violence against public servants (Sections 127/155, 265)	51	17	50	20
Other	193	118	326	183
Exposure to violence	4	3	9	7
Child abduction	0	0	0	0
Hate crime	2	2	2	1
Violence experienced by children	80	38	157	74
Online abuse	49	45	247	71
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,820</b>	<b>2,143</b>	<b>5,278</b>	<b>2,819</b>

Table 1: Number of applications processed by women and the type of offence

*Number of applications from women granted*

Compensation was awarded to victims of violent crime for 1,295 cases in 2018 and 1,222 cases in 2019.

**Detailed overview of the types of offences on which the applications are based:**

Criminal offence	Total 2018	Women 2018	Total 2019	Women 2019
Attempted sexual assault	11	11	14	14
Attempted murder	27	13	29	12
Attempted robbery	3	1	2	0
Sexual acts (Sections 200/297, 304-308)	135	111	174	120
Family violence (Sections 219/282, 283)	476	293	397	229
Threats (Sections 227/263, 264)	101	55	103	46
Robbery (Sections 267, 268/327, 328)	84	27	61	21
Murder (Section 233/275)	60	26	55	21
Sexual assault (Sections 192/291, 292, 293)	184	174	183	156
Sexual intercourse, dependent relationships (Sections 193-196/299, 301, 302, 295, 296)	275	228	309	220
Bodily harm (Sections 229, 229/271–274)	844	246	842	246
Violence against public servants (Sections 127/155, 265)	16	6	13	7
Other	50	36	93	41
Exposure to violence	2	2	4	2
Child abduction	0	0	0	0
Hate crime	2	2	0	0
Violence experienced by children	57	25	11	45
Online abuse	40	39	101	42

TOTAL	2,367	1,295	2,491	1,222
-------	-------	-------	-------	-------

Table 2: Number of applications granted by women and type of offence

#### *Processing time*

The average processing time by the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority for decision-ready cases was 132 days in 2018 and 202 days in 2019.

In the event of an appeal, the average processing time at the Norwegian Civil Affairs Authority was 60 days in 2018 and 80 days in 2019. At the Compensation Board for Victims of Violence Crime, the average processing time was 100 and 140 days respectively.

#### *Amount of restitution*

In 2018, a total of EUR 16.21 million was paid to female applicants, with an average payment of EUR 12,144. In 2019, a total of EUR 15.57 million was paid to female applicants, with an average payment of EUR 13,400.

#### *Pay-out time*

The time it takes from a positive decision being made until the amount awarded being paid up to three weeks.

### **D. Compensation from perpetrators and state compensation**

Chapter 3 of the Damages Act contains several rules that entitle victims of violence to compensation from the perpetrator. If the victim of violence has sustained a personal injury, he or she is entitled to compensation for any injury sustained, loss of future earnings and expenses that the personal injury is assumed to inflict on the person in question in the future, cf. section 3-1. If the victim of violence has sustained a permanent and significant injury of a medical nature, the person in question is also entitled to compensation for permanent injury, cf. section 3-2. Victims of forced marriage, physical assault and a number of various sexual offences are also entitled to compensation under these rules, cf. section 3-3. If the perpetrator has acted with intent or with gross negligence, he or she may also be ordered to pay the victim a lump sum for his or her offences and any loss or damage of a non-economic nature, cf. section 3-5. Victims of violence are granted free legal aid without means testing for compensation cases against the perpetrator, cf. section 16, first paragraph of the Free Legal Aid Act, cf. section 11, first paragraph (4). Claims for compensation may be filed in connection with the criminal case, cf. sections 427 and 428 of the Criminal Procedure Act. Victims who have been subjected to specific serious offences, including forced marriage, domestic abuse, female genital mutilation and sexual assault, are entitled to have a legal representative for victims appointed pursuant to section 107 a of the Criminal Procedure Act. The legal representative for victims shall safeguard the interests of the victims and may assist, among other things, with filing a claim for compensation.

### **E. Custody and visitation rights of children**

It follows from section 43, first paragraph of the Children Act that if contact is not in the best interests of the child, the court must decide that there shall be no contact. As a main rule anyone who is prohibited from having contact with a child pursuant to section 57 of the General Civil Penal Code or section 222 a of the Criminal Procedure Act may not have contact with the child by agreement or decision, see section 43 b of the Children Act. It

follows from section 43 a of the Children Act that contact may be stipulated under supervision by a publicly appointed person.

## **F. Criminalisation of certain forms of violence**

### *Psychological violence*

The obligation to criminalise psychological violence pursuant to Article 33 has been fulfilled in Norwegian law through several provisions. Section 282 of the General Civil Penal Code on abuse in close relationships also applies to mental violence as long as it assumes the form of abuse (established by the Supreme Court of Norway in 2013, Rt. 2013, p. 879). The sentencing framework is imprisonment for a maximum of 6 years. If the abuse is gross, the sentencing framework increases to imprisonment for a maximum of 15 years, cf. section 283 of the General Civil Penal Code. It follows from the Supreme Court's practice that children who witness violence between their guardians are deemed to be aggrieved parties.

In addition, threats and coercion are encompassed by sections 251, 252, 263 and 264 of the General Civil Penal Code, regardless of whether the aggrieved party is a close family member. Coercion where the means of coercion is punishable or otherwise unlawful conduct is punishable pursuant to section 251, first paragraph by a fine or imprisonment for a maximum of 2 years. If the coercion is aggravated, the sentencing framework increases to imprisonment for a maximum of 6 years, cf. section 252. When determining whether the coercion is aggravated, particular importance shall be attached, among other things, to whether it has the characteristics of abuse. Threats of criminal conduct that are apt to provoke serious fear are punishable pursuant to section 263 by a fine or imprisonment for a maximum of 1 year. In the case of aggravated threats, the sentencing framework increases to imprisonment for a maximum of 3 years, cf. section 264.

### *Stalking*

Stalking, as mentioned in Article 34, is encompassed by section 266 a of the General Civil Penal Code. Whoever repeatedly threatens, follows, observes, contacts or by other comparable acts stalks another in a manner which is likely to cause apt to induce fear or anxiety, shall be subject to imprisonment for a maximum of 4 years. Stalking may also be punished pursuant to section 266 of the General Civil Penal Code, which stipulates that anyone who engages in intimidating or harassing behaviour or other reckless conduct, stalks a person or otherwise violates the peace of another person shall be punished by a fine or imprisonment for a maximum of 2 years.

### *Physical violence*

The General Civil Penal Code contains a number of provisions that relate to physical violence as mentioned in Article 35. Violence that has the character of abuse in close relationships (defined in the provision itself) is punishable by imprisonment for up to 6 years, and up to 15 years if the abuse is gross, cf. §§ 282 and 283. Whoever commits an act of violence against another person or otherwise physically violates the person in question shall be punished for physical assault pursuant to section 271 of the General Civil Penal Code by a fine or imprisonment for a maximum of 1 year. Aggravated physical assault is punishable by imprisonment for a maximum of 6 years, cf. section 272. Whoever injures another person's body or health, renders another person physically helpless or causes unconsciousness or a

similar condition in another person, shall be punished by imprisonment for a maximum of 6 years, cf. section 273. Aggravated bodily harm is punishable by imprisonment for a maximum of 10 years, and a maximum of 15 years for any person who causes considerable harm to the body or health of another person, cf. section 274. Homicide is punishable by imprisonment from 8 to a maximum of 21 years, cf. section 275.

#### *Sexual violence*

The obligation to criminalise sexual violence, as mentioned in Article 36, is fulfilled through several provisions of the General Civil Penal Code. Pursuant to section 291, sexual assault is punishable by imprisonment for a maximum of 10 years. The term “sexual assault” in the section heading is used as a common term for several forms of involuntary sexual intercourse with the offender, with a third person or with one’s self. If the sexual assault entails insertion of the penis or other object into the victim’s vagina, anus or mouth, the penalty is imprisonment from 3 (minimum penalty) to a maximum of 15 years. The same applies if the offender, in order to achieve sexual activity, has induced a condition in which the victim is unable to oppose the act, cf. section 292. Aggravated sexual assault is punishable by imprisonment for a maximum of 21 years, cf. section 293. Whoever commits less severe sexual acts with anyone who has not consented to such acts shall be punished by a fine or imprisonment for a maximum of 1 year, cf. Section 297. Sections 295 and 296 of the General Civil Penal Code relates to persons in an unequal power relationship, relationship of trust, etc. with the victim, who engages in or obtains for another person sexual activity with the person in question. Sexual violence in connection with an armed conflict is punishable as a war crime pursuant to section 103, first paragraph, letter d. The sentencing framework is imprisonment for a maximum of 30 years.

Sections 291 to 293 of the General Civil Penal Code and section 297 also applies to sexual violence, including sexual assault, perpetrated against a former or current spouse or partner. In Official Norwegian Report (NOU) 1997: 23, Section 4.4.4.3, page 58, the Sexual Offences Committee expressed that the fact that the victim and perpetrator have previously been married or lived together, is hardly a mitigating factor. The Committee stated that prior cohabitation “may under the circumstances have an impact on the nature of the crime, but it may also be a circumstance that increases the punish ability. Such assaults may be both a violation of the relationship of trust and an attempt to dominate the victim even after the cohabitation has ended”. The Ministry concurred with the Committee’s assessments in Proposition No. 28 (1999-2000) to the Odelsting, Section 4.6.4, page 38.

In Norway, the age of consent is 16 years. Sections 299 to 304 of the General Civil Penal Code relate to sexual assault and sexual activities with children under the ages of 14 and 16, respectively.

#### *Forced marriage*

Section 253 of the General Civil Penal Code concerning forced marriage criminalises acts as mentioned in Article 37. The sentencing framework is imprisonment for a maximum of 6 years. Because extrajudicial marriage is often perceived to be as binding as a marriage entered into formally, the Ministry has proposed that section 253 of the General Civil Penal

Code be expanded to also include extrajudicial forced marriage, cf. Proposition 66 (2019–2020).

Entering into marriage with a person under the age of 16 is punishable irrespective of whether coercion is used, cf. section 262, second paragraph of the General Civil Penal Code.

#### *Female genital mutilation*

The duty to criminalise female genital mutilation as mentioned in Article 38 (a) is fulfilled in Norwegian law through section 284, first paragraph of the General Civil Penal Code. In accordance with this provision, whoever performs a procedure on a woman's genitals that harms the genitals or causes lasting changes, shall be punished by imprisonment for a maximum of 6 years. This also encompasses the reconstruction of any female genital mutilation. Gross female genital mutilation is punishable by imprisonment for a maximum of 15 years, cf. section 285 of the General Civil Penal Code. Whoever performs the acts as mentioned in Articles 38 (b) and (c) is punishable for aiding and abetting, cf. section 15 of the General Civil Penal Code.

#### *Forced abortion and forced sterilisation (Articles 39 a and b)*

The rules of the Abortion Act and the Sterilisation Act apply to voluntary interventions, cf. section 4 of the Abortion Act and section 4 of the Sterilisation Act. Forced abortion and forced sterilisation, as mentioned in Article 39, are encompassed by the general provisions of the General Civil Penal Code on violent crime, including section 274, second paragraph of the General Civil Penal Code, cf. section 11. Forced sterilisation in connection with an armed conflict is punishable as a war crime pursuant to section 103, first paragraph, letter d. The sentencing framework is imprisonment for a maximum of 30 years.

### **G. Legislation against sexual harassment**

Sexually abusive or other obscene behaviour in a public place or in the presence of or before anyone who has not consented to such is punishable pursuant to section 298 of the General Civil Penal Code by a fine or imprisonment for a maximum of 1 year. Sexual harassment may also be punished under section 266 of the General Civil Penal Code, which stipulates that anyone who engages in intimidating or harassing behaviour or other reckless conduct, stalks a person or otherwise violates the peace of another person, shall be punished by a fine or imprisonment for a maximum of 2 years.

Harassment and sexual harassment are also prohibited pursuant to section 4-3 of the Working Environment Act. In addition, there is a special protection against sexual harassment and harassment on the grounds of gender, ethnicity, religion, life stance, functional impairment, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, pursuant to section 13 of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act, cf. section 6, first paragraph.

The provisions of the Anti-Discrimination Ombud Act stipulate that the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud shall provide guidance on cases of sexual harassment, and the activity and reporting duty. The role of the Ombud in active work on equality has been strengthened by the Ombud following up on the activity and reporting duty discussed under 1 A – General principles of the convention. The Ombud's duties are regulated by section 5 of the Anti-Discrimination Ombud Act. From 1 January 2020, the Anti-Discrimination Board will enforce

appeal cases concerning sexual harassment and the provisions concerning the reporting duty of employers, see discussion of this above.

#### **H. Aiding or abetting**

The penal provisions mentioned above under F also apply to aiding and abetting, cf. section 15 of the General Civil Penal Code.

#### **I. Attempts**

Attempts at violation of the penal provisions mentioned above, under F, are punishable, cf. section 16 of the General Civil Penal Code.

#### **J. Unacceptable justifications for crime**

Norwegian law does not allow for the circumstances mentioned in Article 42 (1) leading to exemption from criminal punishment or being considered as a mitigating circumstance in sentencing.

#### **K. Applicability notwithstanding the relationship between perpetrator and victim**

In Norwegian law, no exceptions to criminal liability are made on grounds of a relationship between the victim and the perpetrator of violence.

#### **L. Applicable sanctions and further measures in relation to perpetrators**

1. All the penal provisions mentioned above under F provide grounds for imprisonment. The sentencing framework ranges from 1 to 21 years. Violation of some of the penal provisions may alternatively be punishable by fines. Reference is made to the discussion of the individual penal provisions for more information (see the appendix).

In addition to imprisonment or a fine, a restraining order against contact may be imposed on the offender when there is reason to believe that he or she would otherwise commit a criminal offence against another person, stalk another person or otherwise violate the peace of another person, cf. section 57 of the General Civil Penal Code. If deemed necessary to ensure compliance with restraining order, the court may decide that the person subject to restraining order shall have electronic monitoring imposed for all or part of duration of the restraining order.

When a sentence of imprisonment is not deemed sufficient to protect the lives, health or freedom of others, preventive custody may be ordered on certain conditions, cf. section 40 of the General Civil Penal Code. Offenders over the age of 15 who are of unsound mind or insane and cannot be sentenced to imprisonment or preventive custody, may be sentenced to compulsory mental health care or compulsory care on certain conditions, when this is deemed necessary to protect the lives, health or freedom of others, cf. sections 62 and 63 of the General Civil Penal Code.

Foreign nationals who reside in Norway and have been charged, indicted or convicted in a foreign state for an act that may entail imprisonment for more than 1 year under Norwegian law, may be extradited from Norway under the Extradition Act. If the person in question has been convicted, then it is also required that the judgment entails imprisonment or detention in an institution for at least 4 months. For extradition to Nordic countries and EU countries,

the Arrest Warrant Act applies. The conditions for extradition are more lenient than the conditions for extradition pursuant to the Extradition Act.

2. a. The Execution of Sentences Act allows the Norwegian Correctional Service to establish several control measures, including measures pursuant to sections 36 and 43, that are necessary for a safe and secure execution of leaves, remission of sentence and parole.

2. b. It follows from section 48 of the Children Act that decisions made by the courts concerning parental responsibility, where the child shall live permanently and contact visits shall be in accordance with the best interests of the child. When making such decisions, the court shall pay regard to ensuring that the child is not subjected to violence or in any other way treated in such a manner as to impair or endanger his or her physical or mental health. The surviving parent who is charged, indicted or convicted of having wilfully caused the death of the other parent may only obtain or retain parental responsibility if this is clearly in the best interests of the child, cf. section 64, third paragraph of the Children Act.

All children who are born after 1 January 2020 will initially have parents with shared parental responsibility. In cases where the parents do not live together, the mother may send notice to the Population Register Authority that she shall have sole parental responsibility. She must do so within a year of the child's birth or the establishment of paternity. If she wants to have sole parental responsibility alone after the deadline has expired, she must bring a case before the court.

Pursuant to sections 4-12, 4-19 and 4-20 of the Child Welfare Act, the County Social Welfare Board may decide that the Child Welfare Service shall take the child into care, that the parents shall be denied contact with the child and that the parents shall be deprived of parental responsibility. When these provisions are applied, decisive importance shall be attached to finding measures that are in the best interests of the child, cf. section 4-1 of the Child Welfare Act.

#### **M. Aggravating circumstances**

Section 77 of the General Civil Penal Code stipulates a number of circumstances that shall be considered aggravating in sentencing. Several of these correspond to the circumstances listed in Article 46. In specific cases, the court may attach aggravating importance to circumstances other than those specifically mentioned in section 77, including the circumstances mentioned in Article 46.

#### **N. Prohibition of mandatory alternative dispute resolution processes or sentencing**

Referring a criminal case to mediation by the Conflict Resolution Board requires the consent of the victim, cf. section 71 a of the Criminal Procedure Act. The same applies if mediation by the Conflict Resolution Board is set as a condition for the dismissal of criminal proceedings or suspension of execution of the sentence (suspended sentence), cf. section 37, first paragraph, letter i of the General Civil Penal Code and section 69, third paragraph of the Criminal Procedure Act.

It follows from section 56 of the Children Act that a certificate of mediation must be presented to bring an action concerning parental responsibility, custody and access before

the court. This does not apply in cases where a parent has been convicted of serious violence or abuse against his or her own children pursuant to the General Civil Penal Code, or in such cases has been committed to psychiatric care or committed to care.

It follows from section 23 of the Marriage Act that a spouse may claim a divorce without prior separation if the other spouse has intentionally attempted to kill him or her or their children or wilfully exposed them to severe maltreatment. The same applies if the spouse has behaved in a manner that is likely to arouse serious fear of such conduct.. In these cases, it is not necessary to attend mediation.

There shall be mediation in ordinary separation and divorce cases. It follows from section 7 of the Mediation Regulations that the mediator may grant exemption from the mediation requirement if there are compelling reasons. Mediation may be conducted separately for each of the parents.

#### **O. Administrative and judicial data on cases of violence and murder**

1. in relation to cases resulting in the death of a woman:

a. the number of such cases;

2018: 10 women killed, 6 of them by a partner or ex-partner.

2019: 16 women killed, 5 of them by a partner or ex-partner.

b. the number of cases in which the authorities had prior knowledge of the woman's exposure to violence;

The National Police Directorate does not have statistics for this.

c. the number of perpetrators convicted in relation to these cases;

The National Police Directorate does not have figures for the number of convicted persons, as the perpetrators can also be convicted for offences that are not related to violence against women/intimate partner violence.

d. the number and type of sanctions and further measures imposed as a result of criminal proceedings (including deprivation of liberty), with an indication, where appropriate, of their suspended execution and average length;

The National Police Directorate does not have figures for this.

2. in relation to acts of violence against women amounting to attempted murder:

a. the number of such cases;

The National Criminal Investigation Service does not have figures for attempted murder.

b. the number of cases in which the authorities had prior knowledge of the woman's exposure to violence;

The National Police Directorate does not have figures/statistics for this.

c. the number of perpetrators convicted in relation to these cases;

The National Police Directorate does not have figures/statistics for this.

d. the number and type of sanctions and further measures imposed as a result of criminal proceedings (including deprivation of liberty), with an indication, where appropriate, of their suspended execution and average length.

The National Police Directorate does not have figures/statistics for this.

3. in relation to all other cases of violence against women:

a. the number of complaints made by victims and the number of reports by third parties, to law enforcement agencies/criminal justice authorities;

The National Police Directorate does not have figures/statistics for this.

b. the number of criminal proceedings and/or any other legal action initiated as a result;

The National Police Directorate does not have figures/statistics for this.

c. the number of perpetrators convicted;

The National Police Directorate does not have figures/statistics for this.

d. the number of criminal and other sanctions imposed with an indication of the type of sanctions imposed (for example fine, court-ordered participation in perpetrator programmes, restriction of liberty, deprivation of liberty) and, where appropriate, of their suspended execution and average length;

The National Police Directorate does not have figures/statistics for this.

e. the number of further measures imposed, with an indication of the type of measures adopted (for example monitoring or supervision of the perpetrator, withdrawal of parental rights);

The National Police Directorate does not have figures/statistics for this.

f. the number of perpetrators subjected to further measures referred to in Article 45, paragraph 2.

The National Police Directorate does not have figures/statistics for this.

4. The number of cases which resulted in the death of the children of the women victims.

There are no cases in 2018 or 2019 where both a woman and her child/ren have been killed in Norway (source: National Criminal Investigation Service)

## **P. Other measures**

### *Partner Homicide Committee*

In 2018 the Government set up a commission to review a range of spousal homicide cases. The object is to strengthen the knowledge base regarding risk factors and possible warning signs. The commission will propose measures to develop better and more focused protective measures and better prevention strategies. The commission will deliver their report in 2020.

## **6. Investigation, prosecution and procedural law and protective measures**

### **A. Measures to ensure a prompt and appropriate response from law enforcement agencies**

Domestic violence, including violence against women, is among the types of cases that the Director General of Public Prosecutions has ordered the police to give priority for a number of years. This means that investigation of such crime shall be given priority when there is a scarcity of resources. These cases are also to be handled swift and the clear-up rate should be high.

Within the higher prosecuting authority – the regional public prosecutors and the Director General of Public Prosecutions – the target figure for the processing time for decisions on prosecution and complaints shall not exceed 30 days and 90 per cent of the cases shall be settled within this time frame. Goal achievement (measured in general and not by the type of case) is satisfactory and mainly within the stipulated requirements.<sup>9</sup>

Over the years, the Director General of Public Prosecutions has given substantial attention on the use of interim restraining orders (issued by the prosecuting authority) and the follow up of violations of such. In recent years restraining orders supplemented by electronic monitoring (issued by a court as part of a sentencing judgment) have come into focus. Such measures and sanctions help prevent the re-victimization of victims of domestic violence. This year the prosecuting authority has been instructed to promote the increased use of restraining orders supplemented with electronic monitoring, and the police have been instructed to increase the use of interim restraining orders.

The Director General of Public Prosecutions Directive No. 2/2019 on restraining orders against contact with electronic monitoring provides clear guidelines for when such sanctions should be considered. The guidelines are expected to help increase the number of claims for such penal sanctions. Figures for the current year show that the awareness and use of restraining orders against contact with electronic monitoring is increasing.

Notification of possible abuse in close relationships is given priority in the police's operational activities and the police patrols will be sent to the scene. Police reports shall be created for cases of this type. The patrol shall carry out the initial investigative steps immediately at the scene, which entails a crime scene investigation and securing clues, and audio-recorded questioning of both victims and suspects. This is to ensure the effectiveness and quality of the criminal proceedings and increase the possibility of clarification.

The National Police Directorate does not have figures/statistics for

the number of interventions carried out annually by law enforcement agencies in relation to violence against women.

## **B. Risk assessment**

The Norwegian police use the risk assessment tools SARA and Patriarch. These are discussed in more detail under Chapter 4 G.

The police can arrest a suspected perpetrator, and present them for remand in custody if there is a risk of repeated violence or evidence tampering, among other things. It is the court that decides on remand in custody at the request of the prosecuting authority of the police.

Threat victims can be equipped with a mobile violence alarm to quickly alert the police if help is needed. The alarms are based on GPS positioning and are routed directly to the police alarm centre if it is triggered.

Number of mobile violence alarms (MVA) issued:

In 2018: 1,709

In 2019: 1,240

The scheme of restraining orders against contact with electronic control also referred to as reverse violence alarms (RVA), entered into force on 1 February 2013, and is imposed by the court as a loss of rights pursuant to section 57 of the General Civil Penal Code (discussed in greater detail under V L 1). The scheme entails that the threat perpetrator wears an alarm device that is triggered when he or she moves within a prohibited zone by an electronic “fence”.

The police assess the risk of violence. The prosecuting authority of the police makes decisions on restraining orders and arrests and requests imprisonment.

## **C. Emergency barring orders**

Emergency barring orders are understood in the Norwegian context as an interim restraining order. In addition there are restraining orders against contact, which serve the same purpose and are imposed on the same conditions, but are also a penal sanction that is imposed by the courts rendering a judgment. The prosecution authority is authorised to impose interim/emergency restraining orders, cf. section 222 a of the Criminal Procedure Act. The decision is made by the prosecuting authority of the police but may be reviewed by the court, cf. the seventh paragraph of the provision. Decisions on interim restraining orders covering the suspect’s home are to be brought before the court by the prosecuting authority – regardless of whether the suspect himself has requested a review.

In acute situations, interim restraining orders may be imposed the same day. How quickly the decision is made will otherwise depend on the circumstances of the case – including the urgency of the matter and how well the facts of the case have been illuminated.

An interim restraining order can be imposed for a maximum of one year but can be extended. An interim restraining order covering the suspect’s home can remain in effect for no more than three months at a time, but it can also be extended. An interim restraining order can thus be upheld until a restraining order against contact can be imposed as part of a penal sanction.

Restraining orders can be imposed for the protection of all victims of domestic violence.

Restraining orders can be combined with other protective measures, including violence alarms, surveillance and patrolling. When an interim restraining order is issued, the person on whom the order is imposed shall be informed that a violation of the order may result in a demand for a restraining order against contact with electronic monitoring in a subsequent criminal case.

The Directive from the Director General of Public Prosecutions stipulates that violations of restraining orders shall be followed up quickly and firmly<sup>10</sup>, and in severe cases, violations may result in arrest and detention. Separate adjudication of the violation case *shall* be considered<sup>11</sup> – implying that the prosecutor shall not necessarily await the main hearing and adjudication of the underlying domestic violence or abuse case. If the violation of a restraining order was actually an attempt to seek out the victim, this shall normally lead to a claim before sentencing court for a restraining order against contact with electronic monitoring.<sup>12</sup>

Violation of interim restraining orders has a sentencing framework of a fine or imprisonment for a maximum of 1 year, cf. section 168 of the General Civil Penal Code. In addition, the sentence may include a restraining order – with or without electronic monitoring, cf. sections 32 and 59 of the General Civil Penal Code, cf. section 57.

A sentence of imprisonment for isolated violations that have not resulted in physical violence or other offences of the protected person will not normally be very long, and may also be suspended. Therefore, it is all the more important to also submit a claim for a restraining order against contact supplemented with electronic monitoring when necessary .

The Director General of Public Prosecutions has instructed the police to increase the use of restraining orders in the Goals and Priorities Directive for 2020.

The Support Centres for Crime Victims provides advice and guidance, and the police provide information and an offer of a legal representative for victims. See also Chapter 4 A and B1.

#### **D. Restraining or protection orders – legal framework**

The questions have essentially been answered above under letter C. The procedure for requesting an interim restraining order is quite simple – the police inquire about the need in connection with a report or the police interview in a domestic violence or abuse case, or the victim herself requests such an order from the police, orally or in writing. It is stated in Section 9-7 of the Prosecution Instructions that if there is reason to believe that the conditions for imposing an interim restraining order are met, the person who needs protection shall be informed of the right to request such an order.

Restraining orders may be issued for the protection of anyone who has been subjected to a criminal offence, is stalked, violated or subjected to particularly burdensome disorderly

---

<sup>10</sup> Directive from the Director General of Public Prosecutions on family violence, No. 3/2008, Section 3

<sup>11</sup> Directive from the Director General of Public Prosecutions on restraining orders against contact with electronic control, No. 2/2019, Section 14

<sup>12</sup> Op. Cit. Section 5.1

conduct, cf. the conditions in section 222 a of the Criminal Procedure Act. There is no fee associated with requesting or having a restraining order issued.

### E. Restraining or protection orders – application

The National Police Directorate does not have national figures for the number of restraining orders imposed annually. With regard to the violation of restraining orders, the police have provided the following figures:

Name	Statutory provision	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Violation of an exclusion/restraining order	Section 342, second paragraph of the old General Civil Penal Code	1,884	1,941	1,835	32	2	5	–
Violation of a restraining order against contact	Section 168 of the new General Civil Penal Code			435	2,110	2,093	2,142	2,314
Violation of an exclusion order	Section 168 of the new General Civil Penal Code			56	194	229	178	78
Total		1,884	1,941	2,344	2,336	2,324	2,325	2,392

Source: JUS065

The National Police Directorate does not have figures/information about penal sanctions for the violation of restraining orders.

### F. Ex officio legal proceedings

In accordance with Norwegian law, investigation and prosecution are not contingent on a police report or application for prosecution from the victim, cf. section 62 a, first paragraph of the Criminal Procedure Act and section 244, first paragraph.

a. Investigations are launched by the police, cf. section 225, first paragraph of the Criminal Procedure Act. The question of an indictment is decided, as a general rule, by the public prosecutors, cf. section 66 of the Criminal Procedure Act. The police still nevertheless decide the question of an indictment in cases concerning the violation of section 271 of the General Civil Penal Code concerning physical assault, section 273 concerning bodily harm and section 297 concerning sexually abusive behaviour publicly or without consent, cf. section 67, first paragraph, letters a and b of the Criminal Procedure Act. The Director General of Public Prosecutions decides the question of an indictment in cases concerning the violation of section 275 of the General Civil Penal Code concerning homicide, section 293 concerning aggravated sexual assault, section 301 concerning aggravated sexual assault of children under the age of 14 and section 103, first paragraph, letter d concerning sexual assault, forced sterilisation, etc. in connection with an armed conflict, cf. section 65, first paragraph (1) and (2) of the Criminal Procedure Act.

b. Prosecution shall take place as a general rule, given that the conditions for punishment are considered to be met. If the sentencing framework is 2 years or less, public prosecution may still be waived unless public interest dictates prosecution, cf. section 62 a, second paragraph of the Criminal Procedure Act. When assessing whether there is public interest, it follows from the provision that importance shall be attached, among other things, to the severity of the offence, consideration of general respect for the law, and whether the victim or another person who has suffered harm from the offence wants to bring charges. The Director General of Public Prosecutions has issued assessment guidelines in Directive No. 2/2015, section 1.4 of the new General Civil Penal Code. It is stated here, among other things, that physical assault should as a rule be prosecuted, even if the victim does not wish to press charges.

### **G. Ex parte legal proceedings**

The question is not relevant because a report or application for prosecution from the victim, as mentioned under F, is not necessary for investigation and prosecution of the aforementioned acts.

### **H. Support for victims in legal proceedings**

All the police districts have established support centres for crime victims. The centres provide the victims with advice and guidance throughout the entire criminal case. See also a more detailed discussion under Chapter IV A and B 1. Several courts also offer witness support, which provides an offer of compassionate support and guidance on what will happen in court.

### **I. Measures of protection available during investigation and judicial proceedings**

1. National witness protection guidelines have been established. The guidelines establish two levels of responsibility for protection: a local level, where the police districts are responsible for maintaining the safety of witnesses within their own police district, and a national level, which is safeguarded by the National Police Directorate through the National Criminal Investigation Service. The police have a number of instruments available to them for the protection of victims that are exposed to threat. Mobile violence alarms, electronic control, relocation, restraining orders pursuant to section 222 a of the Criminal Procedure Act, patrolling, surveillance, address blocking and shielding personal data are among these instruments. There will always be a concrete assessment for use of the instrument. When lower-level protection measures are not sufficient, admission to the national witness protection programme may be sought, and permission to use other personal data about themselves (fictitious identity) may be granted, cf. section 14 a ff. of the Police Act.

2. Victim represented by counsel shall be notified advised of custody on remand, duration of the custody, extension of imprisonment and release, cf. section 9-6 of the Prosecution Instructions. In accordance with the Execution of Sentences Act, the Norwegian Correctional Service has a duty to notify the victims or their surviving relatives, if it is of importance to them to know, of the dates the sentence will be served outside of prison (section 16, seventh paragraph), day-release (section 20, third paragraph), leave or remission of sentence (section 36, third paragraph), evasion (section 40, eighth paragraph) and parole or change in place of residence during the parole period (section 42, sixth paragraph). Pursuant

to section 9-6, second paragraph of the Prosecution Instructions, victims represented by counsel and their surviving relatives shall be notified if the person charged is released from custody on remand. Section 45 of the General Civil Penal Code provides rules on the notification of victims and surviving relatives upon parole from preventive custody. When the offender is sentenced to compulsory mental health care, section 5-6 c of the Mental Health Care Act contains rules on notifying victims and surviving relatives of leaves, evasion and the expiration of compulsory mental health care judgments.

In accordance with Article 56 (1) (c), the police shall inform the victims or their surviving relatives of their procedural rights, cf. section 93 e of the Criminal Procedure Act and sections 8-6 and 8-7 of the Prosecution Instructions. The police and the prosecuting authority shall also notify victims represented by counsel as well as surviving relatives, of the development and progress of the case unless investigative grounds or other reasons make it inadvisable. Other victims shall be informed as needed.

The Criminal Procedure Act grants victims a number of rights. Among other things, victims have the right to appeal a decision not to prosecute and a number of other decisions made by the prosecuting authority (section 59 a), to be notified of indictments (section 264 a) and to be present at court hearings (section 93 c). Victims also have the right to be interviewed specially to shed light on what the impacts the offence has had on the victim, cf. section 8-9 of the Prosecution Instructions.

Children have the same procedural rights as adult victims, but their rights are exercised by their guardian (or temporary guardian if the child's guardians are suspects). Children over the age of 15 can choose to exercise their procedural rights on their own (Section 93 g of the Criminal Procedure Act).

The right for victims to have counsel appointed is regulated by section 107a of the Criminal Procedure Act – this right applies, among other things, in cases of domestic violence (section 282 of the General Civil Penal Code). Victim's counsel safeguards the interests of the victim during the course of the case. The victim's counsel may present information on possible evidence to the police, and may request that further investigative steps be taken, cf. section 107 c, second paragraph, last sentence. When the victim is examined in court, the victim's counsel has the right to ask further questions (after the questioning the prosecutor and the counsel for the defence) (section 107 c, third paragraph, first sentence). The victim and the surviving relatives represented by counsel shall be given an opportunity to suggest supplementary evidence (section 264 a).

In accordance with Article 56 (1) (f), the court may decide that a hearing shall be held entirely or in part behind closed doors when privacy considerations so require, cf. section 125, first paragraph, letter b of the Courts of Justice Act. During hearings in criminal cases, photography, video recording, etc. are prohibited, cf. section 131 a of the Courts of Justice Act.

Article 56 (1) (g) and (i) are fulfilled, among other things, by the person indicted not participating in the examination by the police, cf. section 8-13 of the Prosecution Instructions. According to Section 284 of the Criminal Procedure Act the court may decide

that the person indicted shall leave the courtroom or that measures shall be implemented so that the person indicted cannot observe the victim during the latter's testimony.

Alternatively examination of victims may in some cases be carried out in the form of a remote examination according to the rules in the Criminal Procedure Act § 109 a. The court's witness support can also help prevent unwanted contact between the victim and the person charged in connection with court hearings.

In accordance with Article 56 (1) (h), it follows from section 135 of the Courts of Justice Act that the court shall appoint an interpreter if the person taking part in the hearing does not know Norwegian.

3. In order to safeguard the due process protection of children and the special needs of a vulnerable witness, in cases involving violation of section 273 of the General Civil Penal Code concerning bodily harm, section 265 on homicide, section 282 on domestic violence, section 284 on genital mutilation and Chapter 26 on sexual offences, a specially adapted interviewing scheme is used for the police interviewing children under the age of 16, cf. section 239 of the Criminal Procedure Act. When indicated by consideration for the witness, specially adapted interviewing scheme may also be used in other cases for the interviewing of children under the age of 16. In cases where this scheme has been followed section 298 of the Criminal Procedure Act states that a video recording of the interviewing shall as a rule take the place of personal testimony during the main hearing. Most of the police interviews of children under the age of 16 are currently carried out at one of the Children's Houses in Norway.

The Support Centres for Crime Victims provide advice and support during the investigation, but they can also be present during the trial itself. In addition, the courts of Norway have dedicated personnel (witness support) who can assist and support the victim during a trial.

## **J. Free legal aid**

### *Legal aid measures*

Victims of certain forms of violence and abuse are entitled to a legal representative for victims pursuant to section 107 a of the Criminal Procedure Act. Legal representatives for victims shall safeguard the interests of the victim during the investigation and the main hearing, and provide other assistance and support that is natural and reasonable in connection with the case. The assistance is free and provided without means testing, that is, regardless of the victim's income or net worth.

Victims also have an opportunity to apply for free legal aid pursuant to section 11, first paragraph (4), (6) and (7) of the Free Legal Aid Act. Assistance can be provided to victims of violence in compensation cases against the perpetrator, for considering a police report in certain cases and for persons who have been victims of forced marriage. Assistance can also be provided as free legal aid before the court, cf. section 16, first paragraph. Assistance is provided without means testing, that is, regardless of the income or net worth of the victim.

In the event of an application for compensation from the State for victims of violent crime, the injured person may receive free legal aid pursuant to section 11, second paragraph (6) of the Free Legal Aid Act if the person in question has income and net worth below certain

limits set by the Ministry. If a legal representative for victims has been appointed for the injured person, the application for compensation for victims of violent crime will then be encompassed by the duties of the legal representative and be without means testing. There are also opportunities to have reasonable and necessary expenses covered for a lawyer to apply for compensation for victims of violent crime under the rules of the Compensation for Victims of Violent Crime Act.

There are also rules on free legal aid for specific types of cases, such as financial settlement after divorce (free legal advice) and in cases concerning parental disputes (free legal advice and free assistance by way of legal representation).

Victims can freely choose the lawyer they want to have as a legal representative for victims or for free legal aid. The lawyer will as a rule apply for free legal aid for the victims.

Victims can also contact agencies that provide free legal aid, such as Legal Advice for Women, which receives Government support.

#### **K. Other investigation, prosecution, procedural and protective measures**

Several police districts cooperate closely with the Norwegian Correctional Service in connection with the release of perpetrators, both to conduct a motivational conversation with the perpetrator and to implement good measures to reduce the risk of recurrence in cooperation with others.

## **7. Migration and asylum**

### **A. (Autonomous) residence permits**

*No. 1*

#### *a) Relationship breakdown as a result of difficult circumstances, cf. Article 59 (1)*

Foreign nationals with a residence permit as a spouse or domestic partner who have been subjected to physical or mental abuse in the domestic relationship or by other members of the same household, or by in-laws, are entitled to continued residence upon application after the relationship breakdown. There are no strict requirements for demonstration of the probability; the applicant's statement concerning the abuse shall be relied on, unless there are clear grounds supporting that it should be assumed not to be correct. When the circumstances are not covered by the above, it is considered whether, upon a concrete overall assessment, a residence permit shall be granted on a humanitarian basis.

#### *b) Expulsion of the reference person, cf. Article 59 (2)*

If the Norwegian immigration authorities are considering revoking a residence permit due to the fact that the spouse or domestic partner is being expelled, advance notice will be given. The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration will provide guidance in the advance notice that a new application must be submitted if the foreign national may have other grounds for residence in Norway. The person in question will have the time and opportunity to submit an application for a temporary residence permit on independent grounds, for example on the grounds of abuse, cf. (1) (a). If the foreign national does not have other grounds for

residence in the Norway, the immigration authorities will consider in connection with the revocation case whether there are grounds for residence on the basis of strong humanitarian considerations or a particular connection with the realm. Among other things, the foreign national's health or return situation will be relevant in this assessment.

*c) Victim's personal situation, cf. Article 59 (3) (a)*

Residence permits on independent grounds may also be granted to a foreign national who has a residence permit on grounds of family reunification with a spouse or domestic partner, if the foreign national as a result of the relationship breakdown will face unreasonable difficulties in his or her home country as a result of the relationship breakdown due to the social and cultural conditions there. In the assessment, both general matters, such as the family law of the home country and the practices related to marriage, divorce and children, and individual circumstances, such as the applicant's ethnic affiliation, religion and any support or lack of support from the applicant's family and relatives, shall be taken into account. In addition, the Norwegian immigration authorities, upon a concrete overall assessment, in which the foreign national's personal situation is relevant, may consider granting a permit on humanitarian grounds.

*d) Cooperation with the police, cf. Article 59 (3) (b)*

The foreign national's cooperation with the police in a criminal case may be a relevant factor in the overall assessment of whether a permit shall be granted on humanitarian grounds, due, for example, to the risk situation in which the foreign national finds him/herself. As regards victims of human trafficking, the Immigration Regulations state that such a permit shall be granted to foreign nationals who have given witness testimony as the victim in a court case concerning human trafficking, and that under certain conditions, such a permit may be granted to victims of human trafficking who otherwise give testimony to the court or the police in a criminal case. A foreign national who is a victim of human trafficking may also apply for a limited residence permit, which can be granted if the foreign national's presence is deemed necessary to conduct an investigation or criminal case.

*e) Victims of forced marriages held abroad against their will, cf. article 59 (4)*

Foreign nationals who are denied returning to Norway after a stay in their home country may be granted a residence permit under Norwegian law if he or she would have been entitled to a residence permit in Norway on grounds of abuse, cf. (1) (a). Correspondingly, exceptions can be made to the rule that permanent residence permits lapse after residing two years abroad. For example, the applicant may have been pressured, threatened, deprived of their financial resources or travel document, or have otherwise been subjected to negative social control to prevent the person from returning to Norway. In addition, a foreign national may be granted an independent residence permit when legal action has been taken to have the marriage ruled invalid because the person in question has been forced to enter into the marriage by unlawful conduct.

No. 2

Table 1 – Number of residence permits granted pursuant to section 53 of the Immigration Act (all three grounds). Source: Statistics from the Directorate of Immigration (2020)

		2017			2018			2019		
Residence on independent grounds		Women	Men	Tot	Women	Men	Tot	Women	Men	Tot
Granted	Cohabitation ceased due to death of the reference person (first paragraph, letter a)	26	0	26	28	2	30	30	4	34
	Cohabitation ceased due to abuse (first paragraph, letter b)	49	2	51	67	1	68	68	2	70
	Unreasonable difficulties in home country due to a relationship breakdown (second paragraph)	1	0	1	2	0	2	1	0	1
	Lawsuit to have the marriage ruled invalid due to a forced marriage (third paragraph)	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 2 – Decisions on an exemption from the general rule that the permanent residence permit shall lapse, made by the court of first instance

		2017	2018	2019
Decision		Tot	Tot	Tot
Granted	Decisions in which an exemption from the general rule that the permanent residence permit shall lapse has been granted (experience shows that the majority are women)	1	4	3

Table 3 – Decisions on residence permits for women exposed to human trafficking, where cooperation with the police is relevant

		2017			2018			2019		
Decision		Women	Men	Tot	Women	Men	Tot	Women	Men	Tot
Granted	Reflection period and limited permit*	17	6	<b>23</b>	16	8	<b>24</b>	9	10	<b>19</b>
	Residence permit for witnesses in human trafficking cases, etc.	1	5	<b>6</b>	0	0	<b>0</b>	1	3	<b>4</b>

\*the same person may have had several decisions, since these residence permits are temporary and of short duration

We do not have statistics available for:

- Article 59 (2) concerning cases where the reference person is expelled
- Article 59 (4) concerning the loss of a temporary residence permit

## B. Gender based violence as a form of persecution for asylum claims

### No. 1

Norway recognises gender-based violence against women as grounds for protection. The Norwegian Immigration Act clarifies that persecution may, among other things, be in the form of acts “aimed specifically at gender”. It is recognised in Norwegian practice that persecution due to gender shall be deemed to be encompassed by the convention ground “special social group”. Women who are subjected to abuse by their spouse may, for example, be deemed to be persecuted due to their membership in a special social group, provided the authorities’ lack of willingness to provide protection is related to the fact that they are women.

### No. 2

In the legislative background for the Immigration Act, emphasis is placed on the need for a special gender perspective for assessments related to refugee law. The Ministry of Justice and Public Security has issued guidelines on gender-related persecution. It is stated here that a gender-sensitive approach must be ensured at all stages of the administrative procedures. A gender-sensitive interpretation and application of the Refugee Convention implies that one should bear in mind that gender may be a relevant factor. The Directorate of Immigration has also issued several internal guidelines that provide a basis for their handling of cases of gender-related persecution.

Nos. 3 and 4:

Table 4 – Decisions in protection cases by outcome. Source: Statistics from the Directorate of Immigration (2020)

		2017			2018			2019		
Type of decision		Women	Men	Tot	Women	Men	Tot	Women	Men	Tot
Granted	Convention refugee	1,317	2,516	<b>3,833</b>	649	684	<b>1,333</b>	809	838	<b>1,647</b>
	Other refugee status	27	122	<b>149</b>	16	36	<b>52</b>	12	35	<b>47</b>
	Humanitarian grounds	115	289	<b>404</b>	26	42	<b>68</b>	35	60	<b>95</b>
	UMA* limited permit	1	367	<b>368</b>		6	<b>6</b>		4	<b>4</b>
Rejection/other	Rejection	511	1,296	<b>1,807</b>	178	370	<b>548</b>	227	362	<b>589</b>
	Dublin II Regulation	145	286	<b>431</b>	149	253	<b>402</b>	98	179	<b>277</b>
	Application withdrawn	39	115	<b>154</b>	30	79	<b>109</b>	34	116	<b>150</b>
	Shelved application	73	152	<b>225</b>	13	15	<b>28</b>	14	17	<b>31</b>
	Referred to safe third country	48	70	<b>118</b>	45	81	<b>126</b>	31	65	<b>96</b>

\*UMA: Unaccompanied minor asylum seekers

We do not have reliable information about the scope of gender-related cases. The executive officers have reported some cases, but the reports have been too incomplete to be able to say anything certain about the scope.

### C. Gender-sensitive procedures

The Directorate of Immigration's guidelines ensure that single women shall be offered housing that is physically shielded from men. The reception centres shall ensure to the greatest possible extent that women are not subjected to violence, harassment or sexual assault, and they shall have written procedures for handling violence and abuse against women if such should occur. The Directorate of Immigration has guidelines for the identification and follow-up of vulnerable residents, as well as action cards for gender minorities, among others. Information shall be provided to newly arrived asylum seekers about the rights of women and equality, as well as information about domestic violence.

It follows, for example, from the Ministry and Directorate of Immigration guidelines that all the applicants shall be given information that gender-related submissions may give entitlement to protection in Norway, including submissions related to sexual orientation and

gender identity, forced marriage and female genital mutilation. The asylum interview shall be arranged so that it is perceived as safe to make such submissions. The Ministry of Justice and Public Security and the Directorate of Immigration have also issued a number of guidelines on gender-sensitive asylum procedures and reception procedures. Reference is also made to the response for Section B (1) and (2) and Section C (1) and (3).

**D. Non-refoulement**

The Immigration Act states that there is absolute protection against expulsion if the person in question is facing a genuine risk of the death penalty, torture, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. This protection is ensured through regulations and procedures, as mentioned under subsections B and C.