

EUROPEAN COMMISSION AGAINST RACISM AND INTOLERANCE

REPORT ON NORWAY

(seventh monitoring cycle)



Adopted on 30 June 2026

Published on 28 October 2026

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European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI)
Council of Europe
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FOREWORD

The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), established by the Council of Europe, is an independent human rights monitoring body specialised in questions relating to preventing and combating racism, intolerance and related discrimination (on grounds of “race”, ethnic or national origin, citizenship, skin colour, religion, language, sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics). It is composed of independent and impartial members appointed on the basis of their moral authority and recognised expertise in dealing with racism and intolerance.

Within the framework of its statutory activities, ECRI conducts country monitoring work, which consists of analysing the situation in each of the member States of the Council of Europe regarding racism and intolerance and action against these phenomena, and of drawing up relevant proposals and recommendations to address any issues that have been raised during the monitoring process.

ECRI's country monitoring deals with all member States on an equal footing. The work takes place in cycles of about five years, on average. The first-cycle reports were completed in 1998. Work on seventh-cycle reports started in 2025.

The working methods for the preparation of the reports involve desk research and documentary analyses, a visit to the country concerned, and then a confidential dialogue with the national authorities.

ECRI's reports are not the result of inquiries or testimonial evidence. They are analyses based on information gathered from a wide variety of sources. Desk research and documentary studies are based on a large number of national and international written sources. The in situ visit provides the opportunity to meet with various stakeholders directly concerned (such as relevant public officials, national or local elected officials, prosecutors and judges, representatives of equality bodies, national human rights institutions and civil society organisations working in areas of relevance to ECRI, relevant professionals and people belonging to groups of concern to ECRI) with a view to gathering detailed information. The process of confidential dialogue with the national authorities allows the latter to provide, if they consider it necessary, comments on the draft report, with a view to correcting any possible factual errors which the text might contain. At the end of the dialogue, the national authorities may request, if they so wish, that their viewpoints be appended to the final ECRI report.

The seventh-cycle country reports focus on two topics common to all member States: (1) preventing and combating hate speech and hate crime, and (2) ensuring equal treatment and inclusion in education and healthcare.

In the framework of the seventh cycle, priority implementation is requested by ECRI for two specific recommendations chosen from those made in the report. These recommendations should be implemented within 18 months after the publication of the report on the country in question. A process of interim follow-up is subsequently conducted by ECRI to review action taken to implement them.

The following report was drawn up by ECRI under its own responsibility. It was prepared following a visit to Norway from 3 to 7 November 2025. The visit was preceded by online meetings on 30 and 31 October 2025. Unless otherwise indicated, the report covers the situation up to 18 March 2026; as a rule, developments since that date are neither covered in the following analysis nor taken into account in the findings, proposals and recommendations therein.

SUMMARY

Since the adoption of ECRI's sixth report on Norway on 4 December 2020, progress has been made and good practices have been developed in a number of fields.

A National Hate Crime Expertise Unit was established in 2021, with its headquarters attached to the Oslo police district. This unit deals in particular with online hate speech and contributes to capacity-building in other police districts as regards hate crime investigations.

The National Police Directorate published an action plan entitled "Diversity, dialogue and trust (2022-2025)", which includes measures to increase the skills and knowledge of police officers about hate crime, to further develop statistics and analysis of reported hate crimes, and to improve support and protection offered to groups of concern to ECRI.

A Muslim pathfinder scheme was initiated to spread knowledge in schools about the Muslim minority in Norway. It complements the already previously existing Sámi and Jewish pathfinder initiatives.

A digital course has been developed by the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training for newly arrived immigrants who wish to work in kindergartens, schools or in the context of after-school programmes. The initiative aims to increase the recruitment of multilingual individuals into pedagogical roles and assistant positions.

The main State university hospitals in Norway, such as the Oslo University Hospital (OUS) and the Akershus University Hospital, have developed internal policies pertaining to equality, diversity and inclusion that concern both patients and healthcare professionals. By way of example, the OUS has adopted an action plan for diversity and inclusion. Further, some regional health authorities have also promoted such values, including in the region of South-East Norway, which has developed a 2025 regional action plan on diversity, equal healthcare services and migration health.

The Criminal Code was amended to ban so-called conversion practices. The amendments entered into force in January 2024.

ECRI welcomes these positive developments in Norway. However, despite the progress achieved, some issues give rise to concern.

Not all personal characteristics and statuses of relevance to ECRI are yet explicitly protected in the criminal legislation pertaining to hate speech and hate crime, notably as regards hate based on citizenship and language.

The level of trust in the police and the prosecution service among groups of concern to ECRI still leaves something to be desired and appears to result in underreporting of hate crimes, including among LGBTI communities and Roma and Romani/Tater populations in Norway.

The only groups of concern to ECRI for whom there are no group-specific action plans to protect against racial and other forms of hatred are the Norwegian Roma and the Romani people/Tater, despite these populations' exposure to antigypsyism.

Recent pupil surveys and other research provide evidence of bullying in schools, in particular against gender-diverse pupils, thereby raising concerns regarding the effective protection of their right to a safe and inclusive school environment.

According to both public institutions and civil society interlocutors met during the visit, as well as research, while conflicts in Europe or in other regions of the world are increasingly reflected in school classes and schoolyards, including in the form of violent behaviours and attitudes between pupils, teachers and school administrators do not have proper instruments to address such phenomena as well as racism in schools. In addition, some pupils report that their complaints about discriminatory language were not taken seriously by teachers or school administrators.

Recent research reveals instances of racism, discrimination or a lack of cultural sensitivity in the area of healthcare allegedly experienced by both patients and healthcare staff belonging to groups of concern to ECRI, and yet many such incidents are likely to go unreported.

In this report, ECRI requests that the authorities take action in a number of areas and makes a series of recommendations, including the following.

The authorities should give high priority to countering antigypsyism and, in close consultation with people belonging to the

communities concerned, the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud and relevant civil society actors, develop a national action plan on preventing and combating hate against Roma and Romani people/Tater and present it to Parliament for adoption. In doing so, the authorities should take due account of the Action Plan against Racism and Discrimination 2024–2027 and ECRI's General Policy Recommendation No. 13 on combating antigypsyism and discrimination against Roma. If necessary, Council of Europe support should be sought.

The authorities should, as a matter of priority, strengthen the capacity of the educational system to promote a culture of living together among pupils and to deal with sensitive societal issues related to, inter alia, racism, including antisemitism and anti-Muslim racism, and intolerance towards LGBTI persons, by providing teachers and school principals with compulsory and practical training, together with appropriate support material, to help them to create a racism-free and inclusive climate in diverse school environments.*

The authorities should, as matter of priority, develop and adopt a national strategy for equality and inclusion in healthcare, in consultation with representatives of groups of concern to ECRI, relevant civil society organisations and equality bodies. The strategy should aim at identifying and addressing structural barriers to access of groups of concern to ECRI in healthcare and disparities in health outcomes affecting them, set out clear objectives, targeted measures where necessary, ensure effective coordination among relevant authorities and foresee appropriate budgetary resources. In doing so, due account should be taken of General Recommendation No. 37 of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on equality and freedom from racial discrimination in the enjoyment of the right to health.*

ECRI recommends that the authorities ensure that all transgender persons who wish to undertake a medical transition, including those with non-binary gender identities, have as far as possible safe, affordable, and timely access to necessary treatments, taking due consideration of its General Policy Recommendation No. 17 on preventing and combating intolerance and discrimination against LGBTI persons. Against

this background, the authorities should review the treatment model for transgender persons and ensure that eligibility criteria and access pathways are fully consistent with the national guidelines on gender incongruence.

ECRI recommends that the authorities prepare and bring to Parliament a comprehensive bill that expressly acknowledges the right of intersex persons to bodily integrity and prohibits the performance of medically unnecessary surgeries and other non-therapeutic treatments until such time as the intersex child is able to participate in decisions, based on the principle of free and informed consent. The preparation of such legislation should include consultations with relevant experts and health care professionals, intersex children and their parents or guardians, and take due account of ECRI's General Policy Recommendation No. 17 on preventing and combating intolerance and discrimination against LGBTI persons and the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers' Recommendation CM/Rec(2025)7 on equal rights for intersex persons.

ECRI recommends that the Norwegian authorities take concrete measures to ensure effective access to justice for people who complain of racial or other forms of discrimination by developing a system by which they do not have to bear the costs for legal representation in the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Tribunal (EADT) or court and administrative fees in the context of court proceedings, especially in cases of structural discrimination and strategic litigation, taking due account of ECRI's General Policy Recommendation No. 2 on equality bodies to combat racism and intolerance at the national level.

* This recommendation, which will be subject to a process of interim follow-up by ECRI, should be implemented within 18 months after the publication of this report.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. PREVENTING AND COMBATING HATE SPEECH AND HATE CRIME¹

Legislation

1. The most relevant provisions pertaining to hate crime, including hate speech of a criminal nature, are §185 (hateful statements), §264 (aggravated threats), §272 (aggravated physical assault), §274 (aggravated bodily harm), as well as §352 (aggravated vandalism) of the Criminal Code (CC). All these provisions, as well as §77 CC (aggravating circumstances), refer to the grounds of the victim's skin colour, national or ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression when qualifying the crime or determining whether there were aggravating circumstances in the commission of a crime.² At the same time, ECRI considers that the list of protected personal characteristics and statuses in the hate speech and hate crime legislation should be broadened to explicitly include additional grounds of particular relevance to ECRI, notably citizenship and language. ECRI therefore encourages the authorities to review the hate speech and hate crime legislation with the aim to ensuring that citizenship and language are explicitly reflected in the relevant criminal law and any other relevant legal provisions; such review should take due account of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers' Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)16 on combating hate speech and Recommendation CM/Rec(2024)4 on combating hate crime.

Data collection and research

2. According to recent statistics on hate crimes, published in the police's annual hate crime report for 2024,³ there were 1 172 hate crimes, including hate speech-related crimes (which accounted for 37% of all hate crimes registered by the police). The second most common form of hate crime was physical violence, at 20% of all hate crime cases. The most common hate element of relevance to ECRI was skin colour/ethnicity (685 cases – accounting for 58 % of all registered hate crimes), followed by sexual orientation (280 cases – accounting for 24% of all cases), gender identity (100), Islam as religion (76), other or unspecified religion (73), and antisemitism (45). ECRI also notes that recorded hate crimes motivated by sexual orientation and by skin colour/ethnicity constitute the largest increase over the five-year period 2019–2024: sexual orientation rose from 121 to 280 and skin colour/ethnicity from 535 to 685.
3. ECRI was informed that the rate of successful police investigations into hate crimes, including hate speech of a criminal nature, had slightly decreased in recent years. During the years 2019–2024, around 50% of cases on average were cleared, with the highest rate at 53% in 2020, and the lowest, at 44%, in 2024.
4. At the same time, ECRI notes that the hate crime data reported to the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organisation for Cooperation and Security in Europe (OSCE/ODIHR) point to a significant increase in the number of police reports, prosecutions and court sentences for hate crimes in recent years.⁴
5. A number of studies suggest that there are many instances of underreporting. For instance, in connection with the planned Oslo Pride event in 2022, the National Police Directorate conducted a self-reporting study on the experiences of LGBTI

¹ As regards definitions of hate speech and hate crime used by ECRI, see ECRI's [glossary](#).

² An amendment to the CC extending the list of prohibited grounds to include a victim's gender identity or gender expression entered into force on 1 January 2021. At the same time, the term "homosexual orientation" was changed to "sexual orientation" to make clear that it also covered bisexual people. For more details, see [Criminal Code](#).

³ National Police Directorate, Oslo police district (2025, May) [PARHC \(2024\)](#), Annual report on hate crime in Norway for 2024.

⁴ OSCE/ODIHR-Hate Crime Reporting. In [2023](#), there were 1090 police reports, 310 prosecutions and 250 sentences. In [2022](#), the corresponding numbers were 923, 263 and 203. In [2021](#) they were 959, 54 and 17, In [2020](#) they were 744, 804 and 67. For other data gathered and analysed by Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir), see [Bufdir-stat](#), statistikk og analyse.

individuals regarding hate crime and trust in the police, as well as attitudes towards police presence at pride events. According to the results of the 2022 survey, 37% of the respondents have high or fairly high confidence that the police would protect them as LGBTIQ+ people. At the same time, 30% reported low or fairly low confidence. As many as 40% said that they had been subjected to hate crime in the last two years and of those only 8% reported the incident to the police. One reason seemed to be a lack of confidence that reporting incidents would bring any results.⁵ Similarly, further academic research into the reporting of anti-LGBTI hate crimes to the police suggest that LGBTI people did not believe in the police's ability to provide them with the necessary support and protection.⁶ Further, it emerged from the ECRI delegation's findings during the 2025 visit to Norway that there was a significant trust deficit, among Roma and Romani/Tatars, in the police and other criminal justice actors.

6. ECRI appreciates the efforts made by the police and other public services in the area of hate speech and hate crime data collection and analysis. It nevertheless notes that the case management systems currently used by the police, prosecution service and courts do not allow for the systematic extraction and correlation of data on hate speech and hate crime cases throughout the criminal justice process. In particular, hate elements are not recorded in a sufficiently standardised manner across criminal justice institutions, making it difficult to track cases from reporting and investigation, through prosecution, and judicial outcomes, or to assess attrition rates.
7. When it comes to trends affecting specific groups of concern to ECRI, LGBTI persons are considered to be at higher risk of hate speech, especially online, and various forms of hate crime. Against this background, a particularly violent hate crime against the LGBTI community, qualified as a terrorist act in subsequent criminal proceedings, occurred on 25 June 2022, in connection with the LGBTI Pride celebration that was to be held the next day in Oslo. The attack took place in and around a bar and a nightclub popular with LGBTI people in the city. Eleven people were shot, two of whom died from their injuries, with hundreds suffering lesser injuries or psychological damage. The Oslo District Court held that the attack was directed at the LGBTI community at large, aiming to kill as many individuals as possible and to install fear. In July 2024, it sentenced the lone perpetrator to 30 years of preventive detention, with a minimum term of 20 years, for aggravated acts of terrorism. In January 2026, the same court sentenced a second defendant to preventive detention for 30 years, with a minimum term of 20 years, for aiding and abetting the terrorist attack and attempting to form a terrorist organisation.⁷
8. Recent studies indicate that transgender persons are at higher risks of falling victims of hatred, especially online hate speech. According to a study conducted by Amnesty international Norge and the LGBTI organisation FRI on two major social media platforms, 47% of posts took a critical approach to transgender people, while 40% took a supportive approach. In addition, according to the same study, 1,2% of the messages recorded in the transgender debate on those two social media platforms could be characterised as hate speech.⁸
9. Surveys suggest that antisemitic attitudes are not widespread in Norway. However, the 2024 survey conducted by the Norwegian Centre for Holocaust and Minority Studies reveals that, since its previous 2022 survey, there had been an increase

⁵ National Police Directorate (2023, July 12), [POD-RAPPORT \(2023\)](#), Resultater fra LGBTIQ+ undersøkelsen på Pride 2022.

⁶ Nordic Journal of Studies in Policing (2024, December 21), [Reporting Anti-LGBTQI Hate Crime to the Police](#), 21 December 2024, pp. 7-8.

⁷ [Oslo District Court \(2024\)](#), Judgments of 4 July 2024 (TOSL-2023-168771); [Oslo District Court \(2026\)](#), Judgment of 16 January 2026 (TOSL-2025-59260-2).

⁸ [Amnesty-FRI \(2023, June 21\)](#), Analyse & Tall har sett på norske ytringer på Facebook og Twitter fra perioden 1.januar 2018 til 31.desember 2022. Key findings include that the number of social media posts on LGBTI topics increased from 6 457 to 44 620 between 2018 and 2022 and the number of social media posts on transgender people increased from 1 485 to 23 465.

in negative attitudes towards Jews.⁹ While a gradual decline in the prevalence of antisemitism from 2011 to 2022 could be observed in the 2022 survey, this trend reversed in 2024. The authors of the survey pointed to the Hamas attacks of 7 October 2023 and Israel's subsequent war in Gaza as the main potential explanation.¹⁰

10. At the time of ECRI's 2025 visit to Norway, the Supreme Court had given leave to appeal to the defendant, who is the party leader of a small far-right political party, in a hate speech case. The case concerned antisemitic and other racist statements that the politician made over several years. In July 2024, he was sentenced by the Oslo District Court to seven months of imprisonment. A year later, the Borgarting Court of Appeal confirmed the conviction and added one more month to the prison sentence.
11. Regarding attitudes towards Muslims specifically, the results of the HL-centre 2024 survey show that anti-Muslim sentiment is widespread, with 31% of respondents having pronounced prejudices against Muslims. In this connection, reference could be made to the murder, in Oslo, of a Muslim woman from Ethiopia in August 2025. The suspect was charged with murder and terrorism.¹¹
12. During its visit to Norway, the ECRI delegation's attention was also drawn to examples of recent court sentences for hate crime, including one in which a person, among other offences, had physically assaulted an 11-month-old baby, based on the victim's skin colour and national or ethnic origin. It was also established that the attacker shouted racist abuse and spat at the baby's siblings, all of whom were under six years old. The defendant was sentenced to 11 months of imprisonment, based on §§ 185 and 272 CC (the latter with reference to the racist motivation).¹²
13. Sami people are also reported to fall victims of hate speech, in particular online, as confirmed by a report published by the Norwegian Institute of Public Health in 2024 and commissioned by Bufdir, the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs. In this connection, in September 2023, Amnesty international Norge published a report on negative attitudes and stereotypes about the Sami on social media. According to the report, 25% of comments and politicians' pages analysed in a major social media platform that mentioned Sami contained negative attitudes and stereotypes about the Sami people.¹³

Law enforcement and prosecution

14. ECRI notes that the National Hate Crime Expertise Unit was established in 2021, with its headquarters attached to the Oslo police district. This unit deals in particular with online hate speech and contributes to capacity-building in other police districts as regards hate crime investigations. It may also provide guidance in specific cases. Further, in April 2025, this unit organised a national conference on hate crime, with participants from all police districts and various organisations representing groups of concern to ECRI. It also maintains dialogue with communities at risk of hate crimes. The unit mainly consists of police investigators. It also benefits from the support of junior prosecutors whose objective is to facilitate the prosecution of hate crimes. ECRI considers such cooperation between police officers and prosecutors a **good practice**.
15. There is a "tip-off" function for hate speech on the police's website. The National Hate Crime Expertise Unit evaluates each tip, which may lead to the initiation of a criminal case if warranted.

⁹ Norwegian Centre for Holocaust and Minority Studies (2025, March), [HL-Senteret \(2024\)](#), Attitudes towards Jews and Muslims in Norway 2024.

¹⁰ See also [Amnesty \(2024\)](#) and [Anti-Racism Centre \(2022\)](#) for specific studies on antisemitism on the internet or social media.

¹¹ NewsinEnglish.no (2025, August 25), [Norway shaken by new terrorist attack](#).

¹² Oslo District Court (2025, June 2), Case25-009688MED-TOSL/01.

¹³ Amnesty international Norge (2023, September), Negative holdninger og stereotypier om samer på Facebook.

16. ECRI is pleased to note that the National Police Directorate published an action plan entitled "Diversity, dialogue and trust (2022-2025)".¹⁴ Among the measures foreseen in the action plan are initiatives to increase the skills and knowledge of police officers about hate crime as well as to further develop statistics and analysis of reported hate crimes. Measures are also included to, in particular, improve support and protection offered to people belonging to ethnic and religious minorities, LGBTI people and persons with a migration background. Another measure is the ongoing introduction in all police districts of a diversity co-ordinator to liaise with communities in situations of vulnerability. According to civil society sources, the Oslo police district has been particularly active in this regard. The National Police Directorate has also been present in the reference group of the competency increasing programme entitled "Pink Competency Justice",¹⁵ a project meant to increase the level of knowledge on sexual and gender diversity issues within the police.
17. ECRI also notes that the Director of Public Prosecutions issues guidelines for processing criminal cases every year. ECRI's attention was brought to the fact that the 2025 edition of the guidelines,¹⁶ hate crimes are no longer, contrary to previous years, explicitly mentioned as a priority. This was perceived as an omission in some parts of civil society, and this raised questions as to whether the prosecution of hate crimes remains a priority for the prosecution service. However, the relevant authorities stressed that the 2025 guidelines should be read in conjunction with previous guidelines and that hate crimes remain a priority for the prosecution service. In the view of ECRI, it is crucial that the prosecuting authorities give high priority, and are seen to give high priority, to combating hate crime.
18. Despite the efforts made by the authorities to monitor, prevent and combat hate crime, ECRI considers that there is still room for improvement as regards trust in the police and the prosecution service among groups of concern to ECRI, which still appears to result in underreporting of hate crimes, including among LGBTI communities and Roma and Romani/Tater populations in Norway.
19. ECRI recommends that the Norwegian authorities ensure an adequate criminal response to hate crime, including hate speech of a criminal nature, from police and prosecution services, having regard to its impact on individuals and groups of concern to ECRI, by i) giving the highest priority to the effective prosecution of racist, anti-LGBTI and other forms of hate crimes and ii) pursuing regular trust-building engagement with groups of concern to ECRI, in particular LGBTI persons and Roma and Romani/Tater communities throughout the country, in order to address underreporting. In doing so, the authorities should take due account of the Committee of Ministers' Recommendation CM/Rec(2024)4 on combating hate crime.

Policies against racist and other forms of hate speech and hate crime

20. There are a number of specific action plans launched by the Government on countering hate speech and hate crime that are of high relevance to groups of concern to ECRI, notably the Action Plan against Hate and Discrimination against Sami people 2025–2030,¹⁷ the Action Plan to Combat Anti-Muslim Racism 2025 – 2030,¹⁸ the Action Plan against Antisemitism,¹⁹ and the Action Plan on Gender and

¹⁴ National Police Directorate, (2022, March), [Diversity, dialogue and trust, Action Plan for the work of the police \(2022-2025\)](#), Diversity, dialogue and trust.

¹⁵ Information about the Pink Competency Justice project, [Rosa kompetanse justis](#).

¹⁶ Prosecution Service (2025, February 4), Prioriteringar for straffesaksbehandlinga 2025.

¹⁷ Ministry of Culture and Equality (2025, January), Handlingsplan mot hets og diskriminering av samer 2025–2030, [Action Plan against Hate and Discrimination against Sami people 2025-2030](#).

¹⁸ Ministry of Culture and Equality (2025, March), [Action Plan to combat anti-Muslim racism 2025-2030](#).

¹⁹ Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development (2024, May), [Action Plan against antisemitism 2025-2030](#).

Sexual Diversity 2023–2026,²⁰ as well as the Action Plan against Racism and Discrimination 2024–2027.²¹

21. ECRI recognises and supports the efforts made through these action plans adopted by the Norwegian authorities to address racism and other forms of hatred affecting various groups of concern. It welcomes the authorities' clear political commitment to counter these phenomena. At the same time, ECRI observes that these action plans are primarily framed as strategic and conceptual policy documents, setting out broad objectives and areas for intervention. While such an approach has value in terms of agenda-setting and awareness-raising, ECRI is of the view that the action plans in question generally lack operational components that would subsequently allow effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation. In this context, ECRI invites the authorities to ensure that action plans against racism include clearly defined goals and targets, accompanied by appropriate indicators, baseline and target figures, a detailed timetable for achievement, the allocation of suitable budgetary resources and the designation of the administrative bodies and senior officials responsible for implementation and built-in frameworks for regular monitoring and evaluation.
22. ECRI notes that the only groups of concern to ECRI that do not have a group-specific plan are the Norwegian Roma and the Romani people/Tater. Admittedly, the number of Norwegian Roma is small, reportedly numbering no more than about 1 000. However, the Romani People/Tater population is estimated to count between 10 000 and 30 000 members, according to their own estimates. Civil society interlocutors told ECRI's delegation during the visit that, unlike for other groups of concern to ECRI, hate speech or inappropriate statements about the Norwegian Roma and Romani people/Tater population rarely trigger, if any, counter-speech or reactions.
23. The Norwegian Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud has, together with representatives of the Norwegian Roma population, advocated for a specific action plan for Roma and the Romani people/Tater. In its 2022 Opinion, the Council of Europe's Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (ACFC) refers to antigypsyism to which Roma and Romani/Taters are regularly exposed and urged the authorities to elaborate and adopt an action plan against antigypsyism.²² In 2025, there was a proposal made by a member of parliament for an action plan against antigypsyism, which was rejected by a majority of votes.²³
24. ECRI recommends that the Government give high priority to countering antigypsyism and, in close consultation with people belonging to the communities concerned, the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud and relevant civil society actors, develop and adopt a national action plan on preventing and combating hate against Roma and Romani people/Tater. In doing so, the authorities should take due account of the Action Plan against Racism and Discrimination 2024–2027 and ECRI's General Policy Recommendation No. 13 on combating antigypsyism and discrimination against Roma. If necessary, Council of Europe support should be sought.
25. In 2021, the Government established a national grant scheme to facilitate local, regional and national initiatives and activities aimed at countering racism and hate speech on the grounds of ethnicity, religion and belief. In 2026, NOK 24,4 million (close to 2,1 million Euros) were allocated to the implementation of this scheme, up from NOK 23,6 million in 2025.

²⁰ Ministry of Culture and Equality (2023, September), [Action plan on gender and sexual diversity 2023-2026](#).

²¹ Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion (2024, March), [Action plan on racism and discrimination – New initiatives 2024-2027](#).

²² Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the National Minorities (ACFC) (2022), [Fifth Opinion on Norway](#): 8.

²³ See NRK (2025, June 2), [Får ikke støtte til tiltak mot diskriminering: – Overraska og skuffa](#).

26. ECRI also notes that, several digital guides and public sector portals, such as that of Bufdir,²⁴ provide advice on combating hate speech. The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development has prepared a guide on preventing and responding to hate speech, harassment and threats, with contributions from the National Police Directorate and the Police Security Service (PST). The guide is intended to provide practical advice to elected officials, candidates in elections and others involved in political life. It offers practical recommendations for both preventing and dealing with hate speech, harassment and threats, and summarises knowledge about the scope and consequences of these phenomena.
27. Apart from Stortinget's (Parliament) Rules of Procedure,²⁵ stating that improper or insulting behaviour or speech is not permitted, the Parliament does not have a proper code of conduct against hate speech. In this context, ECRI invites the authorities to encourage all political parties in Norway to sign the Charter of European political parties for a non-racist and inclusive society, as endorsed by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) in its Resolution 2443 (2022).²⁶
28. As regards media self-regulatory and regulatory bodies, an Ethical Code of Practice for the Press²⁷ was drawn up by the Norwegian Press Association and a Press Complaints Commission (PFU) was set up.²⁸ PFU's decisions about complaints, if a breach of the Code has been found, typically require the offending outlet to publish the ruling, acknowledge the breach, provide corrections or the opportunity for reply.
29. ECRI was informed that there was no proper regulatory body enforcing legislation against hate speech in the media. The Norwegian Media Authority has no direct mandate in this regard. In the view of ECRI, it is vital that independent regulatory authorities play a positive role in addressing hate speech, including online. ECRI therefore strongly encourages the authorities to take action, at legislative level, if necessary, to entrust the Norwegian Media Authority with clear powers to prevent and combat hate speech, including online, in the light of Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)16 of the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers on combating hate speech.²⁹
30. Stop Hate Speech (*Stopp hatprat*),³⁰ a civil society initiative financially supported by the Government, is a broad national network of young people, voluntary organisations, municipalities, youth workers and various professionals who work together against hate speech. It holds workshops, seminars and courses, and has developed a separate system of "stop hate speech youth ambassadors" who help spread knowledge about hate speech online. ECRI welcomes this initiative.
31. Another promising civil society initiative is the "Stop anti-Muslim hatred" (*Stop Muslimhat*) portal, run by the Muslim Dialogue Network and allowing anti-Muslim hate incidents to be reported online.³¹

²⁴ See Bufdir, [Hatyringer – hjelp, råd og kunnskap](#)

²⁵ Stortinget (2025), The Norwegian Parliament [Rules of procedure and the Constitution](#).

²⁶ Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) (2022, June 20), [–Charter of European political parties for a non-racist and inclusive society](#) and [Resolution 2443 \(2022\)](#) on the role of political parties in fostering diversity and inclusion: a new charter for a non-racist society.

²⁷ [Vær Varsom-plakaten](#) – ethical standards for the press (printed press, radio and television and online publications).

²⁸ For more details on the Press Complaints Commission, see the [website](#) of the Norwegian Press Association.

²⁹ Council of Europe, Committee of Ministers (2022, May 20), [CM/Rec \(2022\) 16 on combating hate speech](#). See also ECRI (2015), [GPR No. 15 on combating hate speech](#).

³⁰ [Stopp hatprat – Bevegelsen mot hatprat](#).

³¹ Muslimsk Dialog Nettverk, [Stopp muslimhat](#).no.

II. ENSURING EQUAL TREATMENT AND INCLUSION IN EDUCATION AND HEALTHCARE

A. Equal treatment and inclusion in the area of education

Legislation and national curriculum

32. The Education Act³² and the Anti-discrimination Act³³ set the legal framework for equal treatment in the education system. According to § 12-3 of the Education Act, “the school shall not accept abusive behaviours such as bullying, violence, discrimination and harassment,” which includes racism. Further, § 12-4 prescribes a duty to ensure a safe and positive psychosocial school environment, and if there are challenges to this in individual cases, the school must draw up a written plan to remedy the situation. Should the measures ordered by the principal not prove effective, the pupil or parents in question can report the case to the county governor (according to § 12-6 of the Education Act), who must review the situation and who may instruct the municipality concerned to rectify the situation and, where appropriate, decide on further measures.
33. The 2020 national curriculum³⁴ for primary and secondary school education has the status of a regulation and provides that education and training must comply with human rights, and that pupils must learn about these. Against this background, ECRI was informed that there are human rights components in different subjects.
34. The curriculum also includes topics related to cultural and religious diversity, as well as topics specifically related to, for instance, Sami, Jews, Roma, and Romani/Tatars. According to the information made available to ECRI, legal instruments for boosting intercultural education and the knowledge of school pupils about national minorities and indigenous people have been put in place. However, they have reportedly been insufficiently implemented. National curriculum guidelines for the higher education of teachers and school administrators include requirements relating to training against discrimination and in favour of cultural sensitivity. However, the guidelines are said to be open to interpretation by individual educators and schools.
35. According to the United Nations (UN) Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent (WGEPAD), there is a misrepresentation of Africa and African history in Norwegian schools. For example, in its report, the WGEPAD point to the discretion of schools to determine the history syllabus on the topic of the enslavement of Africans, which according to the same report has led to derogatory content being taught, such as representing Black children as slaves. The WGEPAD also noted that the content of school curricula did not include any modules on Africans and people of African descent that would help current and future generations of Norwegians understand, appreciate and respect the differences among such groups living in Norway.³⁵
36. ECRI recommends that the authorities revise and adopt appropriate guidance for teachers and other educational professionals concerning cultural, religious and ethnic diversity with a view to underpinning equality and human rights in school education. In particular, emphasis should be placed on a consistent and meaningful representation of people of African descent in school curricula, and in this context making the best use of the Second International Decade for People of African Descent (2025-2034) proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly as a positive tool to review to address any stereotypes and prejudices in schools in relation to Africa, Africans and persons, including pupils, of African descent.

³² The Education Act is available [here](#).

³³ The Anti-discrimination Act is available [here](#).

³⁴ The national curriculum is available [here](#), with some explanations in English [here](#).

³⁵ United Nations (UN), Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent (WGEPAD) (2024), Report of the UN Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, Visit to Norway, 24 July 2024, available [here](#).

Initiatives for promoting equality in schools

37. On a positive note, there are several initiatives in place to spread knowledge about ethnic and religious minorities in schools. One example is the Sami pathfinders scheme, administered by the Sámi University of Applied Sciences on behalf of the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development. The pathfinders,³⁶ expanded from four to six in autumn 2024,³⁷ are Sami students who travel around Norway and give lectures about the Sami, mostly in upper secondary schools, in order to pass on knowledge about Sami culture to fellow young people. A similar Jewish pathfinder scheme exists, involving young Norwegian Jews visiting schools and telling pupils about their lives and experiences as young Jews in Norway.³⁸ Yet another similar initiative, the Muslim pathfinders (*Muslimske veivisere*), also exists, as implemented by the Muslim Dialogue network (MDN).³⁹ ECRI welcomes the pathfinder schemes and considers them **good practices**.
38. As regards equal treatment and inclusion in education from a LGBTI perspective, Norway scores very highly, at 90/100 in the 2025 inclusive education report of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer and Intersex Youth & Student Organisation (IGLYO).⁴⁰ Further, reference should be made to the 2023-2026 Government Action Plan on Gender and Sexual Diversity, which contains actions to improve sexuality education, including LGBTI equality issues.⁴¹
39. The LGBTI NGO's FRI's Pink Competency department (*Rosa kompetanse*) develops and conducts LGBTQ+ sensitivity training courses for professionals in various sectors, including for teachers and other employees in kindergartens, primary and secondary schools, as well as student teachers and professionals working in teacher training programmes at universities and colleges.
40. There are other projects and organisations that provide similar services, such as the Restart project run by Queer Youth Norway (*Skeiv Ungdom*), which educates pupils about LGBTQ+ equality issues, FRI Oslo and Viken's academic department *Skeiv kunnskap*, as well as the organisations Queer World (*Skeiv Verden*) and Salam, which focus more on the intersections between LGBTQ+ identity and belonging to other groups and communities. The school subsection of FRI's Pink Competency maintains a reference group consisting of experienced education professionals, academics working in the field of education, and representatives of various organisations.

Action against racist and anti-LGBTI bullying in schools

41. There continue to be incidents relating to racist and anti-LGBTI bullying in schools. For instance, LGBTI children are exposed to bullying, with a disproportionate impact on gender-diverse pupils, raising concerns regarding the effective protection of their right to a safe and inclusive school environment⁴² On a positive note, however, the most recent pupil survey, published in December 2025,⁴³ indicates an overall decrease of bullying cases in Norwegian schools when compared to the previous three years, during which there was an increase.

³⁶ For more information about the Sami pathfinder scheme, see [here](#).

³⁷ Council of Europe, ACFC (2025, July 1), [Sixth Report](#) submitted on 1 July 2025 by Norway, pursuant to Article 25, paragraph 2 of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM), p. 24.

³⁸ Council of Europe, ACFC (2025, July 1), Sixth Report: 24.

³⁹ For more details about the Muslim pathfinders, see Muslimsk Dialog Nettverk, [Muslimske veivisere](#).

⁴⁰ The interactive LGBTIQ Inclusive Education (IGLYO) Map & Index is accessible [here](#).

⁴¹ This action plan states that the Government will continue the ongoing work to support sex education in schools. In 2023, the Government provided basic funding for FRI (the Norwegian Organisation for Sexual and Gender Diversity), Pink Competency courses in schools and kindergartens, Queer Youth, Sex og Politikk, and the magazine Blikk.

⁴² Wendelborg, C. and Dahl, T. (2024), [Elevundersøkelsen 2023 - Analyse av Elevundersøkelsen skoleåret 2023/24](#) (pupil survey) and Wendelborg, C. (2024), [Mobbing på skolen Analyse av Elevundersøkelsen skoleåret 2023/24 and the Pupil Survey 2024](#), available [here](#). See also the Education Directorate, accessible [here](#), and the website of IGLYO, available [here](#).

⁴³ The results from the 2025 pupil survey are available [here](#).

42. A 2021 study into hate speech and bullying in Oslo schools shows that young people with an ethnic and/or religious minority background are in general similarly exposed to bullying as pupils whose parents were born in the Nordic countries, but those with a minority background face hate speech directed at their skin colour and ethnic or religious background, rather than at “general” grounds for bullying.⁴⁴
43. In a 2022 survey about experiences of encounters with Oslo municipality public services, 38.9% of respondents who had been in educational institutions in the past 12 months reported having been treated worse than others because of their ethnic and/or national origin and/or skin colour or religious affiliation when in contact with school or other educational professionals.⁴⁵
44. There are also reports about increased antisemitic harassment and bullying in school after the Hamas attacks of 7 October 2023 and Israel’s subsequent war in Gaza.⁴⁶ Several NGO representatives met by ECRI’s delegation indicated that Jewish pupils felt increasingly unsafe in school.
45. During a meeting with representatives of the Østfold, Buskerud, Oslo and Akershus county governor’s office, the ECRI delegation learned that racist and other forms of bullying had increased significantly in recent years to a total of some 1 000 cases per year submitted nationwide by parents to county governors’ offices. ECRI notes in this connection that schools do not have a general duty to report all bullying cases to local school authorities, nor are they required to report the grounds of or background for the bullying, as only serious cases must be reported by the principal to the municipal authorities. In ECRI’s view, an obligation for schools to systematically register and report bullying incidents, including their grounds, would be highly beneficial for developing effective anti-bullying policies.
46. ECRI recommends that the Norwegian authorities establish an effective, nationwide, monitoring mechanism that ensures consistent and mandatory reporting, recording, and follow-up of bullying incidents in schools, with particular attention being paid to racist and anti-LGBTI bullying cases, including online.
47. On a positive note, regional anti-bullying ombudsmen have been established across the country since 2018. Their mandate covers children and young people until they reach the age of 24. ECRI’s delegation met with representatives of the anti-bullying ombudsman’s office in Oslo. In practice, the anti-bullying ombudsmen largely act as mediators between parents and schools in the event of bullying incidents. They do not have enforcement powers but can bring bullying cases to the attention of the local school authorities if the school in question does not take appropriate action. ECRI considers the existence of anti-bullying ombudsmen a **good practice**.

Action to prevent group-based hostility in education settings

48. An interesting initiative by the Muslim Dialogue Network is the setting-up of a digital platform for the school sector, with the goal of offering skills development and teaching materials to teachers and pupils based on Muslim perspectives. It aims to promote understanding and respect and dispel myths, misunderstandings and conspiracy theories. Discussion themes include the situation in the Middle East and negative social control. The project is supported by the Bufdir.⁴⁷
49. While in Norway, ECRI’s delegation visited the Bjørndal primary school in Oslo, among the pupils of which over 70 nationalities are represented. As a resource-

⁴⁴ Nadim, M. and Fladmoe, A. (2021). Mobbing og hatytringer blant skoleungdom i Oslo: Betydningen av elevenes minoritetsbakgrunn og skolekonteksten. *Nordisk tidsskrift for ungdomsforskning*, 2(2), 129–149, available [here](#).

⁴⁵ In the education context, 17.4% of those who had felt being treated worse on the grounds of ethnic and/or national origin and/or skin colour had experienced it rarely, 13.3% sometimes and 8.2% often. The corresponding percentages for worse treatment based on religious affiliation were 10.9% (rarely), 8.4% (sometimes) and 5.9% (often). The full survey results are available [here](#) (page 64).

⁴⁶ See report by NRK, Norway’s state-owned public broadcasting corporation, available [here](#).

⁴⁷ See [Skoleveileder.no - Muslimsk dialognettverk](#).

intensive but successful measure to deal with this cultural diversity and the fact that many recently arrived migrant children and their parents are not familiar with the Norwegian school context, the school introduced a drop-in “meeting arena” for parents,⁴⁸ in which conflicts in classrooms, but also any other issues, such as teaching about sexuality and LGBTI equality, can be discussed. The delegation was told that parents with a migrant background proved to be active users of this opportunity to discuss with school representatives, with the support of interpreters where necessary. ECRI considers this a **good practice**.

50. Another positive initiative is a digital course,⁴⁹ developed by the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training for newly arrived immigrants who wish to work in kindergartens, schools or in the context of after-school programmes (SFO). The initiative aims to increase the recruitment of multilingual individuals into pedagogical roles and assistant positions. The current percentage of regular employees with an immigrant background in municipal primary and secondary schools is about 8%.⁵⁰
51. ECRI also welcomes the existence of Dembra (Democracy against prejudice and exclusion), a programme for schools for the prevention of racism, group-based hostility and anti-democratic attitudes. Its website,⁵¹ for example, provides suitable teaching materials for this purpose. Dembra covers various challenges to democracy, such as racism, including anti-Muslim racism, antisemitism, hate speech and extremism. It focuses on teacher training and Dembra online materials can be used by any school. Sometimes schools, as part of their participation in Dembra, visit the Norwegian Centre for Holocaust and Minority Studies (HL-centre).
52. At the same time, during its visit to Norway, the ECRI delegation was told by several interlocutors, representing both public institutions and civil society, that conflicts in Europe or in other regions of the world are increasingly reflected in school classes, and in schoolyards, including in the form of violent behaviours and attitudes between pupils, which sometimes also stem from cultural and/or linguistic misunderstandings.
53. According to a report entitled “Differential Treatment, Racism, and Discrimination in School”,⁵² teachers and school administrators consider that they do not have proper instruments to address racism in schools, while some pupils report that their complaints about discriminatory language were not taken seriously by teachers or school administrators.
54. By way of illustration, ECRI’s delegation heard of graffiti on school premises with racist slurs, which remained in place for a long time before it was removed, without any open discussion about the occurrence. In a recent report by the United Nations Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, reference is made to school administrations calling the police to speak to children of African descent who allegedly responded to provocative, unaddressed, racist acts rather than to the perpetrators of those actions. According to the report, when parents complained about such situations, they were reportedly labelled as troublemakers, which could have led to interventions by social workers and the Child Welfare Service.⁵³

⁴⁸ See [Møteplassen – et inkluderende samlingssted - Oslo kommune - Aktuelt](#).

⁴⁹ For more information about the digital course see Utdanningsdirektorat, [Digitale kurs am norsk barnehage, SFO og skole](#).

⁵⁰ For details about the share in recent years of school employees with an immigrant background, see Regjeringa.no [Prop. 1 S \(2025-2026\)](#), figure 6.6.

⁵¹ For more information about Dembra, see [here](#).

⁵² Lynnebakke, B., Kindt, M. T., Alne, R. H. and Reiling, R. B. (2024), Nordic Institute for Studies in Innovation, Research and Education, available [here](#).

⁵³ UN, [WGEPAD \(2024\)](#): 25 and 44.

55. ECRI recommends, as a matter of priority, that the authorities strengthen the capacity of the educational system to promote a culture of living together among pupils and to deal with sensitive societal issues related to, inter alia, racism, including antisemitism and anti-Muslim racism, and intolerance towards LGBTI persons, by providing teachers and school principals with compulsory and practical training, together with appropriate support material, to help them to create a racism-free and inclusive climate in diverse school environments.

The specific situations of Roma, Romani/Tater and recently arrived migrant pupils

56. One specific and persistent issue regarding Roma children is the lack of knowledge of Norwegian when they enter primary school, their first language being Romanes. ECRI learned that Roma children often do not attend preschool, either because their carers – by choice or for lack of employment opportunities – are able to take care of them at home or are reluctant to engage in the Norwegian education system, by distrust of it or lack of knowledge. In line with a recommendation by the ACFC,⁵⁴ a bilingual Romanes/Norwegian preschool programme was set up in Oslo to encourage Roma parents to send their children to kindergarten to strengthen Roma children's bilingualism and identity. However, at the time of the ECRI delegation's 2025 visit, there were no Roma children enrolled in the programme. ECRI trusts that the authorities will further engage with the Roma community to convince Roma parents to participate in the bilingual Romanes/Norwegian preschool programme.
57. As regards Romani/Taters, they continue to be concerned about the potential consequences of taking a child out of school in order to travel during their traditional travel periods. ECRI was informed by the authorities that the Ministry of Education and Research would enter into dialogue with the Directorate of Education about the extent of the need for adapted teaching during such travel periods. ECRI encourages the development of a suitable learning model for this purpose, taking advantage of technological solutions that have been developed in recent years.
58. ECRI notes that many municipalities offered reception classes for newly arrived migrant children, in which these children are placed to build up their linguistic skills in Norwegian. The precise modalities of these reception classes vary. In the school visited by the ECRI delegation in 2025, such children in the age group for grades one and two in primary school were placed directly in regular classes, whereas reception classes for improving skills in Norwegian were offered to those in the age groups matching grades three to seven.

B. Equal treatment and inclusion in the area of healthcare

Legislation

59. The Anti-Discrimination Act⁵⁵ prohibits discrimination on various grounds, such as ethnicity, religion, language, and national origin, including in the healthcare sector. The Patient and User Rights Act⁵⁶ guarantees all individuals equal access to necessary healthcare services, irrespective of ethnicity, language, type of legal residence status, or other personal characteristics or status. The Specialist Health Services Act⁵⁷ provides that the regional health authorities are responsible for providing specialised healthcare services for all, on the basis of equality and medical need. The Health and Care Services Act⁵⁸ obliges municipalities to provide equitable and needs-based health services to everyone residing in the municipality, including undocumented migrants with urgent needs.

⁵⁴ Council of Europe, [ACFC \(2022\)](#): 216, 218 and 225.

⁵⁵ See Anti-Discrimination Act, available [here](#).

⁵⁶ Patient and User Rights Act, available [here](#).

⁵⁷ See the Specialist Health Services Act, available [here](#).

⁵⁸ See the Health and Care Services Act, available [here](#).

Data and research

60. During its 2025 visit to the Oslo University Hospital (OUS), the ECRI delegation learned about a few formal complaints pertaining to the lack of cultural sensitivity of certain members of staff and the lack of interpretation services. ECRI's delegation also heard of two complaints of allegedly misgendered patients in healthcare lodged with the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Tribunal (EADT), in which the EADT found no breach of legislation. However, the delegation's findings during the visit suggest that instances of racism or unequal treatment in hospital and other healthcare facilities often go unreported.
61. A 2025 report on racism and discrimination in the healthcare sector, jointly produced by three civil society actors, the Anti-Racist Centre, LIN - Equality, Inclusion and Networking, and Minotenk,⁵⁹ refers to instances of racism, discrimination or lack of cultural sensitivity in the area of healthcare allegedly experienced by both patients and healthcare staff belonging to groups of concern to ECRI. By way of example, patients with minority backgrounds said that they were victims of condescending attitudes by medical staff, while some medical staff members belonging to ethnic or religious minorities indicated that they encountered patients who refused to be treated by them because of their perceived or actual ethnic or religious background.
62. In a 2022 survey about users' experiences with Oslo municipality public services, 37.5% of the respondents who had sought healthcare services in the previous 12 months reported having been treated differently from others because of their ethnic or national background and/or their skin colour when encountering municipal healthcare personnel. Out of these, a share of 4.8% respondents said that they had experienced such treatment often, 14.9% sometimes, and 17.8% rarely. The share of respondents who felt that they were treated differently from others based on religion was 4.2% (often), 8.5% (sometimes) and 11.7% (rarely).⁶⁰

Policies and consultations on equal treatment and inclusion in healthcare

63. ECRI notes that some individual hospitals, such as the OUS, the Akershus University Hospital, and the Lovisenberg Hospital, have developed internal policies pertaining to equality, diversity and inclusion that concern both patients and healthcare professionals. For instance, the OUS developed an action plan for diversity and inclusion. The Lovisenberg hospital established an equality and inclusion committee and developed standardised responses for staff facing racist behaviour from patients, including incident reporting when patients refuse care on racist grounds. ECRI also takes note of other policies aimed at promoting equal treatment and inclusion in healthcare, often with an emphasis on migrant healthcare. For example, the region of South-East Norway adopted a 2025 regional action plan on diversity, equal healthcare services and migration health.⁶¹ The Akershus University Hospital developed a 2022-2026 long-term plan for diversity, equality and migration health.⁶² ECRI welcomes these measures against racism and to promote equality.
64. ECRI also learned with interest that the Directorate of Health hosts a user council (*brukerrådet*)⁶³ whose task is, among other things, to identify what is important to its member organisations, including those of relevance to ECRI, such as the Oslo municipality Committee for Multicultural Minorities⁶⁴ and the Association for

⁵⁹ Antirasistisk Senter – LIN - Likestilling, Inkludering og Nettverk – Minotenk, Oslo (2025, November), «[Deg skal jeg ikke ha](#)» - [Rasisme og diskriminering i helsevesenet](#).

⁶⁰ Bangstad, S., Rønningen, N.-M., Larsen, E.N., Sandset, T. and Massa, P. B. (2022), [Kartlegging av rasisme og diskriminering i møte med Oslo kommune](#). Institutt for kirke-, religions- og livssynsforskning(KIFO) Rapport 2022: 2: 61 and 62.

⁶¹ The regional action plan of Southeast Norway on Diversity, Equal Healthcare Services and Migration Health is available [here](#).

⁶² The 2022-2026 Long-term Plan for Diversity, Equality and Migration Health is available [here](#).

⁶³ The website of the user council hosted by the Directorate of Health is accessible [here](#).

⁶⁴ Information about the Oslo municipality Committee for Multicultural Minorities is available [here](#)

Gender and Sexual Diversity.⁶⁵ The Health Directorate also set up a council for immigrant health.⁶⁶ Its task is to help the Health Directorate to ensure equal healthcare services for the immigrant population. There are also networks linked to the Health Directorate that promote immigrants' health and access to health services, namely the Network for Immigrant Health in Municipalities, the Network for Immigrant Health in the Non-Profit and Voluntary Sector, and the Network for Migrant-Friendly Hospitals.

65. ECRI welcomes the adoption of health policies at the level of individual hospitals or at regional level and the existence of advisory structures dedicated to equality and inclusion at national level. It also notes that the 2024-2027 National Health and Co-ordination Plan⁶⁷ includes issues pertaining to the provision of equal and inclusive health services (see, for instance, paragraph 70). However, the ECRI delegation's findings during the 2025 visit suggest that the authorities should take more resolute action to develop effective, research-based and well-resourced policies to prevent and combat any form of racism and inequalities in the area of healthcare across the country, in consultation with appropriate stakeholders.
66. ECRI recommends that the authorities, as a matter of priority, develop and adopt a national strategy for equality and inclusion in healthcare, in consultation with representatives of groups of concern to ECRI, relevant civil society organisations and equality bodies. The strategy should aim at identifying and addressing structural barriers to access of groups of concern to ECRI in healthcare and disparities in health outcomes affecting them, set out clear objectives, targeted measures where necessary, ensure effective coordination among relevant authorities and foresee appropriate budgetary resources. In doing so, due account should be taken of General Recommendation No. 37 of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on equality and freedom from racial discrimination in the enjoyment of the right to health.

Medical schools and training of healthcare professionals

67. ECRI took note of a proposal encouraging *inter alia* the Norwegian Medical Association and medical schools in Norway to endorse the World Medical Association's Declaration on Racism in Medicine and to promote equal treatment and inclusion in healthcare more actively.⁶⁸ ECRI supports such a proposal.
68. ECRI also notes that, back in 2020, regulations on national guidelines for medical education were introduced, which tasked medical schools with teaching "how factors, such as discrimination and racism, particularly affect the public health of minority groups and the Sami as an indigenous people".⁶⁹ During its visit to Norway, ECRI's delegation was told that there was a small entry on racism and cultural sensitivity in healthcare in the curriculum for the initial training of medical students in Norway. However, the content of this part is rarely tested in exams.
69. ECRI recommends that the authorities encourage and support the development of anti-racism, anti-discrimination and cultural competency training for healthcare professionals, including through associations of health professionals, the inclusion of human rights education as a mandatory course in the curricula of medical schools and the provision of in-service training on inter-cultural health, discrimination-related health issues, racism and exclusion, taking due account of General Recommendation No. 37 of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on equality and freedom from racial discrimination in the enjoyment of the right to health.

⁶⁵ See Mental Health and Human Rights Info, [Association for Gender and Sexual Diversity FRI - MHHRI | Mental Health and Human Rights Info](#)

⁶⁶ Information about the Council for Immigrant Health is available [here](#).

⁶⁷ [Nasjonal helse- og samhandlingsplan 2024–2027](#), March 2024.

⁶⁸ See Tidsskriftet (2024, November 12), [Rasisme som helseproblem](#)

⁶⁹ See Kifinfo (2024, August 12), [Racism poses a Threat to Public health](#).

Equal access to information and suitable interpretation services

70. ECRI is pleased to note that the above-mentioned National Health and Co-ordination Plan contains a chapter on equal health services for pregnant women with minority backgrounds, who, according to statistics, experience more complications in connection with childbirth than the general population and who may also require culturally adapted communication about healthcare and/or interpretation services.
71. ECRI was also informed that the Directorate of Health worked on communication to immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees in order to contribute to equal and accessible health services for the entire population, including immigrants. The Directorate also published culturally adapted information about sexual health, pregnancy and childbirth, translated into eight languages.⁷⁰ Further, ECRI learned about several written pieces of guidance about healthcare for asylum seekers in Norway, such as the documents entitled “Your health rights as a refugee or asylum seeker in Norway”, and “How to get help if you are sick or need medical care in Norway?”, which are accessible on the official website for information about and access to health services for residents of Norway (Helsenorge.no).⁷¹ Another website with information about access to healthcare is the “New in Norway”, with information available in Norwegian, English, Russian and Ukrainian.⁷²
72. Nonetheless, the attention of ECRI was brought to the lack of consistent approach to the development and dissemination of health information to patients with a minority or migrant background across the country. During its 2025 visit to Norway, ECRI’s delegation was given examples of delays in the provision of healthcare services caused by insufficient communication, such as surgeries postponed because immigrant patients were not explicitly told to fast in the immediate run-up to them. It also heard that immigrant women took less part in breast cancer screening than other women.⁷³ ECRI strongly encourages the relevant authorities to ensure that all relevant health information is made available to patients belonging to groups of concern to ECRI in an appropriate range of languages.
73. The Interpretation Act (2022) obliges public services to use qualified interpreters when necessary.⁷⁴ In this regard, the Directorate of Health⁷⁵ published information in English about the availability of such interpretation services.⁷⁶ By way of example, the OUS Interpreter Centre (Tolkesentralen), representatives of which ECRI’s delegation met during its 2025 visit to Norway, provides interpretation services in 70 languages for the needs of the OUS.⁷⁷ At the time of the visit, the most common interpreted languages were Arabic, Polish, Somali, Ukrainian and Urdu. In 2024, there were over 60 000 interpreting assignments, and this number was said to be increasing. At the OUS, 78% of the assignments were performed on the spot, 21% by phone interpretation and 1% by video interpretation. The increase in the use of interpretation services has been more than 300% over the last ten years. A translation app developed specifically for the healthcare sector is also used extensively in Norway.⁷⁸
74. While ECRI recognises and commends that a lot has been done to ensure the availability of interpretation services in the healthcare sector, many of ECRI’s interlocutors identified access to interpretation in healthcare as a major issue for

⁷⁰ See Norwegian Directorate of Health, [Home | Zanzu](#) (English language version)

⁷¹ See [Helsenorge - information in English](#), in particular guidance documents about healthcare services for refugees and asylum seekers available [here](#) and as well as for any foreigner available [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).

⁷² See Integrerings- og mangfoldsdirektoratet (IMDi), [Healthcare in Norway | Ny i Norge](#)

⁷³ For example, only about 25% of Somalis take part in such screening, compared with about 80% among Norwegians.

⁷⁴ For example, at the OUH, 99% of interpretation needs are covered by formally qualified interpreters. For about 1% of the demand, there is no formal training in the language concerned and thus there cannot be any formally qualified interpreters.

⁷⁵ See [English - Helsedirektoratet](#)

⁷⁶ Health Directorate, [Interpreter services for you as a health service patient – Right to information in your own language](#).

⁷⁷ See [Tolkesentralen - Oslo universitetssykehus HF](#) (in Norwegian language).

⁷⁸ More information about the use of the Care to Translate app can be found [here](#).

patients in need due to the insufficient number of interpreters. They referred to the practice of asking children to act as interpreters for their parents or grandparents in migrant families, especially in more sparsely populated areas of the country. This has at times led to serious misunderstandings, in addition to which patients in such situations were apparently not always open about their symptoms in the presence of their children. According to the Act on the responsibility of public bodies for the use of interpreters (Interpretation Act), resort to children as interpreters is as a rule illegal, but certain exceptions are foreseen in emergency situations.⁷⁹ In ECRI's view, having children interpret is clearly problematic and not in line with the best interest of the child principle. ECRI invites the authorities to redouble their efforts to ensure that appropriate interpretation services are available and accessible within the healthcare system throughout the country.

The specific situation of irregularly present migrants

75. There are specific regulations regarding the right to health and care services for migrants who are irregularly present in Norway. Irregularly present child migrants generally have the same rights to health care as Norwegian children. As concerns irregularly present adult migrants, ECRI was informed that, apart from certain medical services linked to pregnancy, the 2011 Regulation No. 1255⁸⁰ on the right of persons without permanent residence status to emergency and other necessary healthcare services is interpreted in a restrictive manner to cover only medical conditions that require treatment within three weeks. In this context, it heard of a cancer patient who did not get treatment before his condition became acute and subsequently died.⁸¹ ECRI invites the authorities to review the arrangements for irregularly present migrant adults and those among them who are destitute to ensure that their right to healthcare includes emergency medical treatment and other forms of necessary health care, in the light of its General Policy Recommendation No. 16 on safeguarding irregularly present migrants from discrimination.
76. On a positive note, the Red Cross with its partners has developed an e-learning course for health personnel about the type of healthcare irregularly present migrants are entitled to and some municipalities fund or themselves offer some medical services beyond emergency healthcare to irregularly present migrants.⁸²

LGBTI-specific healthcare and related issues

77. It should be recalled that, in 2020, national guidelines on gender incongruence were adopted.⁸³ During its visit to Norway, ECRI's delegation was told that the number of people in Norway with severe gender incongruence is estimated to be – depending on the type of surgeries – between 2000 and 20 000.
78. Gender-affirming healthcare is in practice managed by the OUH National Treatment Service for Gender Incongruence (NBTK), which is a state hospital.⁸⁴ There are also four regional centres for gender incongruence (in the South-East, West, Central and North health regions). ECRI was informed that the declared objective of the authorities to decentralise gender-affirming healthcare has not yet materialised.
79. Transgender persons who wish to receive gender-affirming treatment at the NBTK are first referred by their general practitioner or specialist health services to regional centres for gender incongruence. If there are psychiatric health issues

⁷⁹ The Act on the responsibility of public bodies for the use of interpreters (Interpretation Act), including Section 4 which as a rule prohibits the use of children as interpreters, is available [here](#).

⁸⁰ Regulation No. 1255 of 2011 is available [here](#).

⁸¹ See Bergens Tidende (2022, January 14), [Pasient ble nektet helsehjelp. Ber Stortinget gripe inn og styrke rettighetene til papirløse](#), media article about this case.

⁸² See [Kirkens Bymisjon – Health centre for undocumented migrants – \(English\)](#)

⁸³ The national [guidelines](#) for gender incongruence are available on the website of the Norwegian Directorate of Health.

⁸⁴ See Oslo universitetssykehus, Nasjonal behandlingstjeneste for kjønnsinkongruens (NBTK), [website](#).

involved, the persons concerned are referred for psychiatric assessment to the District Psychiatric Centre (for adults) or to the Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Outpatient Clinic (for children). These centres then refer the patient to the NBTk for further assessment. For adults, the assessment at the NBTk is carried out by psychologists, doctors and nurses. The assessment usually lasts for a year and consists of conversations, interviews and questionnaires completed by the patients concerned. During the assessment period, the patients are requested to live through a so-called real-life experience, which means that they should live in accordance with their gender identity and change their social role in all aspects of life. If the assessment results in a diagnosis of gender incongruence, the patients may be referred to an endocrinologist for hormone treatment. After a minimum of one year of hormone treatment, the patients may be assessed fit for surgical treatment.⁸⁵

80. People with non-binary gender identities are not offered gender-affirming treatment at the NBTk, which is reportedly not in line with the national guidelines. The position of the NBTk is that the risk of non-binary patients wishing to reconvert later is too high. The stated goal of the NBTk is to have fewer than 1% of “regretters” among those undergoing gender-affirming healthcare. The NBTk estimates that the reversion (also referred to as detransition) rate lies between 10 and 20 %. This position by the NBTk results in, according to recent research,⁸⁶ a fairly high discharge rate from the NBTk, at 264/1198 cases (22%) among those who attended at least one appointment, but to whom in the end no gender-affirming medical treatment was offered. However, the detransition rate is much lower, with just 18 individuals who detransitioned out of 1258 in total.⁸⁷ Furthermore, while ECRI acknowledges the concerns raised by some medical experts about the lack of long-term data and scientific understanding of health disparities among transgender persons, it is concerned that such uncertainties are often used as a reason for denying transgender persons’ access to specialised services.
81. It also emerged from the delegation’s findings during the 2025 visit that there was an apparent lack of trust in the national healthcare system on the part of many transgender persons and civil society actors, in particular in relation to the NBTk. ECRI therefore invites the authorities to take action to develop trust among transgender persons by establishing a framework for regular consultations between the NBTk, where appropriate, other relevant healthcare centres, and transgender community representatives.
82. Access to the NBTk’s gender-affirming measures is strictly limited to those who have undergone the national centre’s internal assessment process. Consequently, individuals who, because of long waiting times, have sought and received gender-affirming healthcare, such as hormone therapy or surgery, through the private sector or abroad,⁸⁸ are systematically excluded from the specialised national services and long-term monitoring that are only available through the NBTk, even when such services are medically necessary. According to recent research, the share of individuals who have sought and paid for gender-affirming healthcare in the private sector in Norway or abroad is high, i.e. at almost half of those having obtained related surgery.⁸⁹

⁸⁵ See Langeland, F., Gulli, M. and Rigrup, B. (2023), Likeverdig helsehjelp for personer med kjønnsinkongruens - [research](#), Nordlandsforskning.

⁸⁶ Nyquist, C. B. et al. (2025). Treatment trajectories among children and adolescents referred to the Norwegian National Center for Gender Incongruence. *Acta Paediatrica*. (Data from the GIRCA Registry) available [here](#).

⁸⁷ Nyquist, C. B. et al. (2025), see subchapter 3.5 on retransition. In the context of transgender experiences, a non-core detransition refers to a partial or temporary cessation or reversal of gender transition steps without abandoning a transgender identity. This contrasts with core detransition, where someone fully re-identifies with their birth sex.

⁸⁸ Gender-affirming healthcare received abroad is not covered by the national health insurance.

⁸⁹ Bolstad, S. H., et al. (2026), Gender-Affirming Health Care Needs, Barriers to Care, and Health and Wellbeing in a Broad Nationwide Sample of Transgender People in Norway, Williams Institute / University of Agder, available [here](#). Among survey

83. ECRI recommends that the authorities ensure that all transgender persons, including those with non-binary gender identities, have as far as possible safe, affordable, and timely access to necessary gender-affirming treatments, taking due consideration of its General Policy Recommendation No. 17 on preventing and combating intolerance and discrimination against LGBTI persons. Against this background, the authorities should review the treatment model for transgender persons and ensure that eligibility criteria and access pathways are fully consistent with the national guidelines on gender incongruence.
84. There is no legal prohibition of so-called sex-normalising surgeries on intersex children. The Ministry of Health and Care Services' stance on the matter is that it is more appropriate to develop professional standards to manage treatment practices rather than creating specific legislation on intersex persons. The responsibility for the treatment and follow-up of intersex child patients is assigned to the OUS in the South-Eastern health region and to the Haukeland University Hospital in the Western health region. The assessment was said to include clinical, radiological, biochemical, and genetic "mapping" of the child.
85. According to the authorities, medical treatment for intersex children is initiated when necessary, but never when there is no such need. It should be noted that the Government's Action Plan on Gender and Sexual Diversity (2023-2026) contains an action to review medical care practices for children who are born with differences in sex development. The ECRI delegation, during its visit to Norway, was told that the hospitals performing surgeries on intersex children have taken an approach of rather delaying medically non-necessary surgeries until about seven years of age in recent years. In ECRI's view, it is essential to introduce in law adequate safeguards against so-called sex-normalising surgeries and other unnecessary medical interventions.
86. ECRI recommends that the authorities prepare and bring to Parliament a comprehensive bill that expressly acknowledges the right of intersex persons to bodily integrity and prohibits the performance of medically unnecessary surgeries and other non-therapeutic treatments until such time as the intersex child is able to participate in decisions, based on the principle of free and informed consent. The preparation of such legislation should include consultations with relevant experts and health care professionals, intersex children and their parents or guardians, and take due account of the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers' Recommendation CM/Rec(2025)7 on equal rights for intersex persons, as well as of ECRI's General Policy Recommendation No. 17 on preventing and combating intolerance and discrimination against LGBTI persons.
87. Finally, ECRI refers to its General Policy Recommendation No. 17 on preventing and combating intolerance and discrimination against LGBTI persons as regards the lifelong negative impacts of conversion practices on the mental and physical well-being of LGBTI people. It therefore welcomes the adoption of amendments to the criminal legislation⁹⁰ with the objective of criminalising the conduct and the marketing of such practices. The amended legislation entered into force in January 2024. According to new §270 CC, the conduct and marketing of such practices are punishable by a fine or imprisonment for a term of up to three years. In the cases of aggravating circumstances (270a CC), the act may be punished with imprisonment of up to six years. Whether or not the adult aggrieved person has given free and informed consent will be a relevant, but not decisive, factor in the overall assessment of whether the new provision has been violated. By contrast, consent from a child can never absolve the perpetrator from criminal liability. Further, the marketing of conversion practices is punishable by a fine or

respondents, 32.5% of those using hormones and 49.5% of those who had obtained surgery reported having obtained it through private funding.

⁹⁰ The Criminal Code is available [here](https://lovdata.no/lov/2005-05-20-28) at <https://lovdata.no/lov/2005-05-20-28> and the actual amendments [here](#).

imprisonment of up to six months (270b CC). At the time of ECRI's visit, no case concerning conversion practices had yet been brought before a court.

III. TOPICS SPECIFIC TO NORWAY

A. Preventing and combating racial profiling by police officers

88. In March 2024, the Norwegian press revealed that Norwegian police had compiled sensitive personal data⁹¹ on more than 650 Roma persons.⁹² The resulting records about Norwegian Roma was compiled using confidential information from other data recording schemes, such as the Norwegian population register and the police information registries. The recording was carried out as part of ongoing criminal investigations against 14 persons. During the 2025 visit to Norway, representatives of the police and the Ministry of Justice and Public Security met by the delegation referred to the need for combating widespread criminality involving people belonging to the Roma community. They indicated that the records in question were not in use, although there was no intention to suppress them. ECRI was also informed that the Norwegian Data Protection Agency instituted an inquiry and found that there was no breach of the Police Registry Act in this case.⁹³
89. In ECRI's view, the establishment of such records containing personal data on a significant proportion of the Roma community in Norway in the context of criminal investigations could amount to racial profiling⁹⁴ and legal grounds on which such records were created should be subject to a more in-depth review. Beyond the serious ethical and legal questions raised by the existence of such records, ECRI is concerned by the negative impact that their existence may have had on the Norwegian Roma community as whole, as a minority with a traumatic history in the country and beyond, including through past practices of registering and racially profiling Roma populations, with dramatic consequences, and on the further spread of anti-Roma prejudices in the general population.
90. ECRI recommends that the authorities take firm action to prevent and combat antigypsyism and discrimination against Roma in policing by: i) adopting a clear policy of zero tolerance towards antigypsyism and anti-Roma discrimination within the police and ii) establishing an independent commission tasked with examining the legal framework, safeguards and practices governing police surveillance, data collection and investigative activities affecting the Roma community, with a view to ensuring full compliance with international and European standards. In doing so, due account should be taken of ECRI's General Policy Recommendations No. 11 and No. 13, as well as General Recommendation No. 36 (2020) of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on preventing and combating racial profiling by law enforcement officials.
91. In 2022, the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud published a survey of ethnic minorities' encounters with the police.⁹⁵ The survey suggests that people with an ethnic minority background often feel suspected by police officers for no reason. According to the survey, persons belonging to ethnic minorities made up 34% of those who had experienced police stops in the year preceding the survey while people belonging to ethnic minorities made up over half of those who had experienced three or more police identify checks in the year in question. The Ombud concluded that there was no appropriate oversight to avert and prevent the development of racial profiling practices.
92. In 2023, the Norwegian Centre against Racism and Save the Children published another report on racial profiling by police officers, the findings of which are similar

⁹¹ The data included information such as age, county of residence and possible criminal proceedings, either completed or ongoing.

⁹² Aftenposten (2024, March 5), [Lyddoptak avdekker hvordan politiet har kartlagt nordmenn med rom-bakgrunn](#).

⁹³ The law is available [here](#).

⁹⁴ ECRI's GPR No. 11 defines racial profiling as the use by the police, with no objective and reasonable justification, of grounds such as race, colour, language, religion, nationality or national or ethnic origin in control, surveillance or investigation activities".

⁹⁵ See Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud(2022), *Kontrollert uten kontroll*.

to that of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud, and pointed out that such profiling practices have a negative impact on the mental health of those affected.⁹⁶

93. ECRI notes that a 2023 report on police stops from a possible discrimination perspective was prepared by the Oslo police district, in co-operation with the OMOD Centre for Social Justice,⁹⁷ Minotenk⁹⁸ and the Norwegian Association of Lawyers.⁹⁹ According to the report, the three partners recommended the introduction of a receipt scheme while the police expressed reservations.¹⁰⁰
94. A pilot programme imposing on police officers to issue receipts to the individuals they stopped was subsequently implemented. The initiative aimed to increase transparency, prevent the development of any racial profiling practices and enable better data collection. An evaluation of the pilot scheme¹⁰¹ was commissioned by the National Police Directorate and the ensuing report was published in December 2023.¹⁰² The evaluation concluded that it had not been clear what the purpose of the scheme had been and that the pilot scheme had little impact on the way police officers carried out ID checks.
95. ECRI recalls that racial and other discriminatory profiling has considerable negative effects on society as a whole, generating a feeling of humiliation and injustice among affected people. Such practices tarnish the profession, jeopardise the work of all those police officers who comply with police ethics and the law and are committed to combating racism and intolerance, and can be seen as potentially indicative of institutional racism within the police. It is therefore crucial that the relevant authorities take further action aimed at preventing and combating any racial profiling practices by police officers effectively.
96. ECRI recommends that the authorities introduce an effective nationwide system for the systematic recording of police identity checks and other relevant law enforcement measures, such as traffic stops and border searches, designed so as to detect and address any racial profiling and other discriminatory practices. In doing so, the authorities should draw inspiration from General Recommendation No. 36 (2020) of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on preventing and combating racial profiling by law enforcement officials.
97. The Parliament (Stortinget) requested the government to amend § 7a of the Norwegian Police Act in order to introduce search zones for gun control and combat gang-related violence. While at the time of the 2025 visit to Norway the police could establish temporary search zones, the proposed amendments would provide police officers with far broader discretionary stop-and-search powers without prior suspicion or reasonable grounds. ECRI shares the concerns expressed by the Equality and Anti-discrimination Ombud according to which these proposed amendments would lead to an even greater risk of racial profiling and other forms of discrimination. Against this background, it notes with great interest that the National Police Directorate considered the existing legal framework as sufficient. ECRI strongly encourages the authorities to review draft and existing

⁹⁶ See the publication by Save the Children and the Anti-racism Centre (2023), [Første gang jeg ble stoppet av politiet var jeg bare 12 år - En kartlegging av hvordan ungdommer og unge voksne med minoritetsbakgrunn opplever politiet og hvordan negative møter med politiet påvirker deres psykiske helse](#), p. 6.

⁹⁷ See [Hjem | OMOD - Organisasjonen Mot Offentlig Diskriminering](#).

⁹⁸ [Hjem - Minotenk](#) (in Norwegian language).

⁹⁹ See Norwegian Association of Lawyers, [English | Juristforbundet](#)

¹⁰⁰ See the legislation against conversion therapies at Politiet (2023, January 1), [hePolitikontroller i et diskrimineringsperspektiv](#).

¹⁰¹ The solution for producing receipts within the framework of the pilot scheme was a receipt pad with a pass-through sheet where the person being checked received one copy and the police another. The police officers filled in the time and place of the ID check, the name and date of birth of the person being checked, as well as their own service number and the legal basis for the check. The part of the receipt retained by the police also contained a field for noting a brief description of the situation. The information from the paper receipt was subsequently logged in a digital register.

¹⁰² See Oslo Economics (2023), [Evaluering av pilot med kvitteringsordning ved personkontroll](#), for an evaluation of the receipt scheme.

laws pertaining to gun control and gang-related violence to ensure that these do not discriminate directly or indirectly against groups of concern to ECRI and, where necessary, take appropriate action at legislative level.

B. Access to justice in non-criminal discrimination cases

98. The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Tribunal (EADT), which reportedly had insufficient resources compared with its workload in the past, was also criticised for not reviewing discrimination cases as thoroughly as it should. The EADT budgetary resources have increased in recent years.¹⁰³ However, the EADT still appears to struggle with the workload. The average case processing time was 13.3 months in January 2026,¹⁰⁴ and there were 817 pending cases at the time of ECRI's 2025 visit.
99. As regards accessibility, ECRI notes that complaints forms are available online. Complaints can be submitted in Norwegian or in English. Complainants are allowed to engage a lawyer to represent them.
100. Decisions by the EADT may be challenged in civil courts. Taking a case to court is generally costly. In Norway, the provision of legal aid¹⁰⁵ is governed by the Legal Aid Act, which was amended in 2025,¹⁰⁶ as was its accompanying Legal Aid Regulation.¹⁰⁷ The Legal Aid Act contains general exemption clauses (§11 and §16) in theory allowing for discretionary legal aid, including representation, in exceptional circumstances, irrespective of the type of case. However, it is still means-tested, unless it has been recommended by the Parliamentary Ombud when it concerns cases with public sector institutions as defendants.¹⁰⁸ In theory, §11 and §16 could also apply to proceedings before EADT. ECRI learned however that, in practice, they do not. The exemption provision is applied at a very high threshold.
101. Taking a case to the EADT is free of charge, but a victim of discrimination taking a case to civil court risks having to cover the defendant's legal costs, which can be quite significant, if they lose the case.
102. In its fifth report, ECRI considered that the authorities should take action to give the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud and the EADT the power to recommend cases to court free of charge so that victims do not have to pay court fees and get their legal representation free of charge. In its subsequent conclusions, ECRI noted that the law could be interpreted in such a way that the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud has such a power but regretted that it was not introduced more explicitly in law and that the Ombud was not provided with dedicated human and financial resources to exercise such a prerogative. As regards the EADT, ECRI's recommendation was eventually not accepted.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰³ According to the information made available to ECRI, the budget of the EADT was 15,37 million NOK compared with 32, 276 million NOK (about 2, 64 million Euros) for 2026.

¹⁰⁴ As of 5 January 2026, as indicated on the [website of the tribunal](#).

¹⁰⁵ The system distinguishes between two main categories of legal aid, namely free legal advice (*fritt rettsråd*) in civil or administrative matters that meet both financial and substantive criteria; free legal representation (*fri sakførsel*), covering representation before courts or administrative tribunals, granted either by the court handling the case or by the County Governor. Eligibility for both forms of legal aid is generally means-tested, based on the applicant's income and assets (although some cases automatically qualify). The regulation also sets rules on co-payments (*egenandel*), documentation requirements, and the processing of applications. With the 2025 reform of the Legal Aid and its accompanying Regulation, a new and more holistic model for assessing financial eligibility for legal aid is applied. The assessment is based on overall ability to pay, taking into account income, assets, and deductions for children. As a result, substantially more people than before are now formally eligible for legal aid. However, very few are in practice because thresholds for maximum income remain low.

¹⁰⁶ The act is available [here](#).

¹⁰⁷ The regulation is available [here](#).

¹⁰⁸ These provisions allow the Parliamentary Ombud to recommend that a private party initiate legal proceedings and have the case tried before a civil court, in which case the person concerned would be granted free legal aid. However, this provision does not apply to recommendations to lodge a complaint with the Anti-Discrimination Tribunal.

¹⁰⁹ See ECRI (2018), [Conclusions on the implementation of the recommendations in respect of Norway subject to interim follow-up](#).

103. ECRI is not the only monitoring body to express misgivings about the effectiveness of remedies for victims of discrimination. For example, in 2019, the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination recommended to undertake public education campaigns on how to file complaints of racial discrimination to ensure access to judicial remedies.¹¹⁰ In a 2024 report on Norway, the UN Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent considered that there were systemic barriers to accessing justice, pursuing judicial procedures and obtaining tangible and fair outcomes in discrimination cases. The Working Group noted that the mandate and real impact of the EADT was constrained by, among other things, the lack of a comprehensive remedial and enforcement mandate, the lack of victim support for legal representation or legal aid, the high threshold of the EADT for pursuing cases and the fact that resources available to the Tribunal were not commensurate with its national mandate, limiting its ability to adjudicate matters expeditiously.¹¹¹
104. ECRI recommends that the Norwegian authorities take concrete measures to ensure effective access to justice for people who complain of racial or other forms of discrimination by developing a system by which they do not have to bear the costs for legal representation in the EADT or court and administrative fees in the context of court proceedings, especially in cases of structural discrimination and strategic litigation, taking due account of ECRI's General Policy Recommendation No. 2 on equality bodies to combat racism and intolerance at the national level.

¹¹⁰ UN, Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) (2019), [Concluding observations on the combined twenty-third and twenty-fourth periodic reports of Norway](#), p. 2, § 10.

¹¹¹ UN [WGEPAD \(2024\)](#): 26.

INTERIM FOLLOW-UP RECOMMENDATIONS

The two specific recommendations for which ECRI requests priority implementation from the authorities of Norway are the following:

- (§55) ECRI recommends that the authorities strengthen the capacity of the educational system to promote a culture of living together among pupils and to deal with sensitive societal issues related to, inter alia, racism, including antisemitism and anti-Muslim racism, and intolerance towards LGBTI persons, by providing teachers and school principals with compulsory and practical training, together with appropriate support material, to help them to create a racism-free and inclusive climate in diverse school environments.
- (§66) ECRI recommends that the authorities develop and adopt a national strategy for equality and inclusion in healthcare, in consultation with representatives of groups of concern to ECRI, relevant civil society organisations and equality bodies. The strategy should aim at identifying and addressing structural barriers to access of groups of concern to ECRI in healthcare and disparities in health outcomes affecting them, set out clear objectives, targeted measures where necessary, ensure effective coordination among relevant authorities and foresee appropriate budgetary resources. In doing so, due account should be taken of General Recommendation No. 37 of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on equality and freedom from racial discrimination in the enjoyment of the right to health.

These recommendations should be implemented within 18 months after the publication of the report. A process of interim follow-up will subsequently be conducted by ECRI to review action taken to implement them.

LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The position of the recommendations in the text of the report is shown in parentheses.

1. (§ 19) ECRI recommends that the Norwegian authorities ensure an adequate criminal response to hate crime, including hate speech of a criminal nature, from police and prosecution services, having regard to its impact on individuals and groups of concern to ECRI, by i) giving the highest priority to the effective prosecution of racist, anti-LGBTI and other forms of hate crimes and ii) pursuing regular trust-building engagement with groups of concern to ECRI, in particular LGBTI persons and Roma and Romani/Tater communities throughout the country, in order to address underreporting. In doing so, the authorities should take due account of the Committee of Ministers' Recommendation CM/Rec(2024)4 on combating hate crime.
2. (§ 24) ECRI recommends that the Government give high priority to countering antigypsyism and, in close consultation with people belonging to the communities concerned, the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud and relevant civil society actors, develop and adopt a national action plan on preventing and combating hate against Roma and Romani people/Tater. In doing so, the authorities should take due account of the Action Plan against Racism and Discrimination 2024–2027 and ECRI's General Policy Recommendation No. 13 on combating antigypsyism and discrimination against Roma. If necessary, Council of Europe support should be sought.
3. (§ 36) ECRI recommends that the authorities revise and adopt appropriate guidance for teachers and other educational professionals concerning cultural, religious and ethnic diversity with a view to underpinning equality and human rights in school education. In particular, emphasis should be placed on a consistent and meaningful representation of people of African descent in school curricula, and in this context making the best use of the Second International Decade for People of African Descent (2025-2034) proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly as a positive tool to review to address any stereotypes and prejudices in schools in relation to Africa, Africans and persons, including pupils, of African descent.
4. (§ 46) ECRI recommends that the Norwegian authorities establish an effective, nationwide, monitoring mechanism that ensures consistent and mandatory reporting, recording, and follow-up of bullying incidents in schools, with particular attention being paid to racist and anti-LGBTI bullying cases, including online.
5. (§ 55) ECRI recommends, as a matter of priority, that the authorities strengthen the capacity of the educational system to promote a culture of living together among pupils and to deal with sensitive societal issues related to, inter alia, racism, including antisemitism and anti-Muslim racism, and intolerance towards LGBTI persons, by providing teachers and school principals with compulsory and practical training, together with appropriate support material, to help them to create a racism-free and inclusive climate in diverse school environments.
6. (§ 66) ECRI recommends that the authorities, as a matter of priority, develop and adopt a national strategy for equality and inclusion in healthcare, in consultation with representatives of groups of concern to ECRI, relevant civil society organisations and equality bodies. The strategy should aim at identifying and addressing structural barriers to access of groups of concern to ECRI in healthcare and disparities in health outcomes affecting them, set out clear objectives, targeted measures where necessary, ensure effective coordination among relevant authorities and foresee appropriate budgetary resources. In doing so, due account should be taken of General Recommendation No. 37 of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on equality and freedom from racial discrimination in the enjoyment of the right to health.

7. (§ 69) ECRI recommends that the authorities encourage and support the development of anti-racism, anti-discrimination and cultural competency training for healthcare professionals, including through associations of health professionals, the inclusion of human rights education as a mandatory course in the curricula of medical schools and the provision of in-service training on inter-cultural health, discrimination-related health issues, racism and exclusion, taking due account of General Recommendation No. 37 of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on equality and freedom from racial discrimination in the enjoyment of the right to health.
8. (§ 83) ECRI recommends that the authorities ensure that all transgender persons, including those with non-binary gender identities, have as far as possible safe, affordable, and timely access to necessary gender-affirming treatments, taking due consideration of its General Policy Recommendation No. 17 on preventing and combating intolerance and discrimination against LGBTI persons. Against this background, the authorities should review the treatment model for transgender persons and ensure that eligibility criteria and access pathways are fully consistent with the national guidelines on gender incongruence.
9. (§ 86) ECRI recommends that the authorities prepare and bring to Parliament a comprehensive bill that expressly acknowledges the right of intersex persons to bodily integrity and prohibits the performance of medically unnecessary surgeries and other non-therapeutic treatments until such time as the intersex child is able to participate in decisions, based on the principle of free and informed consent. The preparation of such legislation should include consultations with relevant experts and health care professionals, intersex children and their parents or guardians, and take due account of the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers' Recommendation CM/Rec(2025)7 on equal rights for intersex persons, as well as of ECRI's General Policy Recommendation No. 17 on preventing and combating intolerance and discrimination against LGBTI persons.
10. (§ 90) ECRI recommends that the authorities take firm action to prevent and combat antigypsyism and discrimination against Roma in policing by: i) adopting a clear policy of zero tolerance towards antigypsyism and anti-Roma discrimination within the police and ii) establishing an independent commission tasked with examining the legal framework, safeguards and practices governing police surveillance, data collection and investigative activities affecting the Roma community, with a view to ensuring full compliance with international and European standards. In doing so, due account should be taken of ECRI's General Policy Recommendations No. 11 and No. 13, as well as General Recommendation No. 36 (2020) of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on preventing and combating racial profiling by law enforcement officials.
11. (§ 96) ECRI recommends that the authorities introduce an effective nationwide system for the systematic recording of police identity checks and other relevant law enforcement measures, such as traffic stops and border searches, designed so as to detect and address any racial profiling and other discriminatory practices. In doing so, the authorities should draw inspiration from General Recommendation No. 36 (2020) of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on preventing and combating racial profiling by law enforcement officials.

12. (§ 104) ECRI recommends that the Norwegian authorities take concrete measures to ensure effective access to justice for people who complain of racial or other forms of discrimination by developing a system by which they do not have to bear the costs for legal representation in the EADT or court and administrative fees in the context of court proceedings, especially in cases of structural discrimination and strategic litigation, taking due account of ECRI's General Policy Recommendation No. 2 on equality bodies to combat racism and intolerance at the national level.

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APPENDIX: GOVERNMENT'S VIEWPOINT

The following appendix does not form part of ECRI's analysis and proposals concerning the situation in Norway

ECRI, in accordance with its country-by-country procedure, engaged into confidential dialogue with the authorities of Norway on a first draft of the report. A number of the authorities' comments were taken on board and integrated into the report's final version (which, in line with ECRI's standard practice, could only take into account developments up until 18 March 2026, date of the examination of the first draft).

The authorities also requested that the following viewpoint be reproduced as an appendix to the report.

The Ministry of Education and Research takes note of ECRI's recommendations number 36 and 55 and shares the view that schools play a central role in combating racism, discrimination and intolerance.

At the same time, we would like to underline that this is already a core element of Norwegian education. The core curriculum emphasises values such as democracy, equality, inclusion and respect for diversity as fundamental to all education. Efforts to address racism, including antisemitism and anti-Muslim racism, as well as respect for LGBTI persons, are embedded within this overall value framework and are followed up through the curriculum renewal and everyday school practice.

Schools' work to ensure safe and inclusive environments is also anchored in legislation governing the right to a safe and good school environment. Teachers and school leaders are required to actively prevent and address violations and to foster an inclusive learning environment.

Furthermore, a wide range of national initiatives, professional development measures and support schemes are in place for teachers and school leaders, including in-service training, guidance resources and cooperation with relevant expert bodies. These measures support educators in handling sensitive issues and in promoting diversity, inclusion and democratic understanding.

The Ministry of Education and Research remains committed to further developing this work in line with societal developments and will continue to strengthen the knowledge base and support provided to the sector where needed.

The Ministry of Education and Research would like to clarify the following with regard to paragraph 45: Some clarifications may help to ensure a more precise presentation of the enforcement scheme: Not all cases handled under this scheme concern racism or other forms of bullying. Rather, the cases cover a broad range of issues related to students' school environment, including situations where students experience a lack of safety that may not necessarily constitute bullying or discrimination. It may therefore be helpful to reflect this broader scope in the description.

With regard to trends over time, final annual figures for 2025 are not yet available. Preliminary data may suggest a possible levelling off or slight decline in recent years; however, it would be advisable to present this with appropriate caution until complete and quality-assured data are available.

The Ministry of Education and Research also refers to the information submitted to ECRI via the Ministry of Culture and Equality in earlier rounds.

The Ministry of Justice and Public Security makes reference to paragraph 90, where ECRI recommends:

“that the authorities take firm action to prevent and combat antigypsyism and discrimination against Roma in policing by: i) adopting a clear policy of zero tolerance towards antigypsyism and anti-Roma discrimination within the police and ii) establishing an independent commission tasked with examining the legal framework, safeguards and practices governing police surveillance, data collection and investigative activities affecting the Roma community, with a view to ensuring full compliance with international and European standards. In doing so, due account should be taken of ECRI's General Policy Recommendations No. 11 and No. 13, as well as General Recommendation No. 36 (2020) of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on preventing and combating racial profiling by law enforcement officials.”

It follows from our discussions with the delegation about the wording and measures in the action plan "Diversity, dialogue and trust (2022-2027)", as well as other measures taken by the police, that there already exists a clear policy of zero tolerance towards antigypsyism and anti-Roma discrimination within the police.

The report mentions that it emerged from the ECRI delegation's findings during the visit to Norway that there was a significant trust deficit, among Roma in the police and other

criminal justice actors. However, the report does not point to any specific examples of negative police behavior, or give any other explanation of reasons for this situation.

We therefore see no justification for the recommendation.

Likewise, it is difficult to see that the information provided about the recording carried out as part of a criminal investigation, is a reasonable cause for establishing an independent commission with the suggested broad mandate.

The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) is a unique human rights body that monitors Council of Europe member states' action against racism, intolerance and discrimination on grounds of "race", colour, language, religion, citizenship, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics.

ECRI was set up by the first Summit of Heads of State and Government of the member states of the Council of Europe in 1993 and became operational in 1994.

ECRI is composed of 46 members appointed on the basis of their independence, impartiality, moral authority and expertise in dealing with issues of racism, intolerance and related discrimination. Each Council of Europe member state appoints one person to serve as a member of ECRI.

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The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 46 member states, including all members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.