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The Norwegian Ombudsperson for Children’s supplementary report to Norway’s seventh periodic report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child – 1st of Dec 2024

PART 1 NEW DEVELOPMENTS

Challenges in the Norwegian welfare system (QPR* 2c)

Exclusion among children and young people is a significant national challenge. It can have profound negative consequences for the individual child, moreover, substantial social and economic cost for society. In 2023, 10% of young people under 30 were not in education, employment, or training (NEET).¹ For many, this situation is linked to physical and mental health problems, socioeconomic challenges, disabilities or school dropout. Exclusion must be prevented by securing accessible and high-quality services to meet the needs of children. This includes prioritising access to early childhood education, schools, and health services.

Children’s services will face increasing pressure in the years ahead. Population decline, an aging population and a shrinking workforce will reduce tax revenues, increase expenditure on benefits and greater pressure on welfare services. The challenges faced by municipalities in meeting their statutory requirements will intensify, particularly in small and remote municipalities.² Some scenarios show many services could “collapse completely” unless measures are implemented to reduce the need for labour.³

These challenges underscore the importance of a rights-based approach by the authorities moving forward. It is essential that the general measures of implementation be further developed and prioritised in national governance. We trust that many municipalities will prioritise services for children, but we also recognise that children’s rights are not adequately implemented, especially those of children in vulnerable and marginalized situations. Going forward, it will be crucial to prioritise in a way that prevents growing disparities in the provision of services for children.

PART II RIGHTS UNDER THE CONVENTION

A. General measures of implementation

Legislation

The best interest of the child in legislation and legislative work (QPR 4a and b)

Major differences exist in how children’s rights are incorporated and implemented in different sectors. The best interest of the child and the child’s right to be heard are incorporated in the Education Act, Child Welfare Act and Immigration Act, which gives the rights a stronger position and secure better implementation.

The best interests of the child and the child’s right to be heard should be incorporated into all regulations that are important to children, e.g. the laws governing the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (Nav), health legislation and the new Public Administration Act.

Most civil servants who handle cases concerning children are not lawyers. Health personnel or Nav employees for instance, will not know about children’s rights unless these are specified in their respective sector laws.

* CRC/C/NOR/QPR/7

The best interest of the child is also important in developments of new laws. In our work we rarely see Child Rights Impact Assessments. The Norwegian Parliamentary Ombud has also criticised the State for not considering consequences for children in the law-making process.⁴ Insufficient assessments of impact on children makes it impossible to consider and decide what is in children's best interest.

We recommend that Norway:

- incorporate the best interests of the child and the child's right to be heard in a number of laws, including the laws governing Nav, health legislation, and the new Public Administration Act
- ensure that the best interests of the child are considered in development of all new regulations

Optional Protocol on a communications procedure (QPR 4d)

Ratification was rejected again in 2022 by Parliament, based on arguments about limiting the State's margin of appreciation, that the Committee would issue wide-ranging statements and that the provisions are discretionary in nature. Civil society made clear they don't agree. The best interest of the child was not part of the consideration.

We recommend that Norway:

- ratify the Third Optional Protocol. Alternatively, undertake new investigations where the best interests of children are a primary consideration

Comprehensive policy, strategy and coordination

Disparities in local government service provision (QPR 5a)

"The principle of generalist municipalities" entails that all municipalities have the same responsibilities, regardless of factors such as location, size and finances. Norway has 357 municipalities, of which 49% have fewer than 5,000 inhabitants. Municipal autonomy is strong.⁵

The quality of help provided by services for children varies greatly. Municipalities are being assigned more responsibilities, parallel with children's needs becoming more complex. A commission report on the generalist municipalities system⁶ concluded that compliance with the law varies greatly and that no municipalities meet all their statutory requirements. Small and more remote municipalities face the greatest challenges.

The Commission states that the challenges will grow and that further measures are needed if the generalist system is to be maintained. It recommends larger municipalities and more inter-municipal cooperation, and that the State exercises restraint when it comes to expanding municipalities' responsibilities without assessing whether they have the expertise and capacity. The Commission recommends a mechanism to follow-up municipalities facing considerable challenges.

We are concerned that the State will be unable to implement the necessary measures. If so, the State must consider transferring responsibility for some tasks to larger municipalities or the national level.

Clear guidelines can prevent undesirable variations. In our experience, ambiguous legislation fails to provide services with the necessary guidance, and we see failures in services without adequate control.

We recommend that Norway:

- closely monitor and address the challenges within the municipal system, and increase efforts to eliminate regional disparities
- develop a strategy to ensure that municipal responsibilities are proportionate to their capacity and establish a mechanism to follow-up municipalities facing considerable challenges
- ensure that municipalities' responsibilities are accompanied by clear guidelines

Cooperation between services (QPR 5b)

Cooperation including establishing statutory duties for cooperation.⁷ It is crucial that the State ensures effective implementation between services remain a significant challenge.⁸ The State has implemented measures,

Preliminary evaluations of the legislative amendments suggest that other factors are hindering collaboration, such as inadequate resources and capacity, and practical issues such as a lack of meeting places, attitudes, structural barriers and unclear responsibilities.⁹

Young people report that they are not able to participate in the collaboration that concerns them. They recommend that the right to participate in the collaboration be made clearer in the legislation, that the authorities create systems for sharing information, and provide services with tools for children's participation. They also recommend that children be given a support person who can coordinate and ensure their participation.¹⁰

We recommend that Norway:

- increase efforts improve cooperation between services
- follow up the evaluation of the duties to cooperate with appropriate measures
- investigate whether children are able to participate and implement necessary measures

Allocation of resources (QPR 6a-d, 36)

Many children's services report insufficient staffing and capacity.¹¹ Budgetary needs for children are not adequately assessed before policies and reforms are introduced.

The State has increased municipalities' block transfers, rather than strengthening the individual services. However, earmarked funds may be more effective. The long-standing resource shortages in many services indicates that children's services are not sufficiently prioritised.

Stricter municipal finances in the future will increase pressure on municipal priorities. It is essential that the State gathers information on the budget needs for children and to a greater extent considers the best interests of the child in budgeting.

We recommend that Norway:

- assess the best interests of the child in public budgeting, including obtaining an overview of service capacity and the resources required to uphold children's rights
- significantly strengthen efforts to ensure that services are allocated the necessary funds to meet its obligations

- allocate earmarked funds to local services facing capacity challenges

Data collection (QPR 7a-b)

There is limited availability of indicators and data to assess whether children's needs and rights are met. A commission tasked with evaluating municipalities' compliance with the law faced significant challenges surveying this. They found little statistical data, and it was difficult to operationalise what is required to fulfil legal obligations. As a result, the commission was only able to gather knowledge on specific areas, and to a limited extent regarding whether children receive services of good quality.¹²

For example, there are few legal indicators on the quality and outcomes of education. Regarding children's right to healthcare, the commission noted that it is "*demanding, if not impossible*" to measure whether municipalities meet the requirements of health legislation, and many indicators were excluded due to poor data quality.¹³

Legal requirements, indicators of compliance, and reporting standards must be designed in a way that helps to ensure that services are measured based on the quality and results of their services. Quality indicators should be developed, supplemented by the collection of data, including from children.

We recommend that Norway:

- develop indicators and reporting systems across sectors
- systematise data on the fulfilment of children's rights

Independent monitoring

National complaint mechanisms (QPR 8a and b)

Children lack effective complaint mechanisms. They lack legal capacity and are often dependent on their parents or guardians. The complaint mechanisms are not child-friendly, and there is a significant need for information and legal aid.

Since the State has chosen not to provide a complaints procedure through the Children's Ombudsperson or the National Institution for Human Rights (NIM), existing complaint mechanisms must be made more child-friendly. The Parliament has instructed the state to investigate this. In our view, the government's follow-up has been insufficient.

We recommend that Norway:

- strengthen children's legal capacity and access to child-friendly legal aid
- ensure children's access to effective and child-friendly complaint mechanisms

Dissemination, awareness-raising and training (QPR 9a-b)

Surveys conducted by the NHRI show that there is variability in the extent to which municipal employees are familiar with children's rights and whether they actively apply them.¹⁴ There remains a need for public professionals to receive increased knowledge about children's rights.

We recommend that Norway:

- strengthen training of all professional groups working with and for children

- ensure increased knowledge of children’s rights within policymaking bodies and municipal administration

B. General principles

Non-discrimination (QPR 11)

Surveys show that children experience discrimination based on their ethnicity, sexual orientation and/or disability.¹⁵ In a 2023 survey, almost half of the respondents said they had experienced racist statements in the past year.¹⁶ National minorities also report a higher degree of hate speech than the rest of the population.¹⁷ Children say they find it challenging and pointless to report instances of racism and discrimination. They want students and teachers to receive more training in schools, as well as information about whistleblowing options.

We recommend that Norway:

- strengthen anti-discrimination efforts and secures participation from children

Best interests of the child (QPR 12b)

In our experience, official investigations, assessments and studies rarely consider impacts on children (Child Rights Impact Assessment). This results in insufficient information when trying to consider the best interest of the child.

The obligation to secure the best interests of the child and children’s right to be heard have recently been included in the guidelines to The Instructions for Official Studies and Reports.¹⁸ If the State ensures proper implementation, this will strengthen children's rights considerably. There is a need for similar tools at local and regional level.

We recommend that Norway:

- include the best interests of the child and the child's right to be heard in all relevant assignment documents, allocation letters and mandates
- ensure comprehensive training and guidance, and encourages the use of these guidelines on local, regional and national level
- monitor how the new guidelines are implemented, identifies challenges and secure updated guidance

Respect for the views of the child (QPR 13b, c and e)

Children’s participation is limited in the work of the authorities. This is due to inadequate attention to the obligation and importance of children's voices, combined with lack of resources and methodological knowledge. Often the framework for investigations lack tools, expertise, time and resources necessary to ensure participation. It is of paramount importance to establish a national resource centre which can provide guidance and collect and disseminate data on participation.

We recommend that Norway:

- develop strategies and action plans on child participation in all government bodies
- instruct all ministries to establish structures for child participation in their work

- establish a national resource centre for child participation that can collect data and ensure expertise and guidance on participation, both nationally and locally

C. Civil rights and freedoms

Right to privacy and appropriate information

Children in the digital environment (QPR 15c)

Children in Norway top European statistics with an average of 3.6 hours of daily internet use.¹⁹ The majority have access to internet, and much of their lives take place online. 93% of 9–11-year-olds have a mobile phone. By the age of 12–14, nearly all children have a mobile, and 90% of 9–18-year-olds use one or more forms of social media.²⁰

There is significant cause for concern regarding the impact of screen time on children’s development, and how it affects their need for free play, physical activity, rest and security. Children are also exposed to bullying, send and receive nudes, and view harmful content online. They are at risk of becoming victims of abuse or engaging in criminal behaviour themselves, by producing and sharing illicit material.

There is a need for further research into how digital media affect various stages of children’s lives and to ensure well-informed policies.²¹ Current research is fragmented, short-term and under-prioritized. This may result in policies that are neither evidence-based nor effective. An interdisciplinary research environment could provide the necessary knowledge and guidance.

Digital platforms remain largely unregulated by law, and there is lack of mechanisms to protect children. Improved regulations and national guidelines should be developed to protect children online.

We recommend that Norway:

- establish an interdisciplinary research centre on children and digital media
- provide recommendations on screen use and establishes a support service for children’s digital lives
- ensure that the law protects children from the harmful effects of screen use and implement effective enforcement mechanisms

The right to privacy (QPR 15a)

Children have limited awareness of how to protect their privacy.²² Young people report feeling uncomfortable about being digitally monitored, but feel they have no choice but to consent to the collection of personal data.²³

Digital learning tools in schools often fail to safeguard children’s privacy.²⁴ The Norwegian Data Protection Authority has stated that municipalities must ensure better protection of students’ privacy.²⁵

Digital competence is included in school curriculum and the national framework plan for early childhood education. However, privacy is not taught as a basic human right.²⁶

The digitalisation of schools has progressed rapidly, without sufficient assessments or measures being taken to ensure the protection of students’ privacy. Norway lacks a comprehensive national privacy policy to protect children's rights.

We recommend that Norway:

- develop a national privacy policy to protect children's rights
- develop a data protection standard for early childhood and schools, including guidelines to strengthen education on privacy

Consumer protection (QPR 15b)

Children are vulnerable consumers and an attractive target for marketing. They are particularly susceptible to harmful content because marketing directed at them is overwhelming, relies on surveillance and is often covert.

The commercial and body-image pressures on social media are massive and tailored to individuals.²⁷ Around half of 13–18-year-olds have received advertisement for weight loss or muscle-building products.²⁸ Young people report receiving ads related to body modification.²⁹

The existing consumer protection regulations are outdated, fragmented and lack clear distribution of responsibility. Regulatory authorities are spread across various sectors, each with different practices and tools. The industry's self-regulatory schemes differ from the legislation on consumer protection and have limited mandates and enforcement powers.

It is positive that the State has enacted a ban on the marketing of unhealthy food and beverages aimed at children. Oversight and sanctions could set a positive precedent for other forms of marketing targeting children.

We recommend that Norway:

- ensure that children receive real consumer protection that addresses the rapid developments in the field
- implement the necessary legislative amendments to protect children's consumer rights
- ensure proper implementation of the ban on marketing unhealthy food and beverages to children

D. Violence against children

Torture, inhuman or degrading treatment (QPR 16)

There is insufficient knowledge about coercion and force by public officials against children and how children are affected by it.

Our work, supervisory reports and testimonies from children show that some children are exposed to severe physical force in various settings: schools, child welfare institutions, services for children with disabilities, mental health care, police and prisons. No overall statistics exist, although various inspections indicate thousands of incidents each year.

It is difficult to comprehend what children experience. The legislation and room for discretion varies for each sector. Expertise among staff, documentation and control will be different. Authority, autonomy and practice among complaint mechanisms varies widely. Overall, there are major challenges concerning children's right to be heard.

It is crucial that the authorities have a clear overview of the extent and practices of physical force and how it affects children. The State must ensure that children are not subjected to disproportionate use of force.

We recommend that Norway:

- conduct a comprehensive assessment of the extent of physical force, regulations, room for discretion, service provider expertise, degree of participation, documentation, oversight and complaint mechanisms, and follow up with concrete, binding measures
- initiate research on the consequences for children of being subjected to physical force
- ensure that children are informants in these processes

Violence and sexual abuse

Prevention (QPR 17b and f)

Thousands of children are victims of violence and abuse. About 20% of children experience physical violence, same for psychological violence, 5% serious physical violence, and around 6% sexual abuse.³⁰

A government appointed commission on rape describes a serious situation. Among youth aged 16-19, 10% responded being raped in 2022. This abuse often occurs between people who know each other.³¹ The scale of sexual violence has increased significantly, for both girls and boys. The number of victims doubled from 2015 to 2023.³² The development may indicate that many young people lack competence about relationships, sexuality and boundaries. The commission on rape is concerned about what effect the use of digital media has on attitudes towards women and sexual culture.

An important preventive measure is that children receive good education about their bodies, sexuality and boundaries. It is included in the curricula for schools and kindergartens, however, the education children receive remains inconsistent. 7 out of 10 students want more education on sexuality.³³ Stronger measures are required.

We recommend that Norway:

- do everything in its power to prevent violence and sexual abuse against children
- increase its efforts to give sexuality education for children higher priority

Follow-up (QPR 17c)

Many children who have experienced violence or abuse need rehabilitation and follow-up, often from multiple services such as schools/kindergartens, health services, child welfare, habilitation services and Nav. Coordination is essential, however, the responsibility for follow-up is not assigned to a single service.³⁴ This makes help for children ineffective.³⁵

We recommend that Norway:

- regulate by law that one sector has overall responsibility for support and follow-up of children exposed to violence or abuse, and that this service shall involve and coordinate other support services

Children's houses (QPR 17d)

On a national level, the expertise and resources for children exposed to violence and abuse are channelled through the children's houses.³⁶ They have a mandate to conduct police interrogations and follow-up measures. Evaluations show that the criminal procedure tends to

dominate, due to children's houses being organized under the police. This development should be adjusted to meet the needs of children.

Access to the children's houses require a police report and investigations by the police, while children and families who don't report are excluded. Participation with children shows that the criminal case is rarely what is important to them, what they want is to get help.³⁷

We recommend that Norway:

- ensure that the services provided by children's houses are based on the needs of children, and safeguard the children's rights in the best possible way
- eliminate the requirement of police report to receive help from the children's houses

E. Family environment and alternative care

Family environment and children's right to contact with both parents (QPR 19)

Children may be refused contact with a parent for different reasons; if a parent is expelled from Norway, being incarcerated or due to parental conflict or separation. There is a lack of knowledge about the extent and causes.

The rules governing deportation and contact with an incarcerated parent are strict and can heavily restrict children's rights to regular contact. Annually, around 24,000 children experience their parents separating.³⁸ Interrupted contact is often due to long-lasting, high levels of conflict between parents. This can adversely impact the child's health and development.³⁹ The number of cases in which contact is interrupted is growing. Many disputes go to trial. In 2023, these accounted for 21% of all cases in district courts.⁴⁰

Children have limited opportunities to express their views on these matters. They lack legal capacity and are often prevented from exercising their rights. Children recommend that all children should have their own session with the family counselling services during mediation, and a follow-up appointment to talk about place of residence and contact.⁴¹

Implemented measures are not sufficiently effective. We question whether the measures are child-sensitive, moreover, how parental conflict affects children's ability to express their views freely.

We recommend that Norway:

- obtain an overview of children involuntary not in contact with both parents, amounts and reasons
- implement measures that prevent long-term conflicts between parents
- ensure children's rights are safeguarded in cases of expulsion, imprisonment and parental separation, and that children are able to express themselves freely

Parental guidance in municipalities (QPR 19a)

Guidance to parents on how they execute their role as caregivers is an important preventative tool for more intrusive child welfare measures, and for safeguarding other rights.⁴²

Municipalities are responsible for these services, and the government's goal is for all municipalities to offer knowledge-based guidance to parents.⁴³ However, this goal has not been met.⁴⁴

The child welfare reform⁴⁵ aims to ensure that various services work together to provide support for children and their families. An evaluation shows that only a few municipalities have made preventive work a higher priority. Moreover, the municipalities have different understandings of what role the child welfare services and other sectors should play.⁴⁶

We recommend that Norway:

- ensure that all municipalities have effective parental guidance measures
- closely monitor the challenges involved in implementing the child welfare reform
- ensure that municipalities have the resources necessary to fulfil their responsibility for preventive work and early intervention

Family coordinator (QPR 19)

The support system for families consists of many services with different areas of responsibility. Children who receive assistance from multiple services say they need a coordinator.⁴⁷ Many municipalities have a “family coordinator” (their liaison with the support system) who coordinates efforts towards the family, considers the family’s needs holistically and prevents the support becoming fragmented. We believe more families should be assigned a coordinator.

We recommend that Norway:

- investigate how more families can be assigned family coordinators

Child welfare services

Norway has a child welfare service that provides good support for families and ensure children are protected and well cared for. Many people who receive assistance from the child welfare services are satisfied with the help they receive.⁴⁸ The majority of children who receive help are provided with support measures in the family (72% in 2022).⁴⁹ Some parents are in such difficult situations that it is hard for them to benefit from the help they receive. This can be due to financial difficulties, housing situations, unemployment, mental illness or substance abuse.

Best interests of the child in decisions from child welfare services (QPR 20a)

The rulings by the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) against Norway criticize Norway’s failure to make adequate individual assessments when determining contact arrangements and insufficient justifications, not the care order itself.⁵⁰ Norway has adjusted its approach following the rulings. The ECtHR rulings concern violations of parents' rights. There are, however, signs that practice may have shifted too far in the opposite direction. We are concerned that we now see a tendency for parents' rights to outweigh the best interests of the child.

This concern is due to drastic changes in recent years:⁵¹

- decrease in care orders from 926 to 548 between 2017-2022
- 25% decrease in support measures between 2017-2022
- increase in prescribed contact
- more children being returned to their biological parents
- significant reduction in adoptions pursuant to the Child Welfare Act

It is difficult to see changes in society or other services that can explain these changes in children's need for assistance from the child welfare services. We fear that not all children are having their right to protection and care fulfilled.

It appears that the ECHR judgments may have resulted in a general increase in contact, where not all decisions are based on assessing the best interests of the child.⁵² These findings are confirmed by our interviews with children, foster parents and child welfare services.⁵³ Some children feel forced into contact and report continued and increasing contact contrary to their wishes. In the Foster Home Survey 2024, 22.6% of the children reported they experienced being physically forced or pressured into contact with a biological parent.⁵⁴

We recommend that Norway:

- collect data on the reasons behind the drastic changes in measures by the child welfare services
- if needed, implement measures that adjust practices in line with the best interests of the child
- introduce legislation that allows children to request the suspension of contact and ensures that no child can be forced to contact with biological parents

Adequate child welfare services (QPR 20a and b)

There are significant and unwanted variations between municipal child welfare services, and substantial challenges have been identified in their service provision.⁵⁵ The authorization to intervene in strong individual rights must be followed by responsibility to ensure that the practice and measures used are proportional.

To reduce variations between municipalities, the state must set clearer requirements for what municipalities need to have in place for the service to be responsible, including strong professional environments, minimum staffing requirements, and standards for the support measures offered.

Moreover, there are significant variations in the interdisciplinary assessments and appropriate services for children placed in alternative care based on which law that regulates the placement.

We recommend that Norway:

- establish statutory requirements for what is required of local child welfare services
- ensure budget frameworks that enable municipalities to meet these requirements
- ensure equal interdisciplinary assessments and access to appropriate services for all children under alternative care

Foster homes (QPR 20b)

There is a significant shortage of foster homes. Conditions for foster homes affect the recruitment of foster families. Foster parents' limited authority creates challenges in managing children's daily lives. Foster parents should be given greater authorities such as the right to file complaints and a statutory right of access to information related to the child's daycare, education and health.

Many children in foster care never get a decision which finally settles whether they will stay in the foster home or return to their biological parents. This uncertainty can affect their mental health and their relationship with the foster family.⁵⁶ An important measure for clarification

will be if the law requires that the child welfare services, the tribunals and the courts at one point assess the goal of reunification with the biological parents.

Several countries have more permanent foster home solutions designed to ensure stability for the child and their right to family life. In Sweden, long-term care and transfer of parental responsibility can be decided after two years. Norway should introduce a similar solution.

As long as the goal is reunification, the child welfare service has to work systematically with parents to ensure they become capable of caring for the child.

We recommend that Norway:

- further increase efforts to recruit more foster homes and give foster parents greater authorities
- introduce in the child welfare act a provision that require the child welfare services, tribunals and courts to assess the goal of reunification within a specified deadline, and when in the best interest of the child decide on long-term placement and transfer of parental responsibility to the foster parents
- ensure better follow-up of parents who lose care of their children

Child welfare institutions (QPR 20b)

Approximately 1,000 children live in child welfare institutions.⁵⁷ Many struggle with trauma, substance abuse and mental illness. Some become isolated and subjected to coercion.⁵⁸ The lack of services in the healthcare sector means that children do not have adequate access to mental health support. For some, this results in placement in child welfare institutions, which often lack the necessary expertise and personnel.

At the same time, there is also a shortage of places in child welfare institutions. Since 2022, demand has increased, particularly for emergency care, substance abuse and children with complex and extensive needs.⁵⁹

A government-appointed commission has recommended that sectors such as health, education and justice take greater responsibility, increase inpatient psychiatric care, provide more flexible and accessible healthcare in the institutions, and develop a new institutional model.⁶⁰

We recommend that Norway:

- develop a new institutional model that better meets children's needs
- ensure greater capacity and more flexible services in the health sector, to secure the right to necessary healthcare in child welfare institutions

International adoptions (QPR 20c)

Around 20,000 international adoptions to Norway were carried out between 1970 and 2024. The media has exposed illegal acts in connection with international adoptions, such as inadequate documentation of the child's identity, lack of consent, forged documentation, and financial payments.⁶¹

The government has appointed a commission to investigate international adoptions. Pending the report due in 2025, the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir) has twice recommended the temporary suspension of international adoptions.⁶² The

government will not follow this recommendation but will implement measures to mitigate risks. We are concerned that the best interests of the child have not been given due weight in the ministry's deliberations and that additional measures are necessary.

We recommend that Norway:

- highlight how the best interests of the child are assessed in decisions concerning international adoptions
- increase its efforts to safeguard children's rights in international adoptions
- ensure regular inspections of international adoptions, and implements immediate changes if necessary

F. Children with disabilities

Service provision for children with disabilities (QPR 22a)

Children with disabilities face significant challenges in accessing support. Inadequate expertise and resources within services often results in children not receiving adequate support. Barriers to accessing appropriate support are worsened by lack of information, burdensome application processes, and a fragmented service system.⁶³

There are considerable regional disparities in the provision of services.⁶⁴ The Office of the Auditor General's review indicates that these differences may stem from difficulties in interpreting the legal framework, lack of expertise, discretionary conditions, and financial constraints. They emphasize the need to investigate the causes of these disparities and use the findings to develop more equitable service provision.⁶⁵

The lack of coordination between services is a major issue. Families need assistance in navigating a complex support system. The State's framework, which includes individual plans, coordinators and child coordinators is designed to address this problem.⁶⁶ However, evaluations show significant challenges. Only 8% who get individual plans and 14% with a coordinator experience that this has resulted in a better coordinated provision of services.⁶⁷ The Office of the Auditor General has criticised the State for not having adequately addressed the shortcomings of the coordinator scheme.⁶⁸ Preliminary evaluations of the child coordinator service suggest that clarifying and refining the roles of child coordinator and coordinator is important.⁶⁹

We recommend that Norway:

- ensure that children with disabilities have access to equal services, regardless of where they live
- collect data on the causes of disparities in services and implements the necessary corrective measures
- address the shortcomings in the individual plan, coordinator and child coordinator systems effectively

Legal safeguards of residential care for children with disabilities (QPR 20b, 22a and b)

Many children with intellectual disabilities live in a children's home or respite care on a full-time or part-time basis. These institutions provide residential care, where the children are not accompanied by their parents, and the institutions are responsible for the provision of care and health services.⁷⁰

Children in these settings are in a highly vulnerable situation. Disabilities can make it difficult for them to express their needs or alert others if they are not receiving appropriate care. They are at increased risk of violence and abuse, particularly in institutions without adequate management and control.⁷¹

A public commission showed that the rights and safety of children in these institutions are not adequately protected and that the institutions are poorly regulated. It recommended stricter regulation and increased periodic review.⁷² The Norwegian Health Inspectorate detected breaches of the law in 76% of institutions, including lack of management and qualified staff, inadequate habilitation services and staff's inability to use communication aids to communicate with the children.⁷³

The State has not followed up recommendations⁷⁴ for better legal regulation and periodic review. The health-care regulation stipulates no requirements for the frequency of inspections. The follow-up on individual municipalities by the county governor⁷⁵ is insufficient, as it only applies to a limited number of institutions. We are concerned that the lack of oversight is contrary to Art. 25.

The State has set different requirements for these institutions compared to other childcare institutions, such as child welfare institutions. This could result in structural discrimination against children with disabilities.

We recommend that Norway:

- introduce requirements for the number and frequency of periodic review by the county governor
- review and strengthen the regulatory framework to enhance the legal protection of children's rights
- significantly improve efforts to ensure the provision of safe and appropriate health and care services for children in children's homes and respite care institutions

G. Basic health and welfare

Health and healthcare services, mental health and adolescent health

Access to mental health services in specialist health services (QPR 23)

The State's specialist health services provide treatment for children with mental disorders. Referrals and diagnoses are increasing, waiting times are becoming longer, the conditions are becoming more severe and presents itself a younger age.⁷⁶ 7% of children aged 4-14 has a mental disorder.⁷⁷

The organisational and financial framework of the specialist health services do not accommodate for the needs of children.⁷⁸ 60% of outpatient clinics do not have the necessary prerequisites to provide effective treatment for compound and complex illnesses.⁷⁹ This includes, among other, the lack of expertise, flexibility and time to coordinate their service.

Long waiting times can lead to more severe conditions and there are major regional disparities in the treatment provision. This results in children not getting the help they need.⁸⁰

The effort to develop knowledge-based treatment methods are insufficient. In those areas where evidence-based methods exist, they are not sufficiently implemented. Nearly 30% of leaders report using treatment methods with insufficient scientific support.⁸¹

We recommend that Norway:

- ensure equal provision of mental health care and that the specialist health services' organisational and financial framework accommodate for children needs for flexibility
- further develop knowledge-based treatment methods for mental illnesses and ensures that existing knowledge is implemented

Resources for mental health services in municipalities (QPR 23a)

Municipalities are responsible for the treatment of children with mild and moderate mental health issues.⁸² Many municipalities are experiencing high demand and do not have adequate resources. The State does not have sufficiently overview of the capacity and resources municipalities need.⁸³

The State has increased municipalities' block grants. However, an evaluation of a previous mental health escalation plan showed that earmarking funds was successful and an important factor in the funds being used for their intended purpose.⁸⁴

Solid, long-term financial investment is needed in municipal mental health care provision. We are concerned that mental health care for children will not be prioritised if funding is not earmarked.

We recommend that Norway:

- collect data about the capacity and resource needs of municipalities to ensure children receive mental health care
- allocate more and earmarked funding for mental health care for children in municipalities

Access to mental health services in municipalities (QPR 23b and d)

There has been an increase in both self-reported mental health issues among children, and the proportion who have sought health services due to mental health problems.⁸⁵

Municipalities are required to offer mental health services in addition to those provided by local health centres, school nurse and general practitioners.⁸⁶ However, there is significant variation across municipalities, and the law does not clearly define what these services should include.⁸⁷ In 2023, 70% of municipalities reported offering low-threshold services, but the content of these services varies, and many only provide access to a general practitioner or a school nurse.⁸⁸

Municipal psychologists⁸⁹ are not obligated to work with children, and 76% of municipalities report a need for more psychological expertise.⁹⁰

The government plans to examine legal regulation of low-threshold mental health services.⁹¹ In this work, it will be important to collect data on how municipalities organise their services and to ensure that the regulations accommodate for the needs of children. Adolescents report that it is important to have easily accessible and flexible services.⁹²

We recommend that Norway:

- establish statutory requirements for the content of mental health care for children and clarify the responsibilities of municipal psychologists in relation to children
- establish mechanisms for collecting data on how municipalities organise mental health services for children

Mental health support services for children without residence permits and asylum-seeking children (QPR 23c)

Children without legal residence in Norway have the same right to health care services as other children. However, municipalities are not required to assess their need for mental health support, which prevents proper oversight. There is also significant variation in the tools used for assessment, and there is a lack of knowledge on how to identify needs early. As a result, there are inconsistent professional recommendations and measures.⁹³

In one study, unaccompanied asylum-seeking children displayed symptoms indicating a need for assessment or treatment, but none had been referred to specialist health services.⁹⁴ We are concerned that children's needs are not being identified and that they do not have access mental health care.

We recommend that Norway:

- strengthen efforts to assess the mental health needs of children without residence permits and asylum-seeking children
- ensure that children without residence permits and asylum-seeking children have access to mental health care in both municipal and specialist health services

Treatment services for gender incongruence (QPR 23e)

There has been a significant increase in requests for healthcare services from children experiencing gender incongruence.⁹⁵ We are concerned that the available services are insufficiently resourced, leading to inequitable access for children. There is considerable variation in the treatment offerings across the country.⁹⁶

There is an ongoing debate regarding treatment options, with substantial disagreement on the most appropriate approach. This disagreement affects the services provided. The quality of the services needs improvement.⁹⁷ The knowledge base is inadequate, and the long-term effects are not well understood. The current regulatory framework does not establish sufficient standards, creating uncertainty within a field that lacks solid evidence.

We are concerned that disagreements over treatment options is making it more difficult for children to access appropriate care. It is essential to clarify what constitutes safe and appropriate practice, particularly given that the treatment may be irreversible, and children are under rapid development.

We recommend that Norway:

- allocate sufficient resources to ensure that children receive equal provision in municipal and specialist health services
- establish mechanisms for collecting data
- quickly implement measures to ensure that children with gender incongruence receive healthcare services in line with clear national professional standards

Children's right to protection from drugs (QPR 23h)

Recent years there has been an increase in children's use of drugs.⁹⁸ The measures to prevent and treat drug-abuse on municipal and specialist level is not good enough.⁹⁹ Programmes available to children vary greatly and some municipalities have no provision at all.¹⁰⁰

The responsibility to follow up children who use drugs does not belong in any specific sector or service. The result is a division of responsibilities between health services, the police, the child welfare services and schools. In many local communities, the police are the only outreach service. Norway's practice does not align with the principle of considering children with drug-abuse as victims, not as criminals.

We are concerned that the government don't recognize the need to scale up prevention of substance abuse among children and secure access to appropriate health services. Knowledge-based measures need to be developed and implemented to ensure proper support, and to strengthen competence in local services around the country.

We recommend that Norway:

- introduce regulation that give one service overall responsibility for prevention and following up of substance abuse, involving and coordinating other services
- ensure that children with a substance abuse receive good follow-up and appropriate health services

Impact of climate change (QPR 24)

The best interests of the child are not considered in assessment, policies and regulations concerning climate and environmental issues. General Comment No. 26 has not been recognised, or integrated into, the ministries' work.

Children are highly engaged in climate-issues, but report that they are not heard.¹⁰¹ Children say it is hard for them to express their views in the public debate, and some children experience hate speech when they participate in the climate debate. It is difficult to find correct information, and children want to learn more about climate in school.¹⁰²

To assess the best interests of the child and ensure children have access to information, data must be collected and disseminated about the impacts of climate change on children's rights. The government need more knowledge on how children in vulnerable situations are affected, for example Sami children and children with disabilities or health issues.

There are few mechanisms for complaints concerning the right to a healthy environment, and court hearings are often inaccessible to children due to their lack of legal capacity, legal aid and money.

We recommend that Norway:

- ensure that the best interests of the child are considered in all matters related to the climate, environment and biodiversity, and secure participation from children

- conduct studies on what impact climate change, environmental challenges and biodiversity loss will have on the fulfilment of children's rights. The knowledge must be made available to children and young people in ways they can understand.
- ensure children's participation in climate issues and investigate how children can try whether their rights to nature and a healthy climate are violated

Standard of living (QPR 25)

102,600 children (10.6%) grow up in persistent low-income families.¹⁰³ 6 out of 10 of these children have an immigrant background.¹⁰⁴ Targeted measures are needed to ensure that the poorest families have a larger and more predictable disposable income. The increase in child benefit is not sufficient to meet this need.

The labour and welfare administration (Nav) consists of national and municipal services. Municipalities are responsible for social services. Repeated surveys show that children's rights are not being adequately safeguarded by municipal Nav offices.¹⁰⁵ There is a lack of knowledge about how children's rights are safeguarded by Nav at the national level.

In addition to incorporating Article 3 and 12 of the CRC into the special legislation governing Nav, additional measures must be implemented to ensure that Nav staff have the necessary competence to implement children's rights in their service provision.

We recommend that Norway:

- introduce automatic adjustment of child benefit in relation to inflation and wages
- investigate and monitor compliance with children's rights in Nav's national services
- ensure that Nav staff have the knowledge necessary to safeguard children's rights in individual cases

H. Education, leisure and cultural activities

Education, including vocational training and guidance

Staff and support services in schools and kindergartens (QPR 26)

Children spend half of their waking hours in kindergarten or school. Therefore, it is crucial that the child's overall needs and rights are safeguarded, both in terms of education, but also, for example, in terms of health, development and protection. This requires employees with time and expertise, interdisciplinary work and contributions from other services.

The increase of bullying, school absenteeism and school-related mental health issues such as stress, may indicate that children's needs are not being adequately cared for in kindergartens and schools.¹⁰⁶ This may be due to a lack of expertise and capacity to provide both academic and psychosocial support. There are major disparities between municipalities, and all stakeholders reports lack of resources.¹⁰⁷

The State must increase their efforts in strengthening kindergartens, schools and associated support services. A comprehensive approach is needed that defines stakeholders' responsibilities, good framework conditions and support with implementing good practice.¹⁰⁸

We recommend that Norway:

- conduct a thorough assessment of children's needs and identify the expertise and resources required in kindergartens and schools

- initiate a comprehensive effort to ensure sufficient financial and human resources for the interdisciplinary work in kindergartens and schools
- ensure the availability of an accessible knowledge base and capacity-building support for the services

Inclusive education (QPR 26a)

Schools are obligated to provide adapted education. Around 50,000 children in compulsory education are entitled to individual adapted education/special needs education.¹⁰⁹ Major shortcomings have been identified in the provision, including lack of specialized staff and inadequate learning-outcomes.¹¹⁰

We are concerned that national and local authorities lack the sufficient standards and mechanisms to monitor and ensure the quality and learning outcomes of individualized support.

The programme “boosting competencies in special education and inclusive practice”¹¹¹ is positive but not enough. It is voluntary and based on municipalities assessing their own upskilling needs. Evaluations show that inadequate resources hinder participation, and that the upskilling model may reinforce regional disparities.¹¹²

The Educational Psychological Counselling Service (PPT) is the main support service for schools regarding inclusive education. It faces serious capacity challenges throughout Norway. 8 out of 10 managers’ report that due to staff shortage they are unable to perform their tasks.¹¹³ The result is children not receiving help, and that many PPT units are unable to participate in the upskilling programme.¹¹⁴ Nevertheless, the State has not allocated more resources or issued guidelines on sufficient staffing.

We recommend that Norway:

- require schools to implement sufficient standards and mechanisms to monitor the quality and learning outcomes of individual adapted education
- follow up evaluations of the upskilling programme, ensures it contributes to adequate skills and that regional disparities are not reinforced
- ensure sufficient capacity in PPT by allocating earmarked funds and issues guidelines on adequate staffing

Universal design of school buildings (QPR 26a)

Inadequate universal design of school buildings results in poor learning environments and children with disabilities having reduces access to their local school.

The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs has produced a roadmap for how schools can be universally designed by 2030.¹¹⁵ The government has stated that it will implement the roadmap, although it has not followed up with the necessary measures.¹¹⁶ It is several years behind the outlined schedule. The government’s universal design action plan does not include any deadlines for the universal design of schools either.¹¹⁷

We recommend that Norway:

- allocate adequate funding via the national budget, in accordance with the roadmap
- develop a binding plan with concrete measures and deadlines, based on the roadmap
- establish a statutory deadline for municipalities’ upgrading of school buildings

Universal design of digital learning tools (QPR 26a)

Many children with disabilities lack access to the necessary digital learning tools. A national inspection showed that inadequate universal design challenge the right to equal education. None of the digital solutions inspected met minimum ICT universal design requirements.¹¹⁸

We recommend that Norway:

- ensure all children with disabilities have access to digital learning tools, for example through a national approval scheme

School absenteeism (QPR 26b)

School absenteeism and “school refusal” is a growing problem. Adolescents with experience of school absenteeism have contributed their experiences and recommendations.¹¹⁹ According to them, school absenteeism is due to bullying, exclusion, mental health issues, school-related pressure and stress, and lack of adapted education. They recommend a more flexible school-system, and to ensure teachers and staff have sufficient skills and resources.

Their report shows that children possess important knowledge regarding school absenteeism. However, a literature review shows that children affected are not sufficiently included in research.¹²⁰

We recommend that Norway:

- strengthen efforts to combat school absenteeism
- ensure children's participation in research and policymaking

School dropout among children in alternative care (QPR 26b)

More young people are completing upper secondary education. Yet, some groups have high dropout rates. Only 5 out of 10 children under care from the child welfare services complete upper secondary school within the standard or extended time. For children in institutions the numbers are 1 out of 10.¹²¹ A far higher proportion of children who have received measures from the child welfare services are not in work or education in the years after completing compulsory education.

The child welfare services are responsible for the care and protection of children in alternative care, while schools are responsible for fulfilling the right to education. Nevertheless, there is little cooperation at national and local level on targeted measures designed to strengthen the right to education for children in alternative care.

We recommend that Norway:

- establish cooperation across the child welfare and education sectors and implement targeted measures in both sectors

Bullying (QPR 26d)

The number of students being bullied at school has increased significantly.¹²² In the Student Survey 2023, 12.8% of year 7 students say they are bullied, while in year 10 it is 10.9%. This represents rises from 7.5% and 5.5%, respectively, in 2020.

Bullying can cause a wide range of health issues such as anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress, and suicidal thoughts. Bullying can also significantly lower educational performance.¹²³

There is a lot of research on effective measures¹²⁴, however its poorly implemented in schools. Complaints indicate that schools are not sufficiently addressing bullying. Schools do not investigate cases properly, and do not implement appropriate measures.¹²⁵

We recommend that Norway:

- strengthen efforts to combat bullying
- issue national guidelines on evidence-based practice to ensure the implementation of evidence-based practice in schools

Physical coercion and force (QPR 26e)

Children are subjected to physical force and coercion in schools.¹²⁶ Children with disabilities are particularly vulnerable.¹²⁷ Physical force may be due to a lack of knowledge and an individual assessment of the needs of the child, and several stakeholders have recommended upskilling in schools.¹²⁸

The Ministry of Education and Research has proposed a new law that further expands the ability to intervene with the use of physical force against students.¹²⁹ We are concerned this will result in more use of force and major adverse consequences for children. The possible impacts on children have not been adequately assessed. There is a lack of child participation in the legislative process. and compensatory measures have not been discussed. No national upskilling or follow-up research plans have been drawn up.

We recommend that Norway:

- ensure that legislation and practices set high thresholds for the use of physical force, and that it is only used where necessary and proportionate
- evaluate regulations that admit the use of physical force and coercion against children in schools
- ensure sufficient training of teachers and staff on how to prevent the use of physical force and to non-violent and child-sensitive approaches on addressing disturbances

Recreation (QPR 27)

The State has committed to ensuring that all children can participate in at least one organised recreational activity. However, several studies show children's participation varies greatly due to economic resources, ethnicity, gender, disability, geography and/or access to information.¹³⁰

The government's action plan for increased participation states that the government will provide data on the participation in recreational activities of children in families receiving social assistance.¹³¹ This should be prioritised and viewed in the context of the need to strengthen the implementation of children's rights in Nav.

We recommend that Norway:

- strengthen cooperation with sport and voluntary sectors to lower barriers to participation
- ensure the implementation of the action plan for increased participation and gather knowledge on how Nav offices ensure that children in families receiving social assistance are able to participate in recreational activities

I. Special protection measures

Unaccompanied children in reception centres (QPR 28a)

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children under 15 years of age are housed in child welfare services care centres, while children above 15 are housed in asylum reception centres. The latter have weaker requirements for the quality of care. In 2023, the Norwegian Immigration Directorate reported major challenges in running these reception centres, in part due to long processing times and inadequate child expertise among staff.¹³² Inspections show that several reception centres do not properly care for children.¹³³ Many unaccompanied children say they struggle to cope with everyday life.¹³⁴

The supervision scheme is significantly underfunded.¹³⁵ Only three inspections were conducted in 2023, which represents 4.7% of reception centres.¹³⁶ Violations have been identified in 4 out of 5 inspections, including staffing, child expertise, training and individual follow-up.¹³⁷

The number of unaccompanied children arriving in Norway with an adult without parental responsibility (e.g. a sibling) is rising. The Norwegian Board of Health Supervision has expressed concerns about the care provided to these children.¹³⁸ There is a need for more knowledge about how the accompanying adult's care abilities are assessed upon arrival and when in reception centres.

We recommend that Norway:

- transfer the responsibility of care for all unaccompanied children to the child welfare services, regardless of age
- allocate more resources to reception centres where unaccompanied children live and strengthens the inspection system
- survey the situation and implements measures to strengthen the follow-up of unaccompanied minors who seek asylum with an adult without parental responsibility

Children belonging to indigenous or minority groups (QPR 29a-c)

Sami children's rights are not sufficiently implemented when it comes to language, hate speech and nature management threatened by climate change. It is crucial that the government and local authorities investigate and carry out impact assessments to protect their rights. If decisions or developments are threatening their culture, compensatory measures must be introduced.

We recommend that Norway:

- ensure the impacts on Sami children's rights are thoroughly assessed where they might hinder their right to live in harmony with their culture

Children in conflict with the law

Legal rights in criminal procedures (QPR 31a)

Challenges remain in safeguarding children's criminal procedural rights, and new legislation is needed. We are concerned about interrogations of children without support from an adult or a lawyer, lack of suitable information before, during and after interrogations and that some children don't have a public defender. Both the Ombudsperson for Children and the

Norwegian Bar Association have addressed the need to strengthen children's criminal procedural rights and asked the government to review the Criminal Procedure Act.¹³⁹

We recommend that Norway:

- strengthen the law to secure that children have defence counsel present during interrogations
- ensure that children receive information that they can understand at every phase of a criminal case and that questioning is tailored to the child's age and development

Children in conflict with the law (QPR 31b)

Local services like schools, child welfare, prevention of drugs, police, healthcare and recreation activities are crucial in preventing crime.

Norway has two punitive reactions for juveniles that are based on the principle of diversion, youth punishment and youth follow-up. Local services and available measures are also key to success for these sentences. The government have introduced legal measures to improve youth punishment and youth follow-up. However, this cannot compensate for the shortcomings in local measures. Research show that these reactions work, but big disparities in the measures available at local level can hinder the goal of helping young people out of crime.¹⁴⁰

Rather than improving conditions for prevention and diversion, the political debate about juvenile offenders revolves around more use of prison. The government has decided to increase the prison capacity for minors from 10 to 30. At the same time, they are investigating "national safety houses", which will also keep children behind locked door. It is hard to see how this corresponds to the principle of prison as a last resort, but rather seem to compensate for shortcomings in other measures.

We recommend that Norway:

- prioritise local prevention and diversion measures for children rather than using prison
- ensure that prison is only used as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time

Preventive detention (QPR 31c)

There has been no follow up of the recommendation from 2018 to discontinue preventive detention of children.

Our studies show that preventive detention will not secure children treatment or measures related to the risk of violence. The day the children turn 18 they are moved to ordinary units for preventive detention, with very demanding conditions.¹⁴¹ Norway has been repeatedly criticised for lack of measures in preventive detention sentences and the extensive use of solitary confinement.¹⁴² Children serving preventive detention often have serious mental health issues that further deteriorates during incarceration. They don't have public lawyers to assist them relating to possible inhuman treatment like solitary confinement or coercive measures, or in matters regarding inadequate education or health services.

We recommend that Norway:

- without further delay end the use of preventive detention for children

Forensic mental health assessments (QPR 31d)

Forensic mental health assessments are often key in assessing legal capacity and the choice of penal reaction. The quality of these forensic assessments is therefore crucial to safeguard the child's legal rights.

The investigation of serious mental illnesses in children is complicated because childhood is a period of development, and children do not have the same medical history as adults. Children in investigations of serious criminal cases are in very vulnerable situations. Nevertheless, there are no requirements for expertise in child psychology or analytical methods meant for children. Some children need to be admitted for observation, but there are no places for this except together with adults.

The first preventive detention case involving a 15-year-old child was reopened after new experts concluded the original assessment was incorrect. The child had not been legally responsible for its actions and the grounds for detention was false. It could only be reopened because the child had a lawyer. Nevertheless, the government have not introduced any changes.

We recommend that Norway:

- introduce requirements for expertise in children's development for forensic psychiatric experts and the use of methodological tools suitable for children
- introduce rules to secure that children sentenced to long sentences have the right to a lawyer and opportunities for new forensic psychiatric assessments

Juveniles in prison (QPR 31e)

Norway's two juvenile prison units have 10 places. They are used both for pretrial detention and for serving sentences. At times, 80% of the capacity are used for pretrial detention which requires high security. Small units with lack of flexibility leads to a situation where all minors in the unit will have high security arrangements, even children where low security would be sufficient and in the best interest of the child.

The number of children in prison increased in 2024. Sometimes pretrial detentions last for many months. We believe the increase is partly due to lack of capacity in child welfare institutions and mental health care for children. The increase means overstretched capacity in the juvenile prison units, resulting in children in prisons with adults.

In 2023, at least 10 children were incarcerated with adult inmates. The number is expected to rise in 2024. No systematic assessments of the best interests of the child are conducted, neither by the courts nor the Norwegian Correctional Service, when children are placed in ordinary prisons.¹⁴³

We recommend that Norway:

- undertake investigations on how the juvenile prison units can be differentiated so that security levels are in line with what is adequate for each child and in the child's best interest
- clarify regulations to make sure children are only incarcerated with adults in exceptional circumstances and in the best interest of the child

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- ¹³¹ Ministry of Culture and Equality (2024). *“Alle inkludert! Handlingsplan for like muligheter til å delta i kultur-, idretts- og friluftaktiviteter, 2024-2026”* [“Everyone included! Action plan for equal opportunities to participate in cultural, sporting and recreational activities”], measure 40
- ¹³² UDI (2023). *“Annual Report”*
- ¹³³ Norwegian Board of Health Supervision’s Supervisory Report 08.02.2024
- ¹³⁴ Save the Children Norway (2022). *“Barn og unges tanker om trygghet på asylmottak”* [“The views of children and young people on safety in asylum reception centres”], Save the Children Norway
- ¹³⁵ The Norwegian Board of Health Supervision’s letter of 17.11.2023 to the Ministry of Justice *“Akutt behov for økte ressurser til tilsyn med omsorgen for enslige mindreårige asylsøkere”* [“Acute need for greater resources for supervising the care of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children”]
- ¹³⁶ County Governor of Oslo og Viken (2023). *“Annual Report”*
- ¹³⁷ Norwegian Board of Health Supervision 08.02.2024. *“Enslige mindreårige asylsøkere får ikke den omsorgen de har krav på, viser tilsyn”* [“Inspections show that unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors are not receiving the care they are entitled to”]

¹³⁸ Norwegian Board of Health Supervision's Supervisory Report 08.02.2024

¹³⁹ Norwegian Bar Association (2023) "*Barnas plass i strafferetten – der samfunnets frykt og omsorg møtes. Årstale i 2023*" [*"The child's place in the criminal law – where society's fears and care meet. Annual speech 2023"*]

¹⁴⁰ Andrews, T. & Eide, A.K. (2019). "*Mellom straff og hjelp – fungerer de nye straffereaksjonene for ungdom*" [*"Between punishment and help – are the new criminal sanctions for young people working?"*], Nordland Research Institute

¹⁴¹ The Ombudsperson for Children's letter of 04.06.2021 to the Ministry of Justice and Public Security "*Funn etter gjennomgang av saker der barn er fengslet i perioden 2016-2019*" [*"Findings after reviewing the cases where children were imprisoned in the period 2016-2019"*]

¹⁴² Norwegian Parliamentary Ombud (2019) "*Særskilt melding til Stortinget om isolasjon i norske fengsel*" [*"Special report to the Norwegian Parliament on isolation in Norwegian prisons"*], Norwegian Parliamentary Ombud

¹⁴³ Norwegian Parliamentary Ombud (2024) "*Barn i Eidsberg fengsel*" [*"Children in Eidsberg Prison"*], Norwegian Parliamentary Ombud