

Country session: Norway
Date of session: 23rd and 24th of May 2018

Background information

[OHCHR press release](#)

Webcast: [first part](#) and [second part](#)

Audio file (pending)

Reporting

Reporting methodology

Regular reporting procedure

Simplified reporting procedure

Concluding Observations with urgent measures

State report:

Common core document	
Initial submission	12 Oct 1993
Updated document	28 Jul 2017
Annex I and Annex II	28 Jul 2017

CRC		OPAC		OPSC	
No. of report	5 th and 6 th	No. of report	-	No. of report	-
Due date	06 Oct 2016	Due date	-	Due date	-
Submission	06 Oct 2016	Submission	-	Submission	-

Written replies	
Submission	<u>28 Feb 2018</u>
Due date	

Public reports from children's rights defenders

- [Sámi Parliament Supplementary Report](#)

Alternative reports	
NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centre for International Environmental Law • Norwegian Forum for the CRC • Samediggi • Rettspolitisk
NHRIs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ombudsman for Children

State delegation

The delegation was very large, composed of a mix of high level Ministers and technical staff. The delegation was headed by Ms. Linda Helleland, Minister of Children equality, accompanied by staff from the Ministry of Health and Care Service, the ministry of Justice and public Security, Ministry of Education and Research and Ministry of Climate and Environment.

Committee's Task Force members

Name & Last Name	Country
Amal Aldoseri (Coordinator)	Morocco
Hatem Kotrane	Tunisia
Mikiko Otani	Japan
Renate Winter	Austria

Dialogue description

i. Character of the dialogue

The dialogue was overall constructive, cooperative and dynamic with in depth, focused and technical discussions between the Committee and the delegation.

ii. General assessment made by the Committee

The Committee was overall satisfied to see the progress of Norway towards the participation of children in judicial and administrative proceedings, including the creation of youth forums. However, the inclusion of migrant children continues to be a challenge and therefore, demands more concrete measures to tackle the problem.

iii. Main issues discussed:

- **Right to be Heard:** The Committee asked whether children themselves could launch complains to office of ombudsman for education, including whether it was child-friendly and had training for staff. The other set of questions on the topic involved, whether children themselves were being heard in family and school, including groups of children and whether it was practiced in all administrative and judicial cases. Finally, the Committee questioned about the youth forums in Norway concerning support and accessibility to all groups of children. The delegation replied that they have submitted proposals for having a court specifically for children and migrants. The ministry has also engaged in discussion with children that are in welfare service and have commissioned a report on improvements to the complaint system, including a child friendly mechanism. The delegation has also highlighted that children are also granted the right to be heard in all social welfare programs, having a handbook on child participation, used by mediators in family cases. Finally, they replied that children's right to be heard is implemented in climate change policy through climate change advisors and youth councils, within 90% of municipalities.
- **Preservation of identity:** the Committee asked whether it existed an environment to preserve the identity of refugees, migrants and others. The Committee also questioned the delegation about the role of the media engagement on the protection of children to combat racism, sexualization of children and the respect to other cultures within Norwegian children. The delegation highlighted that education was used to preserve identity of migrant children, mentioning the qualification of teachers to deal with the topic and activities of integration of migrant children in the education system, creating a positive environment for them.



- **Non-discrimination:** the Committee was worried that children in vulnerable situation belonging to minorities still faces discrimination and asked whether measures were being taken to tackle the problem. The questioning was also extended to LGBT children and children with disabilities, whether they were being accepted in their community and staff. The delegation replied mentioning that they have an act that prohibits discrimination based on age in all aspects of law, which also covered children. In terms of LGBTI discrimination the delegation replied that they have taken measures with this specific group of children.
- **Family environment:** The Committee asked about whether the country has any guide for parents of minority groups. The Committee was worried about the high probability of migrant children to be removed through child welfare service, with migrant families being too scared to reach child welfare services. Also, the Committee asked a question on how to integrate right to be heard in health care sector. The delegation affirmed that the **child welfare service** will be made in cooperation between children and parents. The delegation also replied to the questioning by mentioning that removals are sometimes necessary, but there are measures to improve this process.
- **Administration of Juvenile Justice:** the Committee asked questions related to the situation of alternatives measures to the detention of children and questioned about cases of violence and sexual abuse. The delegation replied by saying that they have an action plan to deal with sexual abuse. In terms of juvenile justice they have acknowledged that there was an increase in the cases of juvenile detention and in those cases there are regulations from 2015 that set out a multidisciplinary team to discuss alternative sentences. They also ensured that alternative sentences are already common for non-violent crimes, such as community sentence or at home. Concerning the detention of migrant children, the delegation said that it is done only when children are facing risk of forced returns.

Recommendations of the Committee

In its Concluding Observations, the Committee drew attention to the need of **urgent measures** concerning the following 6 areas:

Administration of juvenile justice: Committee urges the State party to bring its juvenile justice system fully into line with the Convention and other relevant standards by discontinuing preventive detention for children; Where detention is unavoidable, ensure that the children are not detained together with adults, and withdraw the reservation to article 10, of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights “with regard to the obligation to keep accused juvenile persons and juvenile offenders segregated from adults”; Strengthen safeguards to ensure that isolation as a preventive measure is avoided to the greatest extent possible;

Independent monitoring: the Committee recommends that the State party take measures to ensure that the Ombudsman for Children and/or the National Human Rights Institution are entrusted with the mandate to receive, investigate and address complaints by children, in all areas that concern them, in a child-sensitive manner.

Non-discrimination: The Committee recommends that the State party: Allocate resources for research into the root causes and possible impact of oversexualized representations of girls in the media; Research and develop specific measures on how to address the particular difficulties and discrimination faced by many children with an immigrant background, and train teachers accordingly; Develop a new plan of action for promoting gender and preventing ethnic discrimination; Take awareness-raising measures to foster tolerance and openness about non-conforming with gender stereotypes and the harmful effects of social pressure targeting the public at large.

Children deprived of a family environment: In this regard, the Committee recommends that the State party to ensure that all forms of separation of children from their parents are always in the best interests of the child, including by: Reviewing the current practices for out of home placements, deprivation of parental rights and limitation of contact rights with a view to ensuring that such drastic steps are only used as measures of last resort, with a particular emphasis on Roma families where children seem to be disproportionately separated from their families; Providing parents with the necessary support to avoid the separation from their children;



Mental health: The Committee recommends that the State party: Allocate sufficient resources to the mental health sector; Investigate the causes of suicidal tendencies, particularly among transgender children and children in migration reception centres, and ensure that measures are developed to prevent such tendencies; Improve the diagnosis of mental health problems among children, their parents and teachers is given priority over the prescription of drugs in addressing ADHD and other behavioural specificities; and that parents and children are informed about the negative side effects of treatments with psycho-stimulants and provided with information on non-medical treatments.

Asylum-seeking and refugee children and children in migration situations: the Committee recommends that the State party: Consider establishing a system to automatically reassess temporary residency permits of unaccompanied children as well as issuing residence permits of a longer duration; Address further root causes of disappearance of children out of reception centres; Increase efforts to search for missing children, provide them with the necessary protection, redress and rehabilitation, and ensure that if they have fallen victim to crimes, perpetrators are brought to justice; Under no circumstances deport children and their families back to countries where there is a risk of irreparable harm for the children; Place children and their families into reception centres only for the shortest time possible, and increase human, technical and financial resources allocated to reception centres with a view to ensuring adequate conditions for children while residing therein, in particular that they are protected from violence, have their mental health needs checked and have access to nutritious food; Ensure that children are under no circumstances placed in detention based on their immigration status;

Sustainable Development Goals

- 1.3, on implementing nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all
- 16.9, on providing legal identity for all, including birth registration
- 16.2, on ending abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children

Next State report

CRC	
No. of report	6 th and 7 th
Due date	06 Oct 2026

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