

## NORWAY

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Norway is a parliamentary democracy and constitutional monarchy. The country is governed by a prime minister, a cabinet, and a 169-seat parliament (Storting) that is elected every four years and cannot be dissolved. Free and fair elections to the multiparty parliament were held in 2009. Security forces reported to civilian authorities.

In a country where there were few abuses, violence against women was a continuing societal problem.

Other problems reported during the year included use of police holding cells to detain arrestees for longer periods than permitted by law and occasional incarceration of juveniles in adult prisons. There were also reports of some anti-Semitism, as well as stigmatizing rhetoric against immigrants and Muslims, particularly on the Internet.

There were no reports of officials committing abuses in the security services or elsewhere in the government during the year.

### **Section 1. Respect for the Integrity of the Person, Including Freedom from:**

#### **a. Arbitrary or Unlawful Deprivation of Life**

There were no reports that the government or its agents committed arbitrary or unlawful killings.

#### **b. Disappearance**

There were no reports of politically motivated disappearances, abductions, or kidnappings.

#### **c. Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment**

The constitution and law prohibit such practices, and there were no reports that government officials employed them.

## Prison and Detention Center Conditions

Prison conditions mostly met international standards. Prisoners had access to potable water, and the government permitted visits by independent human rights observers. Research from the Correctional Services Academy indicated that 56 men and three women committed suicide in pretrial detention or prison between 1990 and 2007. More recent figures were not available.

In December the Council of Europe's Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) found seven juveniles being held in adults' prisons. It noted the efforts by authorities to ameliorate the juveniles' conditions and the construction of new, separate detention facilities in some places, but called the situation of a juvenile in Bjorgvin Prison in Bergen "still far from satisfactory." The bar association estimated that nearly half of persons arrested in 2010 were kept in holding cells for longer than the 48 hours permitted by law. Police holding cells were austere and designed for short stays and a transient inmate population. Authorities did not maintain comprehensive statistics of the use of police holding cells nationwide, a fact that the parliamentary ombudsman, the Norwegian Bar Association, the Norwegian Center for Human Rights, and the Children's Ombudsman criticized.

As of May 1, there were 3,602 prisoners in the country, 5.8 percent of whom were women and 0.2 percent juveniles. The combined total prison capacity in the country is 3,826. The country had 44 prisons, of which three were separate prisons for women. In addition, eight other prisons had women's departments with a total of 71 places. A number of other prisons in the country could accommodate women as needed.

Most prisons in the country contained separate cells for pretrial detainees. The Trandum detention center for foreign nationals awaiting deportation had space to house 150 detainees, but since mid-2010 authorities maintained a maximum limit of 70 detainees. Other than Trandum center and police station holding cells, the country had no separate detention facilities. Authorities reported electronically monitoring 1,001 offenders in 2010, of which 47 were transferred to detention centers after breaching the rules.

An ombudsman, who could visit at a prisoner's request or at the ombudsman's own initiative, represented prisoners. The ombudsman does not act on behalf of prisoners and detainees to consider such matters as alternatives to incarceration for nonviolent offenders; only the courts handle sentencing. The ombudsman may conduct investigations and express a legal, nonbinding opinion on whether public

authorities have erred or committed any injustice. The ombudsman also may serve on behalf of prisoners and detainees concerning the status and circumstances of confinement of juvenile offenders but received few complaints on this issue.

The government permitted monitoring visits by independent human rights groups, the media, and the International Committee of the Red Cross. The CPT conducted a periodic visit on May 18-27, during which it inspected six prisons and four police headquarters, including Trandum. Its report, released on December 21, noted that there was a relaxed atmosphere in the country's prisons, and that prison staff appeared to be well trained and very professional. Committee members spoke with arrestees and convicts and received no allegations of ill treatment or unnecessary use of force. The CPT recommended that the government increase its effort to stop detaining persons in police holding cells after they had been remanded in custody and to provide timely access to a lawyer to all arrestees. Authorities permitted prisoners and detainees to submit complaints to judicial authorities without censorship and to request investigation of credible allegations of inhumane conditions; there were no such complaints or allegations during the year through December.

#### **d. Arbitrary Arrest or Detention**

The constitution and law prohibit arbitrary arrest and detention, and there were no reports during the year that the government failed to observe these prohibitions.

#### **Role of the Police and Security Apparatus**

The national police have primary responsibility for internal security. The police may call on the armed forces for assistance in crises. In such circumstances the armed forces are under police authority. The Ministry of Justice and Police oversees the police force.

Civilian authorities maintained effective control over the national police, and the government has effective mechanisms to investigate and punish abuse and corruption. There were no reports of impunity involving the security forces during the year.

#### **Arrest Procedures and Treatment While in Detention**

The law requires warrants authorized by a prosecutor for arrests except when the perpetrator is caught while committing a crime, and police usually arrested a

person based on a warrant. Police are required to file a justification to hold detained persons in custody within four hours of their arrest and must inform detainees of the charges against them within three days. Authorities must arraign an arrested suspect within 24 hours (not including Saturday and Sunday), at which time the arraignment judge determines whether the accused should be held in custody or released pending trial. There is no bail system. All defendants accused of minor crimes, including nonresident foreigners, were routinely released pending trial. Defendants accused of serious or violent crimes usually remained in custody until trial. Arrested persons were allowed access to a lawyer of their choice before interrogation or, if they could not afford one, to an attorney appointed by the government. Authorities usually allowed arrested persons access to family members. The law mandates that detainees be transferred from a temporary police holding cell to a regular prison cell within 48 hours.

The law provides that a court must supervise whether and how long a detainee may be held in solitary confinement, but a regulation provides an exemption where necessary because of building or staff conditions. Ila, the country's highest-security prison, admitted to using the loophole during the year, and defense attorneys reported that several other prisons did so as well. The media reported on August 10 that a 20-year-old suspect sentenced to four weeks in prison without special restrictions nonetheless was held in isolation for 12 days in Ila Prison and in administrative detention due to space constraints. The Court of Appeal ordered the prison to transfer him to regular custody.

The law permits detention of aliens to establish identity or to effect their removal from the country if it is deemed likely they will evade an order to leave. The CPT reported that it received no allegations and found no other evidence of mistreatment of immigration detainees by staff at the Trandum Detention Center for foreign nationals during its May visit.

Pretrial Detention: The CPT, the Bar Association, and Amnesty International criticized the government's pretrial detention, including conditions in holding cells.

#### **e. Denial of Fair Public Trial**

The constitution and law provide for an independent judiciary, and there were no reports during the year that the government interfered with judicial independence.

## **Trial Procedures**

Defendants enjoy a presumption of innocence. Trials are public. In criminal cases involving a maximum prison sentence of at least six years, a court of appeal sits with a jury of 10 civilian members; there is no right to a jury trial in other instances. Defendants have the right to have counsel, at public expense if necessary, to be present at their trial, to confront and question witnesses, to present evidence and witnesses, and to appeal. Defendants and their attorneys have access to government-held evidence relevant to their cases. The law extends these rights to all citizens.

The constitution and law provide for the right to a fair trial, and an independent judiciary effectively enforced this right.

## **Political Prisoners and Detainees**

There were no reports of political prisoners or detainees.

## **Regional Human Rights Court Decisions**

The country is a party to the European Convention on Human Rights and subject to the jurisdiction of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). During the year the court made one ruling against Norway. The government complied with the court's judgment.

## **Civil Judicial Procedures and Remedies**

There is an independent and impartial judiciary in civil matters that can adjudicate cases involving human rights violations; individuals and organizations could appeal decisions to the ECHR.

## **f. Arbitrary Interference with Privacy, Family, Home, or Correspondence**

The constitution and law prohibit such actions, and the government usually respected these prohibitions in practice. A government-appointed working group for communications control reported that police were abusing the emergency loophole in the law to use wiretaps and listening devices without court oversight.

## **Section 2. Respect for Civil Liberties, Including:**

## a. Freedom of Speech and Press

### Status of Freedom of Speech and Press

The constitution and law provide for freedom of speech and press, and the government generally respected these rights in practice. An independent press, an effective judiciary, and a functioning democratic political system combined to ensure freedom of speech and of the press.

The law prohibits “threatening or insulting anyone, or inciting hatred or persecution of or contempt for anyone because of his or her: a) skin color or national or ethnic origin, b) religion or life stance, or c) homosexuality, lifestyle, or orientation.” Violators are subject to a fine or imprisonment not to exceed three years. There were no reported charges or convictions for violating the hate speech law during the year.

Violence and Harassment: In two instances public speakers scheduled to address topics that were sensitive to some in the community canceled their appearances after receiving threats. On April 14, an author withdrew from her planned participation in a panel to discuss oppression of women in developing countries. In September, Kurt Westergaard, the Danish cartoonist who had drawn caricatures of the prophet Mohammed in 2005, canceled his appearance at a planned book launch in Oslo following alleged threats against him.

Nongovernmental Impact: On June 20, the offices of the publishing company Cappelen Damm were under police protection following threatened violence related to its decision to publish a Norwegian edition of the book *The Tyranny of Silence* by Flemming Rose, the cultural editor of Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten*, in which he explained why he printed the Mohammed caricatures in 2005. Eleven men with covered faces turned up to demonstrate against the book’s publication, but the protest dissolved before reaching the publishing house.

### Internet Freedom

There were no government restrictions on access to the Internet or credible reports that the government monitored e-mail or Internet chat rooms other than as permitted by law. Particularly following the July 22 terrorist attacks in and near Oslo, the Center against Racism and others encouraged the Police Security Service (PST) to monitor extremist Internet chat rooms. On August 24, a PST

representative reportedly stated to the media that the PST was cooperating with local police and government to review extremist websites.

Individuals and groups could engage in the expression of views via the Internet, including by e-mail.

### **Academic Freedom and Cultural Events**

There were no government restrictions on academic freedom or cultural events.

### **b. Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association**

The constitution and law provide for freedom of assembly and association, and the government generally respected these rights in practice.

### **c. Freedom of Religion**

See the annual *International Religious Freedom Report* at [www.state.gov/j/drl/irf/rpt/](http://www.state.gov/j/drl/irf/rpt/).

### **d. Freedom of Movement, Internally Displaced Persons, Protection of Refugees, and Stateless Persons**

The law provides for freedom of movement within the country, foreign travel, emigration, and repatriation, and the government generally respected these rights in practice. The government cooperated with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other humanitarian organizations in providing protection and assistance to refugees, asylum seekers, stateless persons, and other persons of concern.

### **Protection of Refugees**

Access to asylum: The law provides for the granting of asylum or refugee status, and the government established a system for providing protection to refugees.

Safe Country of Origin/Transit: The country is party to the Dublin II regulation, which allows the government to return refugees and asylum seekers to the first country they entered that is also a party to the regulation.

Nonrefoulement: In practice the government provided protection against the expulsion or return of refugees to countries where their lives or freedom would be threatened on account of their race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion. On October 31, the Police Immigration Unit reported that it had forcibly returned 3,697 persons to Iraq during the year to date, a 6.7 percent decrease from 2010. UNHCR questioned whether an unspecified number of these returns were to areas of Iraq it deemed unsafe.

Durable Solutions: The government has several programs for voluntary return of refugees through the International Organization for Migration, such as the Voluntary Assisted Return program, the Information, Return, and Reintegration of Afghan Nationals to Afghanistan Program, and the Information, Return, and Reintegration of Iraqi Nationals to Iraq program. These voluntary programs offered financial and logistical support for repatriation, including assistance with travel arrangements and funding.

Temporary Protection: According to the Norwegian Directorate for Immigration, the government provided temporary protection to individuals who might not qualify as refugees and provided it to 757 persons as of August 31.

### **Stateless Persons**

According to UNHCR statistics, there were 3,118 stateless persons in the country as of January; they are not counted as refugees. Citizenship is derived from one's parents; children born in the country do not automatically become citizens. The law authorizes revocation of citizenship granted based on false identity information. Because the law requires applicants for Norwegian citizenship to renounce their original citizenship, revoking Norwegian citizenship can result in statelessness if the person's original citizenship is not reinstated. The government effectively implemented laws and policies to provide stateless persons the opportunity to gain nationality on a nondiscriminatory basis.

### **Section 3. Respect for Political Rights: The Right of Citizens to Change Their Government**

The constitution and law provide citizens the right to change their government peacefully, and citizens exercised this right in practice through periodic, free, and fair elections based on universal suffrage.

### **Elections and Political Participation**



Recent Elections: In 2009 the country held parliamentary elections that were considered free and fair.

Participation of Women and Minorities: Following the 2009 elections, there were 67 women in the 169-seat parliament (nearly 40 percent). There were nine women among the 19 Supreme Court justices, and women headed half of the 20 government ministries. Women led five of the seven political parties represented in parliament. There was one member of parliament and one alternate member from a minority group. There were no minority ministers or Supreme Court justices. Most major political parties in the country voluntarily apply a gender quota system for purposes of nominations and the composition of party-governing bodies at all levels.

#### **Section 4. Official Corruption and Government Transparency**

The law provides criminal penalties for official corruption, and the government generally implemented these laws effectively. There were no confirmed reports of government or police corruption during the year.

Public officials are subject to financial disclosure laws. The Ministry of Justice and Police and the Ministry of Finance are responsible for combating corruption.

The law provides for public access to government information, and the government provided access in practice to both citizens and noncitizens, including foreign media.

#### **Section 5. Governmental Attitude Regarding International and Nongovernmental Investigation of Alleged Violations of Human Rights**

A number of domestic and international human rights groups generally operated without government restriction, investigating and publishing their findings on human rights cases. Government officials often were cooperative and responsive to their views.

UN and Other International Bodies: The government cooperated with the May 18-27 visit of a delegation from the CPT to monitor conditions in detention centers, prisons, and other facilities for persons incarcerated.

Government Human Rights Bodies: The country has parliamentary ombudsmen for public administration, for children, and for equality and antidiscrimination. All ombudsmen enjoyed the government's cooperation and operated without government interference. The ombudsmen hear complaints against actions by government officials, but their offices did not issue any reports specifically on human rights problems during the year. Although the ombudsmen's recommendations are not legally binding, in practice government authorities usually complied with those from the ombudsmen for children and public administration.

Parliament's Standing Committee on Scrutiny and Constitutional Affairs reviews the reports of the parliamentary ombudsmen. Its Standing Committee on Justice is responsible for matters relating to the judicial system, police, the penal code, and the civil and criminal code.

## **Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons**

The law prohibits discrimination based on race, gender, disability, language, or social status, and the government generally enforced this prohibition in practice, although there were reports of violence against women and children, some anti-Semitism, and stigmatizing statements against immigrants and Muslims.

### **Women**

Rape and Domestic Violence: The law criminalizes rape, including spousal rape, and the government generally enforced the law. According to police, 497 rapes were reported nationwide through the second quarter of the year, a 14.7- percent increase from the same period in 2010 and an 84.8- percent increase from 2001. There were 55 attempted rapes reported to police nationwide through the second quarter of the year, eight more than through the same period in 2010.

The penalty for rape is generally two to 21 years in prison, depending on the severity of the assault, the age of the victim, and the circumstances under which the crime occurred. Very few cases, however, resulted in a sentence higher than three years and four months. A report issued in 2007 by the director of public prosecutions indicated that 84 percent of rape cases reported to police between 2001 and 2005 had been dismissed; authorities believed this was usually due to the victim's reluctance to press charges, while Amnesty International asserted that systemic inadequacies played a role. The same report noted that approximately 36 percent of rape trials ended in acquittal. Authorities have not presented a similar

national analysis since 2007. The Statistics Bureau registered 998 rape reports and 78 convictions in 2009, the latest date for which national figures are available. Because the 78 convictions may include cases reported before 2009, the conviction rate cannot be accurately established through publicly available statistics.

During the year authorities strengthened the eight-person sexual violence unit in the National Criminal Investigation Service (KRIPOS) with 10 additional positions and stated that rape victims would be offered up to three hours of free attorney assistance. Oslo police presented a strategic plan to prevent rape.

Violence against women, including spousal abuse, was a problem. The law provides higher penalties for domestic violence than for simple assault, generally one to three years in prison, with an increased term of up to six years in more severe cases and up to 21 years for aggravated rape. The government generally enforced the law in practice, although the Oslo Crisis Center criticized the conviction rate (approximately 15 percent in 2010) as too low and attributed this to insufficient investigation and a backlog in the courts, rather than a lack of evidence. Through the second quarter of the year, police received 1,314 reports of domestic violence, seven more than during the same period in 2010.

The government had programs to prevent rape and domestic violence and to counsel victims. The action plan required each of the country's 27 police districts to have a domestic violence coordinator to assist victims. According to nongovernmental organizations, however, only eight police districts had a full-time domestic violence coordinator, and four districts had no domestic violence coordinator. Public and private organizations operated 51 government-funded shelters and managed five 24-hour crisis hotlines. The shelters provided support and counseling for victims and helped them gain access to social services, doctors, lawyers, and housing authorities. Victims of domestic violence have a right to consult a lawyer free of charge before deciding whether to make a formal complaint. If criminal proceedings are instituted, the victim is entitled to free assistance from a victim's advocate.

Sexual Harassment: The law provides that "employees shall not be subjected to harassment or other unseemly behavior," and the government effectively enforced this provision. Employers who violate this law are subject to fines or prison sentences of up to two years, depending on the seriousness of the offense.

Reproductive Rights: Couples and individuals have the right to decide freely and responsibly the number, spacing, and timing of their children, and to have the

information and means to do so free from discrimination, coercion, and violence. There was easy access to contraception, skilled attendance during childbirth, and essential prenatal and postpartum care. Women were diagnosed and treated for sexually transmitted infections equally with men.

Discrimination: Women have the same legal status as men and enjoy identical rights under family and property laws and in the judicial system. The Ombudsman for Equality and Antidiscrimination (LDO) was generally effective in processing and investigating complaints of gender discrimination. As of September 2010, the latest date for which figures were available, the LDO received 287 information requests and 36 complaints, eight of which resulted in a finding of illegal gender discrimination.

The law provides that women and men engaged in the same activity shall receive equal wages for work of equal value. According to Statistics Norway, women received largely the same pay and benefits as men for equal work but earned on average 15 percent less than what men earned per month. The government attributed this to differences in the professions chosen and the predominance of women in part-time or public sector work. The LDO's office expressed concern that many women were in part-time positions involuntarily because of a tendency in certain industries to provide no meaningful full-time alternative.

The law mandates that 40 percent of the boards of directors of publicly listed companies be women; virtually all public companies complied with the law.

## **Children**

Birth registration: Citizenship is derived from one's parents; children born in the country do not automatically become citizens. All birth clinics in the country reported childbirths to a central birth register, which included names, birth certificates, and social security numbers, including those of the parents.

Child Abuse: In 2010 childcare services initiated 32,858 investigations of alleged abuse, nearly 8.5 percent more than in the previous year and a record high. The minister of justice stated that he considered it positive that more cases were reported and not kept secret. Childcare services completed 32,692 investigations in 2010 and took action in 15,904 cases, while dropping or providing counseling in 16,673 cases. An independent children's ombudsman office within the Ministry of Children, Equality, and Social Inclusion (MCESI) is responsible for the protection of children under the law. The directorate for children, youth, and family affairs

provides assistance and support services. With five regional offices and 26 professional teams, the directorate is the government's principal agency for the welfare and protection of children and families. If criminal proceedings are instituted, the child victim who was subjected to violence, sexual abuse, or genital mutilation is entitled to free assistance from a victim's advocate.

Female genital mutilation (FGM): FGM is illegal. In connection with an indictment of six people from three families for violence against 11 of their children, the court of appeal ruled during a detention hearing during the year that there was a danger of FGM. Whether this referred to FGM that had already taken place or concerns that it would take place absent intervention was unclear. Police investigated no other reports of FGM during the year.

On July 1, the media reported the government would extend nationwide the pilot project, offering counseling and voluntary genital examination to girls at risk of FGM. The leader of a Somali association reportedly welcomed the initiative, noting that he was concerned that girls could be forced to undergo FGM during "vacations" outside of the country. The UN Committee on the Elimination of Racism and Discrimination (CERD) welcomed the country's Action Plan against FGM, which included the pilot project, but expressed concern that the perceived excessive focus on the topic could stigmatize women and girls from particular minority groups.

Child Marriage: Forced marriage, and aiding and abetting a forced marriage are punishable under the law. As part of the government's Action Plan against Forced Marriage (2008-2011), the Directorate of Integration and Diversity placed minority counselors in upper secondary schools throughout the country and integration attaches in the country's diplomatic and consular missions abroad to prevent, identify, and address cases of forced marriage. In 2010 the Expert Team for the Prevention of Forced Marriage in the Directorate for Children, Youth, and Family Affairs reported 73 forced marriages and 309 threats of forced marriage, a significant increase from 2009. The expert team was responsible for providing accommodation and support for young people over 18 who were subjected to forced marriage or the threat of forced marriage, while Child Protection Services was responsible for minors. Police supervised the shelter services and provided security as needed. In contrast to 2010 there were no reports of children ending up in shelters for drug addicts due to slow case processing.

During the year a court convicted a 24-year-old man of forcibly marrying, raping, and sexually abusing his then 13-year-old first cousin. In September the court of

appeal increased his sentence from five years and six months to six years. The offender's mother and the victim's parents also were convicted on all the same charges except rape. The offender's mother did not appeal the trial court's sentence of three years and six months, while the victim's mother was acquitted on appeal. The victim's father was sentenced to three years and four months in prison. Police feared that the victim could be killed as punishment for disgracing the family. The girl, who was 18 and a high school senior in 2011, lived in an undisclosed location as part of a police protection program.

On December 16, four people were convicted of arranging a forced marriage between a 16-year-old girl and a 23-year-old man in 2009. The man's uncle and aunt were each sentenced to eight months in prison, while the victim's mother and brother received 240 hours of community service each.

International Child Abduction: The country is a party to the 1980 Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction. The country is a party to the 1980 Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction. For country-specific information see [http://travel.state.gov/abduction/country/country\\_3781.html](http://travel.state.gov/abduction/country/country_3781.html).

### **Anti-Semitism**

The Jewish population is relatively small, consisting of between 1,500 to 2,000 persons, approximately 750 of whom were registered with the Jewish community.

On March 11, a deputy representative for the indigenous Sami parliament in the northern part of the country contended on Facebook that there was no evidence the Holocaust happened and that Jews were responsible for war crimes in Russia. Government leaders from across the political and geographic spectrum condemned his statements, although the law did not permit excluding him from serving as an independent deputy representative in the Sami parliament before his term as an elected official ended. In an unrelated incident during the year, one caricature appearing in a major newspaper minimized the Holocaust by depicting Gaza as a Nazi concentration camp.

On April 20, in an op-ed in the country's leading newspaper, prominent Norwegian author Jostein Gaarder apologized for his controversial 2006 article entitled "God's Chosen People." He acknowledged the article could have been interpreted as anti-Semitic, although that had not been his intention, he said. In his apology, Gaarder emphasized that "We must never express ourselves so that legitimate criticism of

the government of Israel's policies can in any way be confused with an illegitimate and in every way intolerable hatred of Jews or Judaism." Before publishing the April piece, Gaarder engaged in a dialogue with Jewish community leaders, who said they welcomed his initiative and apology.

On June 7, the Oslo municipality reported that one out of every three Jewish pupils in secondary schools (grades 8-10) has experienced anti-Semitism in Oslo secondary schools, while more than half of the students surveyed (52 percent) said they had heard the word "Jew" used as an insult at school. The impetus for the survey was a March 2010 NRK news program, which highlighted increasing anti-Semitic attitudes and incidents of harassment or bullying of Jewish students in Norway's schools. The Oslo study determined that the extent of bullying appeared to relate to the quality of the individual teacher's leadership and the learning environment. In response to the findings, the federal minister of education pledged six million kroner (one million dollars) to train teachers to combat anti-Semitism in schools nationwide and to include anti-Semitism as a stand-alone topic in national and local school curricula. In the fall, the Oslo municipality began including anti-Semitism in its school curriculum.

There were some reports of anti-Semitic conspiracy theories in mainstream newspapers, both in a feature article and in letters to the editor, either suggesting (the article) or alleging outright (the letters) that Jews control the U.S. government.

The government continued to support organizations working to combat racism, discrimination, and anti-Semitism, including the White Buses foundation, which took students from Norway to the Auschwitz extermination camp in Poland and other Nazi concentration camps to educate them about the Holocaust. In January the government pledged three million kroner (\$500,000) to the Center for Studies of the Holocaust and Religious Minorities in Oslo to conduct a national survey on anti-Semitism. The study was scheduled to be completed in 2012. During the year, the government also announced a grant of 200,000 kroner (\$33,300) to the Jewish community in Oslo to document members' experiences with anti-Semitism in the country and to survey membership trends. The government also granted 50,000 kroner (\$8,300) toward a teaching project at the Oslo Jewish Museum.

On June 14-15, the Norwegian Jewish community hosted a conference on anti-Semitism entitled, "Norway, Israel and the Jews: Myths and Realities." The conference consisted of roundtable discussions with Norwegian editors, journalists, politicians, religious and minority leaders, and academics, and included a debate on when anti-Israel comments cross the line to anti-Semitism. The Norwegian

Ministry of Foreign Affairs supported the conference, both financially and through active participation.

### **Trafficking in Persons**

See the Department of State's annual *Trafficking in Persons Report* at [www.state.gov/j/tip](http://www.state.gov/j/tip).

### **Persons with Disabilities**

The constitution and law prohibit discrimination against persons with disabilities in employment, education, access to health care, and the provision of other state services, and the government effectively enforced these provisions. The law applies generally to all persons with disabilities without enumerating specific types of disabilities. It mandates access to public buildings, information, and communications for persons with disabilities. The MCESI and the State Council on Disability share the responsibility to protect the rights of persons with disabilities. The State Council served as an advisory body for the MCESI, which coordinated national policy, and managed the social benefits system for persons with disabilities. All educational institutions are required to have an appointed contact person for students with disabilities as well as a plan of action to include this group of students.

### **National/Racial/Ethnic Minorities**

On July 22, rightwing extremist Anders Behring Breivik detonated a large improvised explosive device (IED) next to government buildings that housed many ministries and the prime minister's office, killing eight persons and injuring scores. After detonating the IED, Breivik drove to a Labor Party youth camp on the island of Utoya outside of Oslo and shot and killed 69 persons (mostly youths) and injured many others. Shortly before the attack, Breivik posted a manifesto on the Internet in which he accused the Labor Party of treason for, among other things, encouraging multiculturalism, feminism, and Muslim immigration.

The Center against Racism reported that, in the hours after the attack and before the perpetrator's identity was established, some immigrants and Muslims in Oslo reported being harassed, spat upon, yelled at, or chased. The government responded to the July 22 attacks by calling for "more democracy, more openness, and more humanity." Commentators noted that, in the months following the attack, there was a greater feeling of inclusiveness towards all members of society.



In a year in which there were few reports of racial profiling by police, media reported that a Ugandan researcher with the International Panel on Climate Change was stopped and searched by Oslo police in October. The police officer reportedly apologized on the spot, saying he searched the man because his behavior was suspicious, not because he was African. The Oslo Police District subsequently sent a letter of apology. There were increasing instances of stigmatizing and hostile rhetoric against immigrants and Muslims during the year, particularly on the Internet. KRIPOS maintained a Web page for the public to contact police regarding online hate speech. In 2008, the latest date for which figures were available, KRIPOS reportedly received 160 complaints about racism and racist expressions on the Internet, but none led to further investigation or action by authorities.

In its concluding report on the country this year, CERD expressed concern over racist views by extremist groups on the Internet and by some representatives of political parties, “which constitute hate speech and may lead to acts of hostility against certain minority groups.” CERD also expressed concern over the lack of judicial statistics on the number of complaints, investigations, prosecutions, and condemnations regarding racist acts. After a Congolese-Norwegian woman was attacked violently December 12 and told to “go back to where she came from,” there were calls for police to do more to monitor and address hate crimes.

Immigrants and their children sometimes had more difficulty finding employment than equally qualified ethnic Norwegians. As of August 30, the unemployment rate among immigrants was 6.5 percent, compared with 3.3 percent among nonimmigrants, according to government statistics. African immigrants had the highest unemployment rate at 12.4 percent, followed by Asians at 8.2 percent, immigrants from eastern EU countries at 7.4 percent, and Central Americans at 6.3 percent.

### **Indigenous People**

The 38,470 Sami living in the northern part of the country are Norway’s indigenous people. According to media reports, on August 28, a study by the University of Tromsø and Victorian Health Promotion Foundation concluded that 35 percent of Norwegian Sami have experienced race-based discrimination.

### **Societal Abuses, Discrimination, and Acts of Violence Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity**

There were no impediments to organizations for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) persons, and the police and other government agents did not perpetrate or condone violence against the LGBT community or individuals.

After launching an information campaign in December to encourage registration of hate-crime incidents against LGBT persons, the National Association for LGBT persons received 20 reports of incidents on its Web site in one month, compared with 36 hate-crime incidents against LGBT persons registered in all of 2009.

### **Other Societal Violence or Discrimination**

There were no media reports of societal violence against persons with HIV/AIDS. In contrast to 2010, there were no media reports of persons with HIV/AIDS facing discrimination by some dentists and medical personnel.

## **Section 7. Worker Rights**

### **a. Freedom of Association and the Right to Collective Bargaining**

The law allows workers to form and join independent unions of their choice without previous authorization or excessive requirements. The law allows unions to conduct their activities without government interference. All workers, including government employees and military personnel, have the right to organize and to bargain collectively. The law provides for the right to strike, except for military forces and senior civil servants, and workers exercised this right in practice. However, with the approval of parliament, the government may compel arbitration in all industrial sectors under certain circumstances, such as when a strike threatens the quality of health care or endangers public safety. The law prohibits antiunion discrimination.

The government respected workers' freedoms of association, collective bargaining, and striking, and the workers exercised these rights in practice. The Labor Party, which leads the country's governing coalition, and the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions have common historical roots but are independent of each other. There were no reports that antiunion discrimination occurred during the year.

### **b. Prohibition of Forced or Compulsory Labor**

The law prohibits forced or compulsory labor, including by children, and the government enforced these provisions in practice. However, there were reports that persons were subjected to forced labor in the domestic service and construction sectors and that foreign children are subjected to forced begging and forced criminal activity, such as shoplifting and selling drugs. Also see the Department of State's *Trafficking in Persons Report* at [www.state.gov/j/tip](http://www.state.gov/j/tip).

### **c. Prohibition of Child Labor and Minimum Age for Employment**

Children 13 to 15 years of age may be employed up to 12 hours per week in light work that does not adversely affect their health, development, or schooling. Between the ages of 15 and 18, persons not in school may work up to 40 hours per week, while persons who remain in school may only work a number of hours that does not adversely affect their schooling, in fact substantially less than 40 hours.

There are laws to protect children from exploitation in the workplace, and the government effectively enforced these laws. The Norwegian Labor Inspection Authority (NLIA), which is part of the Ministry of Labor and Social Inclusion, is the enforcement agency. In practice minimum age rules were observed, but children were trafficked for forced labor. Also see the Department of State's *Trafficking in Persons Report* at [www.state.gov/j/tip](http://www.state.gov/j/tip).

### **d. Acceptable Conditions of Work**

There is no legislated or administratively set minimum wage, although in practice there was a minimum wage in certain sectors. Wages are set in collective bargaining agreements negotiated by labor unions, employers, and the government. The usually biennial agreements may include minimum wage levels for specific sectors.

The law limits the normal workweek to 37.5 hours and provides for 25 working days of paid leave per year (31 days for workers over age 60). The law mandates a 28-hour rest period on weekends and holidays. The law provides for premium pay of 40 percent of salary for overtime and prohibits compulsory overtime in excess of 10 hours per week. The law provides the same benefits for citizens and foreign or migrant workers with residency permits. The law forbids employment of foreign or migrant workers who do not have residency permits.

The law provides for safe and physically acceptable working conditions for all employed persons. The NLIA, in consultation with nongovernment experts, set

specific standards. Under the law, enterprises with 50 or more workers must establish environment committees composed of management, workers, and health personnel. All enterprises with 10 or more workers must have safety delegates, who are elected by the employees. Workers have the right to remove themselves from situations that endanger their health.

The NLIA effectively monitored compliance with labor legislation and standards. There were reports, especially in the cleaning industry, of foreign workers' being underpaid or overworked beyond legally permissible limits. No data was available on whether workers exercised the right to remove themselves from situations that endanger their health in practice.