



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Norway*



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Introduction

Norway, ranked at the first place in the Human Development Index (HDI) since 2001¹, is one of the wealthiest countries in the world. It is also one of the European countries with the most equal distribution of income and with the most expenditure on both education and social protection. However, despite its political commitments to eradicate poverty, child poverty has increased in Norway since 2000. Contributing factors to poverty are strongly linked in Norway with violence against children and child sexual abuse. According to the Ombudsman for Children, unaccompanied and refugee children remain among the most vulnerable groups to human trafficking and sexual exploitation.²

Although there is no evidence of widespread **child prostitution** in Norway³, several research studies have documented this phenomenon. In 2003, a study of the University of Oslo revealed that 1.4 % of the adolescent interviewed had sold sex, with boys three times more involved than girls. According to the organisation Pro Centre, children are rarely encountered in the traditional prostitution market but can meet adults through chat-rooms or social networking websites and are normally are given other type of remuneration than money in return for sex (e.g. accommodation, food, clothes, drugs or top up cards for their phones).⁴

Norway is mostly a destination country for **children trafficked** from Eastern Europe, West and Northern Africa and Central

Asia.⁵ The Norwegian government as well as non-governmental agencies have raised concerns over the vulnerability to trafficking of unaccompanied minor asylum seekers. There is limited information about methods of recruitment, modalities of sexual exploitation and profiles of child traffickers in Norway as trafficking schemes seem to vary by the victims' countries of origin.

Successful regional police operations have uncovered several **child pornography** networks involving Norwegian nationals.⁶ According to national and international police operations, the production and distribution of child pornography is by organised global networks. In addition to commercial production, digital technology has rendered it easier to produce home-made pornography for personal use. A 2011 EU Kids Online survey found that Norway is one of the European "high risk" countries for children and young people using the Internet.

Norway is a country of origin for child sex tourism. In most cases, Norwegian **child sex tourists** travel to poor countries with a high level of corruption, especially in Eastern Europe, Africa and South and East Asia.⁷ There is a link between child sex tourism and child pornography, as the internet is the main tool for organising and promoting child sex tourism as well as for distributing the images illustrating the sexual abuse of children.

National Plan of Action

A number of national plans of actions (NPAs) have been developed in Norway (which are regularly updated) concerning the different aspects of child sexual abuse and exploitation, such as the *Plan of action to Combat Human Trafficking, Action Plan of children, young people and the internet*. Despite paying more attention to children's rights and needs through the years, Norway still has gaps in the existing NPAs. For example, the demand measure to address the sexual exploitation of children in tourism should still be systematically integrated in the

present policy framework. Furthermore, an external evaluation of the current NPAs should be conducted in order to assess the effectiveness of measures implemented to date and to further improve government strategies. At the local level, several municipalities have adopted plans of action to address prostitution and human trafficking, which contain measures to prevent and counteract these phenomena as well as provide assistance to the victims, both adults and young people.⁸

Coordination and Cooperation

Although Norway does not have a mechanism or a body responsible to address all forms of CSEC, the government has been particularly active in coordinating efforts in the area of human trafficking and online safety for children. For example, the Ministry of Justice and the National Police set up the *Coordinating Unit for Victims of Trafficking (KOM)*, a project for nationwide coordination of assistance and protection of victims of human trafficking which main tasks are to identify frameworks and procedures for cross-disciplinary cooperation on the identification, assistance and protection of trafficked victims and to implement measures to improve coordination between different levels. However, in practice, collaboration between State agencies and civil society key actors remains quite limited and informal. Moreover, the KOM does not specifically tackle child trafficking.⁹ The Norwegian Media Authority (NMA) is the national co-ordinator for Children and Internet Safety in Norway. In addition, Norway was the first country in the

world to establish an ombudsman with statutory rights in order to protect children and their rights. This position has a broad mandate to promote the interests of children towards public and private stakeholders, but unfortunately cannot receive complaints from children.¹⁰ At the local level, some municipalities have established coordination mechanism to address prostitution and human trafficking. Norway is also a very active country in promoting regional and international cooperation against CSEC both on law enforcement and judicial level, mainly in partnership with the European Union. The Norwegian National Criminal Investigation Service (NCIS) serves as the “driver” of the Internet Related Child Abusive Material Project (CIRCAMP) and is also a member of the Innocent Images International Task Force. Moreover, the Norwegian government has signed a cooperation agreement with Eurojust, which plays an active role in fighting cross-border crimes against children.

Prevention

Norway has implemented numerous prevention campaigns against CSEC. However, there are very limited examples of prevention activities focused on child prostitution. Some municipalities, in collaboration with NGOs, have accomplished preventive activities against

child prostitution and trafficking. The safe use of the internet has been a priority to the Norwegian government, the NCI has launched a direct reporting mechanism to the police hotline (www.tips.kripos.no)¹¹ and use the Child Sexual Abuse Anti Distribution Filter

(CSAADF). In addition, Norway has developed several policies to prevent vulnerable children from trafficking, such as unaccompanied asylum seeking minors. Moreover, a number of awareness raising activities were conducted to address human trafficking in general, although often with very little attention on children. Among these, the ROSA project, financially supported by the Ministry of Justice,

has been a driving force in raising awareness of the social and welfare needs of trafficking victims. Preventing measures have also been taken by Norway regarding child sex tourism, as it has contributed to several international organizations and NGOs to conduct domestic and international campaigns against travelling child sex offenders.¹²

Protection

Legislation

Norway is party to a number of international legal instruments combating sexual exploitation of children. The government has ratified both the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and its Optional Protocol on the Sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (OPSC), as well as the UN Trafficking Protocol, ILO Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, and the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings. The Council of Europe Convention on the protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse still need to be ratified.

The age of consent for sexual activities in Norway is 16. Committing a sexual offence against a child under sixteen is criminalised with a penalty from up to 21 years in the most serious cases.¹³ Norwegian law on **child prostitution** complies with the OPSC as it affords a strong protection to all children up to the age of 18. The act of pimping and letting premises for prostitution are penalised in the Norwegian penal Code.¹⁴

Legislation regarding **child trafficking** complies with international minimum standards. Norway amended its Penal code in 2003 to make trafficking in persons a specific crime. According to current regulations, all persons who claim to be a victim of human trafficking may be granted a six month reflection period without condition during which they are allowed to stay in Norway, in order to give an opportunity to the victims of human trafficking to assess their situation. Victims of human trafficking may also be granted a limited residence permit for up to one year in order to prosecute the traffickers. However, some NGOs reported some cases

where trafficked children were deported without receiving a reflection period.¹⁵

The Norwegian legislation generally covers all the acts related to **child pornography** mentioned in the OPSC and is one of the few countries in Europe which have adopted provisions against the solicitation of children for sexual purposes.

Although Norwegian law allows prosecution of CSEC related offences committed abroad by Norwegian nationals and person domiciled in its territory, existing legislation does not enable the extradition of Norwegian nationals to foreign countries.

Child protection units

The NCIS has the national responsibility for investigating cases related to child pornography, child sex tourism and trafficking in human beings, including children.¹⁶ It has established an intelligence unit in relation to sexual assault on the Internet with the Norwegian Computer Crime Centre.¹⁷ Although specialised units to investigate child trafficking for sexual purposes don't exist in Norway, some successful police works such as the EXIT project which aims to investigate the purchase of sexual services, pimping and human trafficking give hope.

Support services for children

Children who have been victims of abuse, including those involved in the production of child abuse images, receive care and assistance through the ordinary child protection system. Furthermore, the Child Welfare Service is mandate to initiate an investigation and take

measures for children suspected to have been engaged in prostitution. However, there are no specific shelters operated and/or supported by the State which accommodate and provide specialised services to child victims of trafficking and according to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, there is a need to further enhance knowledge of sexual exploitation and abuse among professionals working with and protecting children.¹⁸

Training law enforcement personnel

Training programs related to trafficking have been conducted under the auspice of KOM and other agencies or organisations. However, Norway should intensify its efforts to build the capacity of law enforcers to deal with CSEC crimes and its' victims, in particularly for identifying and assisting child victims of trafficking, as well as on improving awareness and coordination in applying extraterritorial legislation.

Child and Youth Participation

The meaningful involvement of children and youth in all issues and matters affecting them has been encouraged by the Norwegian government. The Ombudsman has established various forums in order to listen to children and to ensure that Norwegian children and young people were heard directly by the Committee on

the Rights of the Child, a special hearing was arranged. Children and youth have also been actively involved in a number of activities to promote child safety on the Internet. However, according to the Ombudsman, children in Norway are not being heard to the extent to which there are entitled.¹⁹

Priority Actions Required

National plans of action

The Government of Norway should conduct a policy review of all national plans of actions addressing the CSEC, in order to identify potential gaps and develop the necessary follow up actions. Furthermore, the participation of all the key stakeholders involved in the current and future national plans of action and policies against CSEC should be supported and promoted, particularly by creating platforms for child and youth.

Coordination and cooperation

Coordination at national and municipal levels should be enhanced to ensure effective and comprehensive assistance and support for child victims of CSEC. At the international level, Norway should develop co-operation agreements with countries of origin of child victims of trafficking to ensure an effective and

comprehensive risk assessment and enable their safe return.

Prevention

Norway should undertake comprehensive studies and implement consistent data collection methods to quantify the prevalence and dimensions of sexual exploitation of children in the country. Furthermore, awareness-raising on CSEC of children should become part of every school curriculum. The tourism industry, in collaboration with NGOs and governments departments, should promote the implementation of the Code of conduct for the Protection of children from sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism. A code of ethical conduct in cyberspace should as well be created. Moreover, the government should consider launching a campaign to reduce the demand for sex with children, addressing both local demand and travelling child sex offenders.

Protection

Norway must ratify the *Council of Europe Convention on the protection of children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse* and consider further amending its legislation to punish other child pornography related offences set forth in this Convention. In addition, investigation, prosecution and conviction of all child sex offenders should be increased and the government should collect statistics on them. Furthermore, special training on CSEC should be provided to all relevant law enforcement bodies, focusing *inter-alia* on child-sensitive approaches during the legal process and victims' identification. The government should also allocate the necessary human and financial resources to the police with a view to ensure better counteraction of CSEC crimes and through the Child Protection Welfare, provide

support to child victims of trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation. Moreover, care and support should be provided regardless of children's collaboration in the prosecution of traffickers. Finally, Norway should ensure that all support services available for CSEC victims are tailored to their unique needs, taking into consideration their gender, age, country of origin, culture and religion.

Child and youth participation

Norway should provide more meaningful opportunities for children to contribute ideas and express themselves in the policy making process, as well as in the delivery of prevention and recovery and reintegration programs, including to address CSEC.

Endnotes

- ¹ Norway. *Country Profile: Human Development Indicators*. Accessed on 22 August 2012 from: <http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/NOR.html>
- ² The Norwegian Forum for the Convention on the Rights of the Child. *Supplementary Report 2009 to Norway's fourth Report to The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child*. 2009. Accessed on 22 August 2012 from: http://www.crin.org/docs/Norway_NFRC_NGO_Report.pdf
- ³ <http://prosentret.no/en/mindrearige/>
- ⁴ Ibid.
- ⁵ KOM (Coordination Unit for Victims of Human Trafficking). *Rapport fra Koordineringsenheten for Ofre for Menneskehandel 2011*. 2012. Accessed on 23 August 2012 from: https://www.politi.no/vedlegg/rapport/Vedlegg_1805.pdf
- ⁶ Over 200 straffet for barneporno. Accessed on 24 August 2012 from: <http://www.tv2.no/nyheter/innenriks/krim/over-200-straffet-for-barneporno-2780565.html>
- ⁷ *Hit drar norske sexovergripere*. 1 June 2011. Accessed on 24 August 2012 from: <http://www.dagbladet.no/2011/01/06/nyheter/sexhandel/barnepornografi/14963112/>
- ⁸ The NPAs in Norwegian only are available at: <http://prosentret.no/en/publikasjoner/statlige-og-municipale-handlingsplaner-2/>
- ⁹ ECPAT International – TBS. *Country Progress Card: Norway*. 2010. Accessed on 28 August 2012 from: www.ecpat.net
- ¹⁰ Committee on the Rights of the Child. *Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 44 of the Convention. Concluding observations: Norway*. 2010. Accessed on 22 August 2012 from: <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G10/410/42/PDF/G1041042.pdf?OpenElement>
- ¹¹ Government of Norway. *Mid-term report on follow-up of the recommendations of the United Nations Human Rights Council under the Universal Periodic Review Mechanism*. 2012. Accessed on 10 September 2012 from: www.lib.ohchr.org
- ¹² United States Department of State, *Trafficking in Persons Report 2009 - Norway*, 16 June 2009, available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4a42149c28.html> [accessed 13 September 2012]
- ¹³ Section 195 of the General Civil Penal Code of Norway.
- ¹⁴ Section 202 of the Norwegian General Civil Penal Code.
- ¹⁵ United States Department of State, 2011 Trafficking in Persons Report - Norway, 27 June 2011, available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4e12ee572d.html> [accessed 9 September 2012]
- ¹⁶ ECPAT International. *Country Progress Card: Norway*. 2010. Accessed on 30 August 2012 from www.ecpat.net
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- ¹⁸ Committee on the Rights of the Child. *Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 44 of the Convention. Concluding observations: Norway*. 2010. Accessed on 22 August 2012 from: <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G10/410/42/PDF/G1041042.pdf?OpenElement>
- ¹⁹ The Ombudsman for Children in Norway. *Supplementary Report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child – 2009*. Accessed on 22 August 2012 from: http://www.crin.org/docs/supplementary-report-to-the-un_english.pdf