

OECD Public Governance Policy Papers

Harnessing the global transformations to accelerate equality in Norway

OECD Scan



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Abstract

Strengthening equality is central to Norway's economic resilience, labour supply, long-term competitiveness and its capacity to respond to major global transformations. This OECD paper looks at how Norway can strengthen gender equality in a rapidly changing world. It highlights Norway's strong foundations, including high levels of women's participation in the labour market, supportive family policies, and a strong legal and institutional framework. At the same time, it shows that persistent challenges, such as high rates of part-time work among women, the motherhood penalty, and gender segregation in education and jobs, continue to limit opportunities. The paper offers practical recommendations to turn ambition into action across government, strengthen accountability, and ensure equality policy remains fit for the future.

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The preparation of the paper was overseen by Gillian Dorner, Deputy Director (GOV); Tatyana Teplova, Senior Counsellor and Head of GOV's Global Partnerships, Inclusion and Justice Division (GPIJ); Pinar Guven, Head of Inclusiveness Cluster in GPIJ; and Monika Queisser, Senior Counsellor and Head of Social Policy (ELS). The development of the paper was managed by Stefani Cooper (GOV); the main authors are Stefani Cooper (GOV) and Valentina Patrini (ELS). The authors are grateful to Sandra Charles and Denise Gareau, Government of Canada, for their valuable inputs as peers; to Jisoo Yoon (GOV), Jasmin Thomas (ELS) and Maxime Ladaïque (ELS) for their research support and to Ciara Muller and Andrea Uhrhammer, for their editorial and publication support.

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Executive summary

At the request of the Norwegian Ministry for Culture and Equality, the OECD conducted a scan of gender equality in the context of global transformations in Norway. The purpose was to identify ways to strengthen Norway's approach to equality and support the implementation of the 2025–2030 Strategy for Equality Between Women and Men. The Scan aims to enhance the public administration's capacity to integrate equality into public policy, particularly in response to emerging global challenges.

Drawing on input from over 30 stakeholder groups – including national and local authorities, social partners, the Sami Parliament, and civil society (full list in Annex A) – the Scan provides a situation analysis and recommendations for the future direction of equality policy in Norway. It also reflects the standards established in the 2013 and 2015 OECD Recommendations on Gender Equality.

Norway leads on equality and has strong foundations yet remains exposed to risk amidst the global transformations

Norway has long been recognised as a global leader in gender equality across the OECD, with high levels of women's labour force participation (LFP), strong family support policies such as paid parental leave and universal childcare, and widespread support for egalitarian gender norms. Norway also has clear institutional commitment to equality. For example, the updated Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act (2018) imposes a positive duty on public authorities to actively and systematically work to promote equality in all of their activities. Indeed, Norway has allocated responsibility for achieving equality across all ministries and agencies. Norway has a range of institutions implementing their equality programme of work including a Ministry for Equality and dedicated implementation support within government and civil society, demonstrating a robust system for promoting and monitoring equality. Underpinning this, the government has explicitly recognised the importance of equality in their policy priorities. Indeed, recent steps across a number of sectors to adopt strategies aimed at achieving inclusive and equal transformations signal renewed political commitment. This is complemented by Norway's commitment to equality for men and boys, including through the appointment of the Men's Committee in 2022 and the work of the Reform Resource Centre for Men. These strengths have helped narrow labour market gender gaps and promote a more inclusive society.

Targeting education and labour market gaps

However, persistent challenges risk undermining this progress: high rates of part-time work among women, a persistent motherhood penalty in terms of career progression and pay, and persistent structural segregation in education and employment. To address these challenges, the OECD recommends:

- Targeting persistent gender gaps in both LFP and hours worked, including through inclusive employment pathways for specific groups, such as migrant women.

- To drive further economic growth, continue efforts to narrow gaps in education and labour markets through targeted incentives, educational reforms, and public-private partnerships that support women's entry into STEM, green, and digital fields, and men's entry into traditionally women-dominated fields such as health, care and education.

Translating commitment into system-wide action

Despite strong political commitment, equality is not yet integrated as a strategic tool across government. Most critically, there is a disconnect between Norway's equality ambitions and how these are operationalised across government. Ministries do not routinely connect equality objectives with broader national economic goals such as full employment, industry competitiveness and innovation, particularly in the energy, green and digital sectors, despite their obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty and the Employer Equality Duty (sections 24 and 26 of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act). Moreover, there is room to shift the focus from approaching equality as a box to tick or search for a problem to solve, towards harnessing equality as a strategic driver of resilient and inclusive growth. In transforming sectors, equality work remains disconnected from central planning and decision-making processes. A reliance on gender-neutral policy and legislative design, grounded in the assumption that equality has already been achieved, can obscure new forms of disadvantage or inequality – including digital exclusion and technology-facilitated gender-based violence – as rapid societal and technological change accelerates. To address these challenges, the OECD recommends:

- Integrating equality commitments as vital cross-cutting objectives in overarching political platforms, policy priority statements and national strategic planning.
- Embedding minimum equality standards in the *Instructions for Official Studies* and Guidance (Norway's regulatory impact assessment process) for all major policy and legislative decisions, especially in sectors responding to rapid change.
- Launching flagship whole-of-government initiatives that position equality as central to achieving national priorities. For example, an inaugural 'Inclusive Full Employment' initiative across ministries could demonstrate how equality enhances productivity and labour market participation.
- Consistently embedding equality into sectoral transformation strategies, particularly in energy, digitalisation, and green innovation.
- Framing equality as an enabler of competitiveness in strategy and communications, in addition to being a social and human rights obligation, in order to shift from compliance to strategic value.

Building capacity and sustainability for long-term impact

Sustained progress on equality depends on a strong evidence base and the institutional capacity to apply that evidence in policymaking. Existing institutions such as the Ministry for Culture and Equality, Bufdir and Statistics Norway play pivotal roles, but resourcing constraints and uneven expertise across line ministries constrain impact. Sectors are rapidly transforming yet equality and impact data from across fast-changing industries are incomplete, limiting the government's ability to design responsive policies that also tackle disadvantage and structural discrimination. While some ministries are commendably embedding equality into their national strategies, the contribution of these policies to national equality goals is unclear. Lastly, equality work is often isolated within individual ministries without clear accountability mechanisms. To address these challenges, the OECD recommends:

- Further capitalising on the potential of equality institutions to strengthen government-wide capacity for mainstreaming equality by continuing to equip these institutions with the expertise, tools, and

coordination mechanisms needed to deliver effective awareness-raising and training for public officials.

- Developing a whole-of-government monitoring and evaluation framework to assess outcomes across institutions.
- Standardising performance reporting across ministries and agencies to focus on the results and impact of strategies and promote the measurement of outcomes, not just reporting of activities.
- Enhancing data collection and analysis, especially in the green and digital sectors, to better identify and address inequality and discrimination risks.
- Expanding the national equality knowledge repository managed by Bufdir.

1 Overview of recommendations

To strengthen Norway's approach to equality and support the implementation of the 2025–2030 Strategy for Equality Between Women and Men, the OECD recommends:

Table 1. Summary of recommendations

Roadmap focus	Recommendations	Suggested actions	Suggested responsibility	Suggested timeframe
Work together to create an enabling environment for equality policy	Recommendation 1: Strengthen existing mechanisms to accelerate whole-of-government progress	A. Promote equality as a strategic objective, including in public policy priority statements, national economic and social plans, budgets, and whole-of-government frameworks. B. Use policy priority allocation letters to integrate equality across whole-of-government action C. Embed minimum equality standards in the Instructions for Official Studies and Guidance (Norway's regulatory impact assessment process) for all major policy and legislative decisions, especially in sectors responding to rapid change. D. Consistently embed equality into sectoral transformation strategies, particularly in energy, digitalisation and green innovation E. Reframe equality as a strategic driver of competitiveness and inclusive growth, in addition to human rights obligation	Centre of Government, with policy leadership from the Ministry for Equality and Bufdir	Short-term
Build whole-of-government action and evidence to demonstrate the value of equality as a strategic driver of competitiveness and economic growth	Recommendation 2: Develop a series of whole-of-government flagship initiatives to achieve core government priorities through the equality policy framework	A. Consider developing an inaugural whole-of-government flagship initiative on achieving inclusive full employment B. Introduce a whole-of-government M&E framework to build the evidence base showing how equality contributes to competitiveness, innovation, and inclusive growth C. Standardise performance reporting across ministries and agencies to focus on the results and impact of strategies and promote the measurement of outcomes, not just reporting of activities	All Ministries, with leadership from the Ministry of Culture and Equality, Bufdir and the Centre of Government	Medium-term
Building capacity, awareness raising and knowledge	Recommendation 3: Focus on awareness raising,	A. Continue investing in equality institutions, including equipping them with the expertise, tools and	The Ministry of Culture and Equality,	Long-term

Roadmap focus	Recommendations	Suggested actions	Suggested responsibility	Suggested timeframe
translation for better policies and outcomes	capacity building and knowledge translation	coordination mechanisms needed to deliver government-wide capacity for mainstreaming gender B. Prioritise targeted awareness raising, capacity building and knowledge translation across the public sector for greater engagement and impact C. Clarify the education, training and capacity building roles of Bufdir and the Ombud D. Expand intersectional equality data and research in transforming sectors including green, energy and digital E. Expand the national equality knowledge repository, consolidating good practices, analytical tools and sector-specific guidance F. Build capacity to apply data insights in decision-making and ensure consistent training across ministries	Bufdir, Ombud, Statistics Norway and all sectors involved in implementing equality policy	

2 Norway leads on equality yet remains exposed to risks amidst global transformations

Norway's progressive approach to gender equality has positioned it as a global leader, particularly in closing gaps between women and men across education, employment and leadership. This success reflects strong policy frameworks and institutional commitment as well as meaningful cultural change, such as shifting gender norms, promoting shared caregiving responsibilities, and reducing gendered educational and occupational choices. Such strengths should be harnessed to sustain progress as Norway navigates emerging global transformations including the digital and green transformations, demographic shifts, and geopolitical instability. Without strengthening of Norway's strategic approach to equality, existing disparities may widen, limiting Norway's ability to fully harness the potential for inclusive economic and social growth afforded by the global transformations. Gender gaps in leadership roles within fast-changing sectors such as energy and technology also risk narrowing the perspectives shaping these global transformations.

Norway has a solid track record in gender equality and labour markets, yet remains exposed to risks related to the current global transformations

Norway stands out as one of the OECD countries with the highest equality between men and women, reaching top levels across a range of gender equality measures in education, employment and governance. Yet, gender gaps remain and may become more pronounced in the context of the digital and green transformation and beyond.

Gender gaps in Norway's labour market are relatively narrow, supported by family policies and gender norms

Thanks to supportive family policies and egalitarian norms, Norway's labour market gender gaps are relatively small compared to other OECD countries. Further narrowing them would advance gender equality and foster economic growth.

Extensive family supports help both women and men participate in the labour market

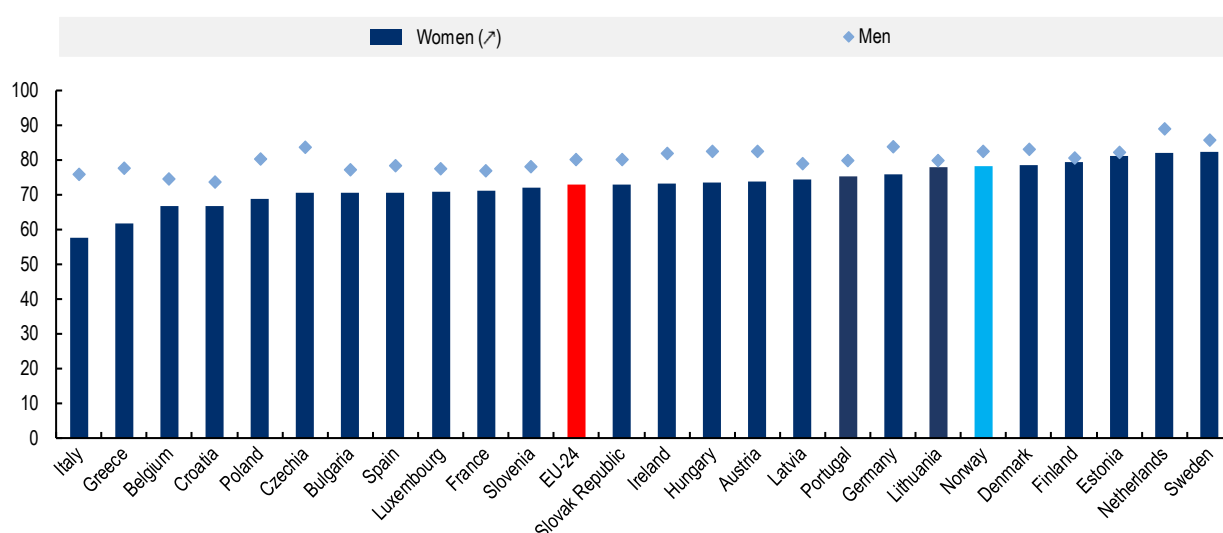
Since the 1970s, Norway has progressively moved away from the traditional male breadwinner model, advancing reforms to build a more gender-equal state. These reforms have promoted women as equal contributors in the labour market and the role of men as caretakers. Policies aim to enable full labour market participation for both women and men, and mothers and fathers, including by facilitating the reconciliation of work and family life – with well-paid parental leave with reserved periods for care by both parents, as well as family services such as universal and affordable childcare, following the end of paid leave (OECD, 2023^[1]). In this context, in 1993 Norway pioneered the world's first non-transferable parental

leave entitlement for fathers (the *father's quota*), initially providing four weeks of paid leave (Haas and Rostgaard, 2011^[2]) and gradually expanded to 15 weeks in 2018. Since its introduction, fathers' use of parental leave has increased substantially, though usage strongly depends on the length of the quota (Kvande, 2021^[3]). Reserving part of parental leave for fathers supports family well-being and a more equal sharing of paid and unpaid work. Fathers' leave-taking is associated with higher maternal income, a more balanced division of household and care tasks, and stronger father-child relationships (OECD, 2023^[1]).

With this strong dual-earner and care-sharing model, Norway has overall high labour force participation (LFP) rates – 83% for men and 78% for women (Figure 1). High employment rates extend to women who become mothers. In 2020, 78% of Norwegian mothers with children under five were employed, only slightly below the 80% employment rate of women without children under 15. This gap is much narrower than in most other OECD countries, where motherhood is more strongly associated with lower employment (OECD, 2023^[1]).

Figure 1. Women participate in the labour market less than men

Labour force participation rates (%), women and men (15-64), 2023



Note: EU-24 refers to the unweighted average of the 24 EU countries with available data for this indicator. ↗ indicates that the data is sorted according to this series in ascending order.

Source: OECD Data Explorer "Labour force participation rate" (<http://data-explorer.oecd.org/s/zr>).

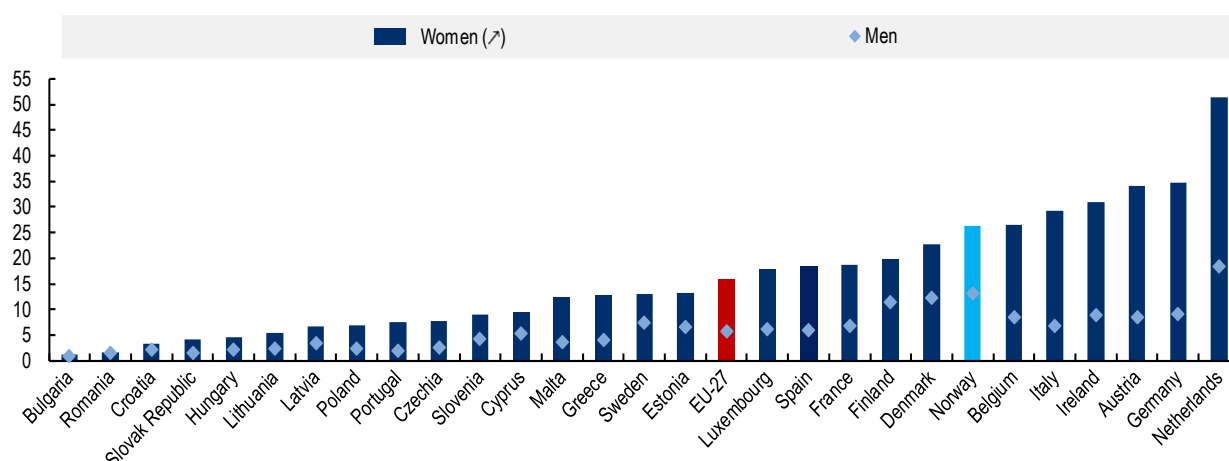
Corresponding with this, egalitarian gender norms are fairly common in Norway. For example, 4% of respondents to the World Value Survey¹ in Norway believe that men are more entitled to a job during periods of job scarcity, compared to an OECD average of 17%, and 88% of people disagree that men make better business executives than women, higher than the OECD average of 77% (OECD, 2025^[4]). Consistently, findings from the Norwegian CORE Survey 2022–25 indicate broad support for an egalitarian family model, with only a small minority of respondents (most of whom are men) favouring more traditional approaches (CORE, 2025^[5]). Norway also ranks among the most gender-equal countries in the OECD's Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) (OECD, 2023^[6]). However, SIGI also shows that further work is required to address some remaining harmful attitudes. For example, 26% of the Norwegian population believe that children suffer when a mother works for pay, and 29% agree it can cause problems when a woman earns more money than her husband (OECD, 2023^[7]).

Gender gaps in part-time employment mirror gender gaps in family responsibilities

Women in Norway are twice as likely as men to work part-time (26% compared to 13%) (Figure 2), reflecting gender differences in working-time arrangements across the life course. Part-time work is particularly common among women in their 30s, when gender gaps in full-time employment are most pronounced, while part-time arrangements are also prevalent among younger adults (often linked to education) and older workers (Rogne and Salvanes, 2025^[8]). As in all OECD countries, women spend more time on unpaid household work than men – about 3/4 of an hour more per day in 2022² – limiting their long-term earnings potential and contributing to gender gaps in wages and pensions. While the gender wage gap for full-time earners has narrowed – from 8.3% in 2009 to 4.5% in 2023 – a “motherhood penalty” (a shortfall in wage growth following childbirth) continues to affect women’s career progression and financial outcomes over the life course (OECD, 2019^[9]; 2023^[11]; 2023^[10]; 2025^[4]; Evertsson, Moberg and van der Vleuten, 2025^[11]). This persists despite recent cohort trends pointing to increasing full-time employment among younger generations of women, including mothers (Rogne and Salvanes, 2025^[8]), and increases in part-time employment for men (OECD, 2024^[12]). Accordingly, results from the Norwegian CORE Survey 2022-25 show that around half of both women and men consider that having children limits women’s career opportunities, while only 14% think the same applies to men. Men are somewhat more likely than women to view children as a potential obstacle to men’s career progression (CORE, 2025^[5]).

Figure 2. Women are more likely to work part-time than men

Part-time employment rates (%) for women and men (15-64), total employment, 2023



Note: EU-27 is an unweighted average.

Source: OECD Data Explorer, “Incidence of full-time and part-time employment based on OECD-harmonized definition” (<http://data-explorer.oecd.org/s/118>).

Results from the 2024 OECD Risks that Matter (RTM) Survey show that in Norway, women express higher concern than men about access to good-quality long-term care for family members (52% vs. 48% for elderly care; 40% vs. 35% for working-age care), though both rates remain below the OECD average. Interestingly, Norwegian women are less concerned than men about having to give up their job to provide unpaid care (22% vs. 32%), which contrasts with the broader trend across OECD countries. Respondents also report lower concern about access to childcare or education compared to the OECD average, particularly women (25% in Norway vs. 41% in the OECD). This may reflect that confidence in the availability of good-quality, affordable public services locally is also relatively high, with around 45% of men

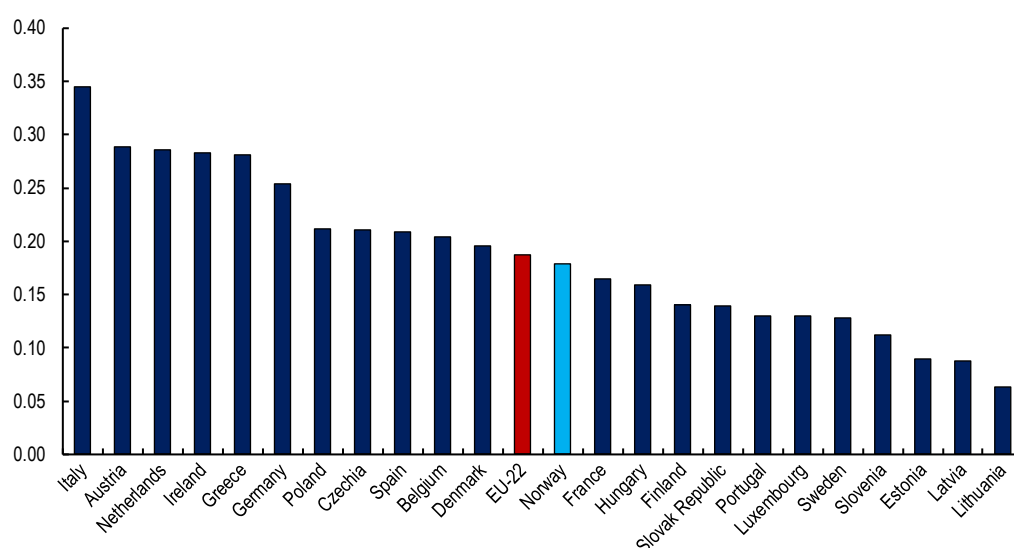
and 44% of women in Norway believing they would have access to quality and affordable family supports if needed – above the OECD average (41% for men and 36% for women) (OECD, 2024^[13]; 2025^[4]).

Closing gender gaps in labour force participation and hours worked would boost GDP

Gender gaps in labour market outcomes not only hinder progress towards gender equality but also incur significant economic costs resulting from the underutilisation of a diverse talent pool. In the context of population ageing, marked by longer lifespans and declining or stagnant fertility, boosting labour market participation among all women is both a moral and an economic necessity. Indeed, closing gender gaps in labour force participation (LFP) and working hours can have substantial effects on economic growth. Figure 3 presents economic output projections assuming a convergence of women's and men's LFP and working hours across different 5-year-age-groups by 2060, most of which implies an increase in women's LFP and working hours relative to men's levels. In Norway, closing such gaps could raise annual GDP growth by 0.18 percentage points by 2060, slightly below the EU average of 0.19 percentage points.

Figure 3. Gains in economic growth from closing gender participation and working hours gaps

Difference relative to the baseline in projected average annual rate of growth in potential GDP per capita over the period 2023-60, assuming closure of gender gaps in labour force participation and working hours, percentage points



Note: EU-22 refers to the unweighted average of the 22 EU countries with available data for this indicator. The projections assume that labour force participation (LFP) and working hours gaps close by 2060. For LFP, this is based on convergence of male and female levels to the highest level for each 5-year age groups in each country, following baseline labour force projections over the period 2023-2060. In the absence of future working hours forecasts, projections are based on convergence from a constant 2022 level (or latest available). See Fluchtmann, Keese and Adema (2024^[14]) for a description of the method and data used.

Source: OECD estimates based on OECD Population Data, OECD Employment Database and the OECD Long-Term Growth Model.

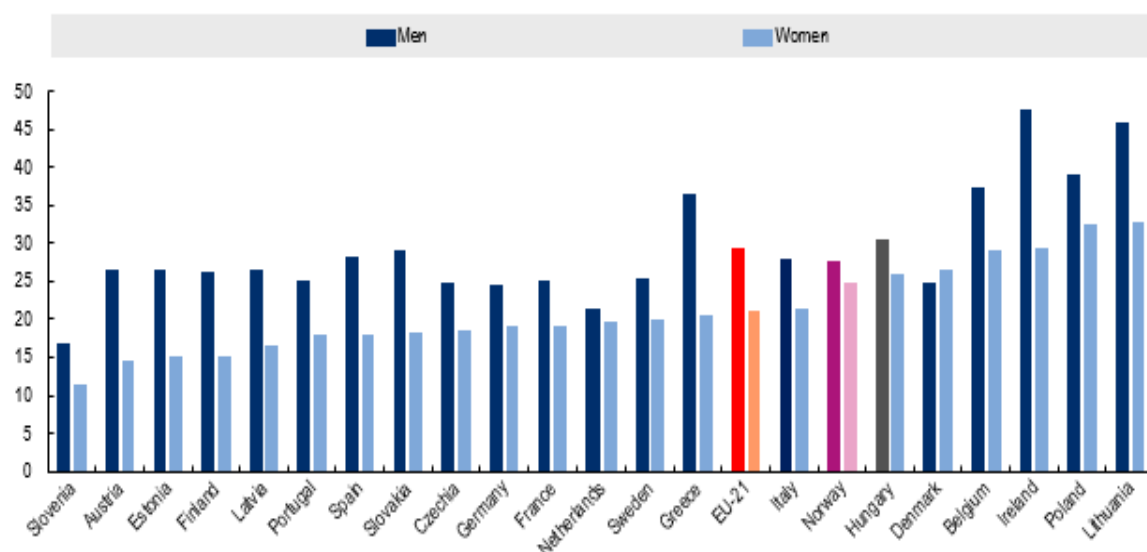
Some groups of women face additional barriers to full employment

Effectively addressing gender gaps in labour market outcomes requires responding to the diverse intersecting barriers faced by different groups of women. For instance, immigrant women in Norway have significantly lower employment rates compared to native-born women, and they are also disproportionately concentrated in low wage sectors such as cleaning and hospitality, even when highly educated – reflecting challenges such as language proficiency and recognition of foreign qualifications, among others (OECD,

2022^[15]; Statistics Norway, 2025^[16]). Similarly, women with disability continue to experience persistently low employment rates compared to women without disability (Figure 4); and overall, gaps are more pronounced for men (OECD, 2022^[17]). These intersectional disadvantages underscore the importance of tailoring policies to the specific needs of underrepresented groups while addressing structural inequalities, to ensure that efforts to close gender labour gaps are inclusive, equitable and effective across the full diversity of the working-age population.

Figure 4. Women and men with disability have lower employment rates than those without

Disability employment gap (percentage points), men and women, 2024



Notes: Some disability and severe disability are combined. The disability employment gap is defined as the difference between the employment rates of people with no and those with some or severe limitation in their daily activities, aged 20-64. The employment rate is calculated by dividing the number of persons aged 20 to 64 in employment by the total population of the same age group.

Source: Eurostat "Disability employment gap by level of activity limitation and sex" (https://doi.org/10.2908/TEPSR_SP200).

Closing gender disparities in the labour market also requires adapting to emerging trends and needs, e.g. those linked to the green and digital transformations, which are reshaping labour market demands and call for a resilient workforce. While everyone will be affected in terms of work, health and well-being, impacts are unlikely to be gender neutral. Differences in access to resources and knowledge, representation in leadership and research & development, physiological factors, patterns of employment and consumption, as well as gender norms and stereotypes, may lead to differentiated outcomes, create new challenges and/or expand existing gaps, and should be taken into account in policy design (OECD, 2024^[18]; 2025^[4]).

Gender segregation in fields of studies and in the labour market persists

Gender segregation in educational choices sets the basis for a segregated labour market, where women are overrepresented in the health, care and education sectors, while men are more likely to work in technical fields, industry, and construction (Ministry of Culture and Equality, 2024^[19]; Kilden, 2022^[20]). At the same time, men are mainly concentrated in the private sector, while women are more evenly distributed across private and public employment (Bufdir, 2024^[21]).

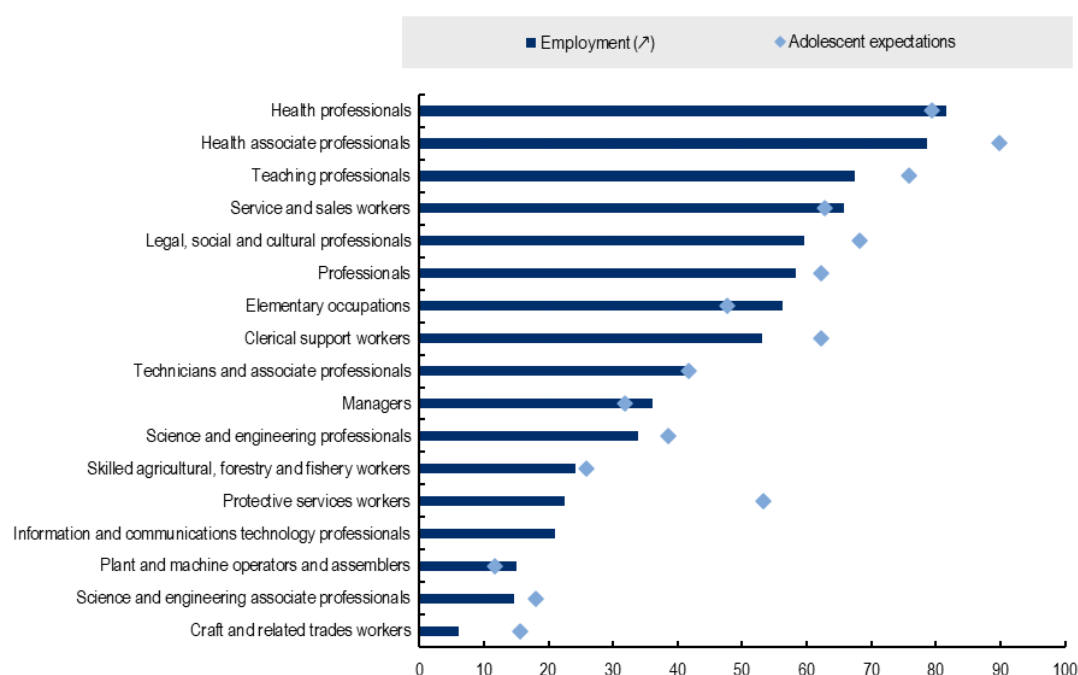
Such segregation starts early, materialising in gendered educational choices and career expectations. Women remain underrepresented in STEM studies overall, accounting for 31% of graduates in Norway – below the OECD average of 34%. In Norway, women represent 82% of graduates in health and welfare

and 73% in education, compared to 25% in engineering, manufacturing and construction, and only 26% in ICT fields; these patterns are broadly similar across OECD countries (OECD Data Explorer, 2024^[22]).

Occupational segregation in adolescents' career expectations closely mirrors current levels of occupational segregation. Longitudinal evidence suggests that career aspirations expressed by individuals at age 15 tend to align closely with the types of jobs they later pursue in adulthood (Mann et al., 2020^[23]). OECD PISA 2022 data show that in Norway, most 15-year-old students expecting to work in male-dominated professions are boys, and the opposite happens for women-dominated professions (Figure 5). Gender-balanced career expectations are rare: only a small number of occupations – such as technicians and elementary occupations and protective service workers – show a relatively even gender distribution. Changes, where observed, appear to be driven mainly by girls' choices rather than boys' (Barth, Reisel and Misje Østbakken, 2023^[24]). Overall, the gender distribution of career aspirations for each profession suggests that occupational segregation is likely to persist into the next generation of the Norwegian workforce.

Figure 5. Occupational segregation in adolescents' career expectations mirrors occupational segregation in the labour market

Share (%) of 15-year-old students reporting career expectations for selected occupations who are girls compared to share (%) of employed persons (15-64) in selected occupations who are women, Norway



Note: Occupations refer to ISCO 08 classifications. Data for adolescent expectations refer to 2022. Data for employment refer to 2024.

Source: Eurostat (2024) "Employed persons by detailed occupation (ISCO-08 two-digit level)" (10.2908/LFSA_EGAI2D) combined with OECD Secretariat calculations using publicly available microdata from the 2022 OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) (<https://www.oecd.org/en/data/datasets/pisa-2022-database.html#data>).

Current megatrends reinforce the need to address labour-market segregation from a comprehensive perspective that mobilises both women and men. For instance, demographic ageing is expected to generate strong and sustained labour shortages in care-related sectors, while technological change is expanding demand for skills concentrated in ICT-intensive occupations. In Norway, around nine in ten long-term care workers are women, and demand for workers in this sector is projected to increase markedly

as population ageing accelerates, yet care jobs remain relatively low paid and characterised by demanding working conditions (OECD, 2023^[25]). Addressing future labour gaps will require improving job quality and pay in these female-dominated sectors and making these occupations more attractive to all workers, including men. At the same time, women remain underrepresented in ICT and other technology-intensive fields that are central to the digital and green transitions that are reshaping labour demand and tend to offer higher pay and stronger career prospects (see below). These gender equality issues reflect structural patterns that affect both women and men across the life course (Box 1).

Box 1. Identifying and addressing gender equality challenges affecting boys and men in Norway

While women, on average, earn less and remain underrepresented in leadership positions than men, boys and men face a distinct set of disadvantages that are less visible in aggregate labour-market indicators but crucial for understanding persistent gender segregation.

Boys in Norway underperform relative to girls at several stages of the education system and are less likely to complete upper secondary education or pursue higher education. Men are also overrepresented in indicators of social vulnerability, including incarceration, substance abuse, and suicide mortality. These patterns point to gender-specific risks that accumulate over the life course and affect men's labour-market attachment, health outcomes and social inclusion.

Norway's gender-segregated labour market reflects not only barriers faced by women in male-dominated fields, but also the persistent underrepresentation of men in female-dominated sectors such as health, care and education. Despite strong labour demand in these sectors, men's participation remains low. Reducing segregation therefore requires policies that address norms, incentives and institutional pathways shaping educational and occupational choices for both girls and boys.

Recognising these challenges, the Norwegian government appointed a Men's Committee in 2022 to examine gender equality outcomes with a focus on boys and men. Its 2024 report documents gender gaps affecting men in education, working life, health and caregiving, and calls for a more inclusive equality framework that addresses gendered disadvantages wherever they arise. The findings will be followed up in a white paper on boys' and men's equality challenges, expected in 2026.

Civil-society actors also contribute to this agenda. As a positive example, *Reform – Resource centre for men* is a politically independent Norwegian non-profit organisation working towards gender equality from a male perspective, with a focus on fatherhood and caregiving, inclusive masculinities, men's mental health and wellbeing, violence prevention, and men's roles in family and working life. Through research, policy engagement and training activities with schools, employers and municipalities, Reform promotes gender equality as a shared societal challenge that concerns both women and men.

Source: NOU (2024^[26]), *Likestillingens neste steg (The next step towards equality)* and Reform (2017^[27]), *Gender equality with a male perspective*.

Gender gaps in leadership, innovation and perceptions of the green and digital transitions

Norway is a frontrunner in digitalisation and environmental policies (OECD, 2022^[28]; 2024^[29]). It invests heavily in technological development and innovation to support its green transformation (OECD, 2022^[28]; 2025^[30]) and has one of the most digitally advanced governments in the OECD (OECD, 2024^[31]). However, as labour markets evolve, Norway will need to face the gender-differentiated impacts of occupational and industrial segregation also in relation to the green and digital transition.

Governments have a key role to play in steering the shift away from fossil fuels by shaping incentives through policy. Yet, women remain underrepresented in legislative and ministerial positions across nearly all OECD countries – including within environment-related portfolios. Norway performs significantly above

the OECD average in this area: in 2024, women held 44% of political executive positions in national ministries responsible for environment and climate change, compared to an OECD average of 34% (OECD, 2025^[4]; EIGE, 2024^[32]). Greater representation of women in decision-making roles is linked to stronger environmental outcomes – including more ambitious climate policies, improved environmental quality, greater support for environmental legislation, increased attention to gender-specific impacts, and a higher likelihood of ratifying international environmental treaties (OECD, 2025^[4]). Results from the 2024 OECD RTM Survey (OECD, 2024^[13]) also show that (consistent with other OECD countries) more women (69%) than men (56%) in Norway are concerned about climate and (possibly in relation to that) women are more likely to believe the government is not doing enough to tackle climate change (45% vs 34% of men).

Yet, horizontal segregation means that women continue to be underrepresented in most science-related fields, including innovations related to climate and the environment. This is evident in environmental science research: while their share has increased over time, women accounted for just 31% of active authors in environmental science in Norway over the 2014–18 period – up from 17% in 1999–2003, but still below parity and in line with the OECD-23 average (34%) (OECD, 2025^[4]; De Kleijn et al., 2020^[33]).

While the net employment effects of the green transition remain uncertain, men are more likely to lose their jobs due to their overrepresentation in carbon-intensive sectors, while women remain underrepresented in emerging green jobs (OECD, 2025^[4]). Similarly, while evidence on gender-specific impacts of the digital transformation remains mixed, it is expected to disrupt exposed occupations and affect population groups unequally. Occupational and industrial segregation can lead to different exposures and vulnerabilities for women and men in this context, with different capacities to deal with such change – i.e. acquiring new skills or using emerging digital tools (OECD, 2025^[4]). Gender gaps in digital skills, such as programming, may also contribute to different labour market outcomes for women and men (OECD, 2024^[34]).

Skills shortages remain a barrier to digital transformation in Norway, where ICT specialists represent 4.5% of total employment, only slightly above the EU average of 4.3%, and women account for just about 20% of these roles, highlighting disparities in access to digital careers. Overall, further opportunities remain for Norway to fully benefit from digital-intensive sectors, which account for 35% of value-added growth – behind other Nordic countries (OECD, 2024^[29]). In 2018, 43% of Norway's labour force was employed in high and medium-high digital-intensive industries – below the OECD average of 50%, showing room for improvement to meet the demands of a highly digital economy (OECD, n.d.^[35]).

Results from the 2024 OECD RTM Survey show that women and men recognise the potential benefits and risks of the digital transformation. Men, however, are more likely to expect positive impacts – such as improved work-life balance or less repetitive tasks. At the same time, men report greater concern than women about job loss due to automation or insufficient/incompatible technical skills. The low values observed for women in Norway may be linked to their underrepresentation in ICT occupations.

3 Building on strong foundations to advance equality amidst global transformations

Norway has a mature equality model, backed by a robust institutional framework and sustained leadership

Norway's mature equality model and institutional framework, aligned with the standards set in the 2013 and 2015 OECD Gender Recommendations, provide a strong foundation to build on in order to remain at the forefront of equality policy amidst global transformations.

Sound legislative and institutional architecture

Legislative framework

Norway benefits from a mature and coherent legislative framework that promotes equality and prohibits discrimination. Norway ratified the CEDAW Convention in 1981. The Convention is incorporated into the Human Rights Act (2009), which means that CEDAW applies as Norwegian law and takes precedence over conflicting national legislation. Non-discrimination is also enshrined in the Constitution. Norway adopted its first Gender Equality Act in 1978. In 2018, this was replaced by the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act, which consolidated protections against discrimination on multiple grounds, including gender, pregnancy, caregiving responsibilities, disability, age, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and gender identity. The Act aims to promote equality and prevent discrimination in all areas of society, with a particular focus on improving the position of women and minorities. The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act includes provisions that require public authorities, employers, and social partners to actively promote equality and prevent discrimination and harassment.

Awareness of, and full compliance with, these laws and regulations by public authorities, employers and the public is still a work in progress in some settings. This may be in part due to limited incentives and/or sanctions to support compliance.

Regulatory approach to gender mainstreaming

Section 24 of the Act imposes a positive duty on public authorities to actively and systematically work to promote equality in all of their activities, including budgeting, and integrate equality considerations across their work. Norway's duty broadly aligns with gender impact assessment requirements across other OECD countries. For example, 26 out of 34 countries that responded to the 2021 OECD Survey on Gender Mainstreaming and Governance (hereinafter, the 2021 GMG Survey) have a formal requirement for GIAs in place. Section 26 of the Act requires all employers, regardless of size and sector, to work actively to promote equality, prevent discrimination and seek to prevent harassment, sexual harassment and gender-

based violence, including in the areas of recruitment, pay and working conditions, promotion, development opportunities, accommodation and the opportunity to combine work with family life. All public undertakings, regardless of size, and private undertakings that ordinarily employ more than 50 persons, are required to follow a four-step method, which means that they shall investigate whether there is a risk of discrimination or other barriers to equality, analyse the causes of identified risks, and take appropriate action.

Beyond the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act, the Instructions for Official Studies is an additional regulatory mechanism that supports equality work across ministries and agencies. The current Instructions, issued by Royal Decree on 18 October 2024, set out mandatory procedures for preparing government-sponsored studies, legislative proposals, regulations, and reports to the *Storting*³. It requires a comprehensive assessment of consequences, analysing financial, administrative, environmental, societal, and legal impacts, with quantification where possible. At a minimum, ‘fundamental questions’ raised by a proposed government measure must be considered in a balanced, systematic and integrated manner.⁴ Further positive and negative effects of the proposed measures, how permanent these are expected to be, and who will be affected by the measures must also be considered.

The general guide to the Instructions for Official Studies states that if the measure being assessed is likely to have significant implications for equality, the case must be submitted to the Ministry of Culture and Equality. The Ministry of Culture and Equality receives several cases for consultation and provides input on many of them.

Institutions involved in implementing the equality framework

Norway’s equality and anti-discrimination model is implemented by a range of important institutions including the Ministry for Culture and Equality (who hold policy responsibility for the Equality and Non-Discrimination Act), public authorities, employers and social partners (who have obligations under the Act), and a range of institutions that support implementation including the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir), the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud (Ombud), the Anti-Discrimination Tribunal (Tribunal), five regional Equality Centres including Reform (the Resource Centre for Men), and data and research institutions such as Statistics Norway, and CORE (the Gender Equality Research Centre) (see Box 2 for further information).

Collectively, these institutions aim to provide critical legal protection, raise awareness and drive system-wide cultural change, making Norway a model for effective equality governance. An overview of the key institutions responsible for implementing these frameworks is discussed in more detail in Box 2.

Accountability

Section 24 of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act requires all employers, regardless of size or sector, to document their efforts to promote equality while section 26 requires all public enterprises and private enterprises with more than 50 (or 20) employees to issue a statement on the actual status of gender equality in their organisation as well as what they are doing to comply with the activity duty contained in section 26.

The Ombud is mandated to supervise the activity duty and duty to issue a statement under sections 24, 25, 26 and 26(a) (see section 5 of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud Act). Section 26(a) also includes an important accountability mechanism which allows impacted employees and their representatives, the Anti-Discrimination Tribunal, the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud and researchers to request documentation if necessary to investigate whether the employer has complied with its duty under section 26 (Ministry of Culture and Equality, 2025^[36]) (Lovdata, 2025^[37]).

Cases regarding an employer’s breach of the duty to issue a statement on gender equality (section 26(a)) can be brought before the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Tribunal. A party, the Ombud or other persons with legal standing may submit a case to the Tribunal.

Box 2. An overview of key institutions in the Norwegian equality ecosystem

Ministry of Culture and Equality

The Ministry of Culture and Equality is responsible for coordinating national equality policies, in addition to the Ministry's own sectoral responsibility for equality and non-discrimination policy (Ministry of Culture and Equality, 2024^[19]); (Ministry of Culture and Equality, n.d.^[38]). The Ministry also monitors the equality and non-discrimination work of the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs within the Ministry of Children and Families.

The Ministry also has responsibilities under the guidelines to the Instructions for Official Studies which requires all ministries to submit proposals for measures with significant implications for equality to the Ministry for Culture and Equality for consultation and input. The Ministry, in partnership with the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir) in the Ministry of Children and Families also supports with education and capacity building efforts, including through commissioning research, annual seminars for all sectors at the state level and a cross-sectoral working group on research on equality and non-discrimination.

Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir)

The Norwegian Directorate of Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir) is the specialist agency for gender equality, disability, ethnicity and sexual orientation, gender identity and gender issues. The Ministry of Children and Families, the Ministry of Culture and Equality and the Ministry for Labour and Inclusion govern different parts of Bufdir through an annual instruction letter. Each ministry tasks Bufdir with assignments funded through the state budget. Part of Bufdir's funding comes from these three Ministries. Bufdir's tasks include implementation of the Ministry's equality policy, documentation and knowledge development, promoting equality and providing guidance to public offices, executing policy measures (including following up national action plans), and administering grant schemes for gender equality policy organisations, among other responsibilities.

All public authorities and public service providers (including Ministries, agencies, county governors and municipalities)

All public authorities are responsible for achieving equality in their respective sectors and meeting their obligations under the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act. This includes the positive duty to actively and systematically work to promote equality in all of their activities, including budgeting, and integrate equality considerations across their work. Public service providers such as educational institutions and health care providers are also duty holders under the Act.

County Governors

Each county in Norway has a County Governor who represents the central government at the county level. The task of the County Governor's office is to make sure the goals, guidelines and actions of the Storting (parliament) are followed locally. On behalf of some of the national ministries, the County Governors' office fulfils a variety of administrative functions related to municipalities and individuals including the implementation of national policy in the county, as well as acting as a coordination and legal safeguard authority, in addition to other responsibilities. As public authorities, County Governors have specific responsibilities under the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act. County Governors such as Agder have policy documents (*Handlingsplan 2023-2026: Likestilling. Inkluderende. Mangfold*) setting out their main focus areas such as diversity and inclusion, recruitment, equal pay and leadership.

Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud

The Ombud is an independent public administrative agency administratively subordinate to the Ministry of Culture and Equality. It is tasked with promoting genuine equality and preventing discrimination in all

sectors of society on the basis of gender, pregnancy, leave in connection with childbirth or adoption, care responsibilities, ethnicity, religion, belief, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or age, as set out in the Norwegian Anti-Discrimination Ombud Act (Government of Norway, 2017^[39]).

The Ombud monitors the compliance of Norwegian law and practice with international obligations under three conventions related to equality, including CEDAW, and reports directly to the treaty bodies. Additionally, the Ombud fulfils its mandate by actively participating in public engagements such as public hearings and debates, awareness-raising, conducting research on relevant issues, providing free guidance to individuals, employers, and organisations regarding cases of discrimination as well as preventative efforts (Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud, n.d.^[40]). The Ombud also supervises the activity duty and duty to issue a statement under sections 24, 25, 26 and 26(a) of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act (see s5 of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud Act for further information).

Anti-Discrimination Tribunal

Established and governed by the same Act of 2017, the Anti-Discrimination Tribunal is an independent and impartial complaints body that can make final, binding decisions on discrimination, harassment, retaliation and sexual harassment cases. It can also impose penalties and redress measures (Government of Norway, 2017^[39]). The Tribunal has played a role in clarifying the use of positive discrimination to close gender gaps in certain areas of society.

Statistics Norway

Statistics Norway is the national statistical institute of Norway and is responsible for collecting and communicating statistics related to the economy, population, and society and for conducting related research and analysis. The Equality Coordinator at Statistics Norway serves as a key link between statistical work and national equality efforts, working to enhance integration of equality perspectives in official statistics. The position is primarily funded by Bufdir. Bufdir and Statistics Norway have an annual agreement specifying the delivery of tables and analyses. For further information on equality data collected by Statistics Norway, see Box 3.

Equality Centres

Norway has five independent Equality Centres covering all regions of Norway. The Equality Centres engage in long-term advocacy and development work for equality within all grounds of discrimination. They also produce experience-based knowledge and provide expertise on practical equality work. Furthermore, the centres are important links between Bufdir as a state actor and the municipalities, county authorities, state administrators, organisations and businesses in the districts. The Equality Centres seek to bridge the gap between research and practice, providing insights for better outcomes.

Reform – Ressurssenter for Menn

Reform Resource Centre for Men is a politically independent, non-profit organisation in Norway that works to advance gender equality by ensuring that men and boys are both included in gender equality efforts and that their specific life situations are better understood as part of broader equality work. It documents and shares knowledge on men's and boys' living conditions and challenges, offers courses, lectures, workshops and publications on issues such as health, violence, fatherhood and masculinity, and participates in national and international projects and public debates to inform policy and practice. Reform also runs support services and initiatives aimed at promoting active fatherhood, violence prevention, better physical and mental health, and more equal norms around masculinity.

Committee for Gender Balance and Diversity in Research and Higher Education

Since 2004, Norway has had a dedicated committee for gender balance in research (the KIF Committee). The Committee has its mandate from the Ministry of Education and Research. From 1 January 2026 their mandate also includes higher education. The KIF Committee aims to increase knowledge about how gender, social and ethnic background affect students' educational choices and critical transitions in research careers; from the path into research to senior-level and leadership positions. The KIF Committee supports and provides recommendations on measures that promote gender balance, equality and diversity among students and academic staff at universities, university colleges and research institutes.

Political buy-in and consensus on the importance of equality

Equality consistently features in political platforms in Norway, reflecting broad consensus on its value as a national objective and political leadership. This is highly commendable and not common practice across the OECD. An additional strength of equality work in Norway lies in the strong ministerial leadership and highly motivated and knowledgeable teams within the Ministry of Culture and Equality and Bufdir, leading for example to the development of Norway's first Gender Equality Strategy. Further, staff in the Equality Centres and the Ombud are an important source of expertise and policy thinking and are highly motivated to contribute to better equality outcomes.

In Norway, ministries enjoy a high degree of autonomy and a decentralised governmental system, with no one ministry having authority over another ministry. Each ministry is therefore responsible for integrating gender equality into the ordinary operations within their areas of responsibility. At the same time, OECD experience shows the importance of active engagement from the Centre of Government⁵ (CoG) including the Prime Minister's office and Ministry of Finance in driving equality as a shared, cross-government objective. While the political commitment to equality as a key policy issue in Norway is clear, this has not yet fully translated into sustained leadership from CoG to help embed it across all ministries. As a result, equality tends to be seen more as a standalone policy area led by the Ministry of Equality, which may limit the effectiveness of mainstreaming efforts.

Similarly, across ministries, there is widespread recognition that gender equality remains an important societal goal, even if perceptions of achievement may temper the sense of urgency. For example, labour force policies including parental leave consider how to support individuals who have taken career breaks back into the workforce, reflecting a nuanced understanding of how gender and other factors impact labour market participation. Further, the government recognises the important equality challenges and opportunities facing boys and men, including gender differences in the workplace and education, men as caregivers, vulnerability and health which will be outlined in a white paper due in 2026.

Importantly, several sectors have integrated equality across their recent strategies related to the global transformations, including the film and video games industries, the maritime and climate change sectors (See Box 3). These cultural and policy foundations create an enabling environment for more integrated and inclusive equality efforts across sectors. In addition, Norway's approach to facilitating gender equality in employment relations provides an important benchmark for other sectors and OECD countries as they engage stakeholders across the transformations. Notably, the tripartite working group on gender equality in public life launched in 2013 – a unique collaborative mechanism under the Council on Labour and Pension Policy comprised of employer and employee organisations, run by the Ministry of Culture and Equality on equality-related matters in employment and industry – exemplifies the constructive partnership approach of Norwegian labour relations and politics.

Box 3. Examples of strategies that have actively integrated equality

Norway's strategic initiatives in areas such as sports (Action Plan for Equal Opportunities in Cultural Life, Sports and Outdoor Activities 2024-2026), joint research projects and strategies in education and the film and video games industries stand out for their practical application of integrated equality efforts. For example, over the past five years, the Norwegian Film Institute has taken a structured, goal-oriented approach to promoting gender equality in Norway's film and video game industries, aligned with national film policy. This work has resulted in clear progress, for example, the proportion of women in projects receiving film production grants has reached 50% as of 2024 (Government of Norway, n.d.^[41]).

Additional sectors have taken proactive measures to integrate equality considerations in policy development, for example:

- **Time for Games: The Government's Computer Games Strategy 2024–2026: Launched in 2024**, this strategy seeks to promote diversity, equality, professionalism, and sustainable growth within Norway's video game industry (Ministry of Culture and Equality, 2023^[42]). It includes actions to increase women's participation in key roles and to map content diversity across Norwegian games. The strategy also aims to build an inclusive, accessible, and respectful gaming culture by tackling barriers related to gender, disability, ethnicity, and other factors (Ministry of Culture and Equality, 2023^[42]). Measures include national guidelines for inclusion, initiatives against hate speech and harassment, and the creation of a national competence centre for video game culture under the Norwegian Film Institute (Ministry of Culture and Equality, 2023^[42]).
- **Gender Equality Strategy for the Maritime Sector 2023**: This strategy responds to the maritime industry's ongoing green and digital transformation by promoting gender equality and inclusion. It focuses on four key areas: recruitment and role models, inclusive work environments, freedom from harassment, and workforce adaptation (Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries, 2023^[43]). The government pledges to integrate gender and diversity perspectives across maritime policy, partner with industry actors, and encourage more women to pursue maritime education and careers. It also supports gender-responsive workplace policies to ensure equal opportunities in this evolving sector (Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries, 2023^[43]).
- **White paper on a changing climate: United for a climate-resilient society**: This white paper outlines Norway's priorities for climate adaptation and resilience, highlighting the unequal effects of climate change across gender, ethnicity, income, age, and Indigenous status (Ministry of Climate and Environment, 2023^[44]). It includes a focus on improving the knowledge base for adaptation, particularly regarding the gendered impacts of climate change. One proposed measure is a national vulnerability analysis that incorporates gender perspectives to guide policymaking. Overall, the paper underscores the need for socially inclusive and equitable approaches to building climate resilience (Ministry of Climate and Environment, 2023^[44]).

Ambitious research and evidence agenda combined with sound data and research infrastructure

Norway places a strong emphasis on joint research initiatives, supported by data collection by the national statistics office, Statistics Norway. While Norway has a sound existing base of gender and intersectional data (see Box 4), ministries and stakeholders have identified important research and data gaps including health and experiences with all forms of violence, as well as quality of life, participation in public life and equality and discrimination challenges facing Sami people⁶, national minorities, migrants, people with

disability, and LGBT+ subgroups. Recognising these gaps, the Ministry for Culture and Equality has established a cross-sectoral working group to share and discuss research on equality and discrimination and identify needs and priorities for future research and development efforts. Since 2013, Bufdir has coordinated the biannual Equality Data Forum. The Forum brings together data users and producers, including various agencies, Statistics Norway, and the Ombud. Its primary aim is to promote more comprehensive and systematic data collection in the areas of equality and discrimination. While Statistics Norway does not have a dedicated gender data plan, since 2004, the Ministry of Culture and Equality has contributed funding and Bufdir has contributed expert advice to support the collection of greater equality-related statistics.

To supplement this data collection, equality institutions (e.g. Bufdir, Ombud and others) regularly acquire research and statistics from universities and research institutions to provide the empirical basis for understanding equality challenges, support the development of policy solutions and monitor progress. Some recent examples include exploring the implications of anti-discrimination regulations and AI development and exploring AI use to map hate speech in social media.

Box 4. Gender and intersectional data collection in Norway

Statistics Norway has a sound base of gender and intersectional data

Statistics Norway publishes regular reports on employment, education, income, and health. Detailed surveys and interviews provide insights into experiences with discrimination, access to services, and overall quality of life, supplemented by data from health and labour market registers. Major surveys in Norway break down respondents by geography, income, gender, age, level of education, marital status, and migrant background. While disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity are also asked about in some surveys, ethnicity and race are not asked about in any of the major surveys. Since 2020, Statistics Norway has conducted a national population survey on quality of life to shed light on living conditions and inequalities between different groups and track trends over time, such as for people with migrant background and sexual minorities.

At the municipal level, Statistics Norway tracks twelve indicators of gender equality in public life using administrative data. These cover representation in governance, employment, leadership, education, and income, as well as fathers' parental leave uptake and gender balance in business and educational structures (Statistics Norway, 2024^[45]).

Source: Responses to the 2025 OECD survey on gender mainstreaming amidst the global transformations in Norway (unpublished).

Dedicated gender equality strategy and an intersectional approach to equality

Norway's first national gender equality strategy (2025–2030) adopts an intersectional approach to promote equality across six key goals, including economic independence, equal work opportunities, freedom from violence, and better health (Ministry of Culture and Equality, 2024^[19]). It also addresses emerging global challenges by promoting women in STEM, ensuring AI aligns with equality laws, tackling online harassment, and introducing new gender-disaggregated indicators to track progress across sectors. The Strategy places responsibility for achieving gender equality in different sectors with each ministry, reinforcing the equality duties contained within Norway's anti-discrimination laws.

Norway's Strategy underscores the nation's strong capacity for cultural adaptation and openness to evolving social and technological change. This adaptability – evident in its progress on shared caregiving and gender equality for men and women – serves as a key asset for building resilience and inclusive growth amid digital, climate, and demographic transformations.

Box 5. Norway's strategies to address intersecting forms of inequality and discrimination

Norway has developed a range of policy measures to address intersecting forms of inequality and discrimination on different discrimination grounds, including: A Society For All. The government's strategy for the equality of persons with disabilities 2020–2030; Action plan for the equality of persons with disabilities 2020–2025; Action Plan on Gender and Sexual Diversity (2023–2026); Action Plan on Racism and Discrimination – New Initiatives 2024–2027; Action Plan against Anti-Semitism 2025–2030; Action plan to combat harassment and discrimination of the Sámi and; Action plan to combat racism and discrimination against Muslims.

4 Equality under pressure: Addressing governance gaps for a changing world

While Norway can build on solid foundations for promoting equality amidst global transformations, there exist a number of structural and strategic opportunities for improvement if Norway seeks to achieve inclusive global transformations and close remaining gaps. Most critically, there is a disconnect between Norway's equality ambitions and how these are operationalised across government.

Strategic disconnect: equality policy is often seen as peripheral to core government goals

The Norwegian Government's policy priorities (Government of Norway, 2025^[46]) focus on addressing global transformations in employment, energy, digitalisation, and security, while ensuring that the benefits are widely shared among the population. While these goals are a shared and pressing priority across ministries, equality policy is rarely viewed as a strategic tool to achieve this objective. For example, most ministries do not make the connection between full employment and the need to address structural barriers that exclude or limit participation by women, people with disability, and other underrepresented groups. Norway is not alone in this challenge which is common across the OECD (OECD, 2023^[47]).

The government's policy priorities recognise that transforming sectors, especially energy and technology, are central to Norway's economic future. Yet, persistent structural inequalities in these fields, including the underrepresentation of women in STEM, pose risks to Norway's ability to lead and remain competitive in a fast-changing world. The energy sector's challenges reflect a broader pattern: in transforming or high-growth sectors, equality work is often disconnected from central economic, innovation, and planning processes. While some ministries and agencies may be working to support equality in sectoral employment, these efforts are not always coordinated across the ecosystem. This means that equality is often absent when strategic decisions are made and the opportunity to shape the direction of transformation from the outset through inclusive planning and decision-making is frequently missed.

Further, some ministries approach the integration of gender considerations in policymaking as a search for a specific problem to solve, rather than as a strategic opportunity to improve policy outcomes. This problem-driven approach risks reducing gender mainstreaming to a compliance exercise, rather than fostering meaningful, evidence-based policy design grounded in equality data.

More broadly, equality initiatives across ministries tend to focus on specific populations in isolation, for example, women returning from career breaks or young people outside the labour market. While these initiatives are highly valuable, there is limited vision on how to collectively achieve this across all ministries and sectors. This piecemeal approach can limit policy impact and contribute to fragmented planning and inefficient resource use. Further work to link cross-cutting strategies across sectors would reinforce and strengthen policy efforts. For example, while the Action Plan for Digital Inclusion (2023-2026) recognises

the higher risk of digital exclusion for migrant women, it does not otherwise integrate gender equality considerations throughout action areas. Still, the cross-cutting principles and central focus on digital inclusion provide a promising entry point for gender mainstreaming in the digital transformation (Ministry of Digitalisation and Public Governance, 2023^[48]).

Sectoral responsibility can be challenging without strong involvement and leadership from the Centre of Government

In a governance system where equality is a horizontal and legally mandated responsibility shared across all ministries, strong involvement and visible leadership from the Centre of Government (CoG)⁷, including the Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry of Finance, is essential (OECD, 2023^[47]). Recognising the crucial role of the CoG in effective gender mainstreaming, OECD countries are increasingly establishing units within the CoG to promote horizontal and vertical coordination across government; demonstrating a willingness to steer and co-ordinate it from the centre and at the highest political level, in line with the 2015 OECD Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life (OECD, 2023^[47]). This is the case in Canada, see Box 6 in Chapter 3 for further information on how CoG promotes gender equality in that context.

Norway has a decentralised system where government is based on ministries with a high degree of autonomy, however, the CoG still has a critical role to play in driving equality as a shared, cross-government objective. While sector ministries are responsible for implementing equality within their mandates in Norway, the principle of individual ministerial responsibility can create tensions around ownership and accountability, especially in the absence of hierarchical authority between ministries. No single line ministry, including the Ministry of Culture and Equality, can unilaterally enforce action by others. In this context, the tools available to drive progress include strategic alignment, the government's political platform and policy priorities, and the integration of equality objectives into key governance mechanisms such as allocation letters, policy strategies, and budgeting processes. Without facilitation and signalling from the CoG to encourage coherence and prioritisation, particularly through financial and policy steering instruments, it becomes significantly more difficult to operationalise equality goals across government. A proactive role by the CoG is therefore critical to creating the enabling environment needed for effective equality mainstreaming.

Legislative and policy frameworks are generally designed in a 'gender-neutral' manner and may not consistently incorporate equality considerations

Norwegian ministries reported that while specific policy measures may be implemented to support women and girls where necessary, generally speaking, legislation and policy frameworks do not explicitly integrate equality considerations and are largely framed as gender-neutral. This is due to a widely held perception across ministries that a sufficient level of gender equality has been achieved, reflected in Norway's consistently high rankings on various gender equality indexes. However, this approach presents risks moving forward, including the reinforcement of existing inequalities or emergence of new gaps, missed opportunities for inclusive economic growth and innovation and unequal access to new technologies and services (see Box 7). It also diverges with common practice across the OECD, with most countries' GIA requirements focusing on laws and regulations (OECD, 2023^[47]). While several sectors have adopted universal design principles⁸, implementation of this approach is far from widespread and also may not sufficiently consider socio-economic inequalities and structural disadvantage.

Further sector-specific guidance is needed as well as wider integration of equality considerations into legislative, policy and service delivery design. This is particularly important in the areas of education and employment, where gender gaps remain in key sectors relating to the transformations. Particularly

important are policies and legislation that provide for structural reforms to encourage men and boys to participate in sectors such as health, care and education and women and girls in sectors such as STEM.

Box 6. Changing regulatory design as a result of Gender-based Analysis Plus in Canada

Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus) is an analytical tool used to support the development of responsive and inclusive policies, programs, and other initiatives in Canada. GBA Plus is a process for understanding who is impacted by the issue or opportunity being addressed by the initiative; identifying how the initiative could be tailored to meet diverse needs of the people most impacted; and anticipating and mitigating any barriers to accessing or benefitting from the initiative. GBA Plus is an intersectional analysis that goes beyond biological (sex) and socio-cultural (gender) differences to consider other factors, such as age, disability, education, ethnicity, economic status, geography (including rurality), language, race, religion, and sexual orientation. Using GBA Plus involves taking a gender- and diversity-sensitive approach to our work. Considering all intersecting identity factors as part of GBA Plus, not only sex and gender, is a commitment by the Government of Canada.

A concrete example of GBA Plus in action was its role in changing a sponsorship regulation. Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) is a federal department with a legislative requirement to conduct GBA Plus under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act. In 2016, IRCC reviewed a rule that required sponsored spouses and partners of Canadian citizens and permanent residents to live with their sponsor for two years to keep their permanent resident status.

The GBA Plus assessment showed that this rule could make already vulnerable people, often women, more at risk. Factors such as gender, age, language barriers, isolation, and financial dependence could create power imbalances in relationships. The analysis revealed that this two-year cohabitation requirement could worsen vulnerabilities, especially in cases of domestic abuse. Data showed that women made up about 70% of people who sought an exception to the rule on grounds of abuse or neglect. IRCC concluded that the requirement might be forcing some individuals to stay in abusive relationships for fear of losing their status in Canada.

As a result, Canada repealed the conditional permanent residence rule on April 18, 2017.

Source: OECD (2018), Gender Equality in Canada: Mainstreaming, Governance and Budgeting, OECD Publishing, Paris. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264301108-en>.

Box 7. Risks of gender-neutral legislative and policy frameworks in the context of the global transformations in Norway

The assumption that gender and other inequalities are solved can obscure new and complex forms of discrimination, disadvantage and inequality arising from rapidly emerging societal, technological, and economic changes currently facing Norway:

- **Reinforcement of existing inequalities or emergence of new gaps:** Global transformations can exacerbate or create new gendered inequalities by affecting sectors and occupations differently. For example, the energy transformation often shifts job demand from traditionally male-dominated fossil fuel industries to emerging green sectors, where women may be underrepresented in both policymaking and industry (OECD, 2024^[18]). At the same time, men's

over-representation in carbon-intensive extractive industries, like mining, oil and gas may mean significant job losses and underemployment as part of the green transformation (OECD, 2025^[4]). To ensure women and men benefit from the growing opportunities in the best-paying, expanding sectors, governments can work toward combatting gender segregation by field of study and occupation and industry and ensure that both women and men have access to re-training and re-skilling opportunities linked to the green transition. Similarly, energy policies that prioritise supply and infrastructure may neglect how energy access and affordability affect men and women differently (OECD, 2024^[18]). For example, in Europe, the energy crisis has resulted in more women than men facing energy poverty and an inability to afford their energy needs (Feenstra, Stojilovska and Laryea, 2024^[49]). Without explicitly considering the gendered impact of policy design options, policies risk reinforcing occupational segregation or disadvantaging groups who may already face inequality.

- **Missed opportunities for inclusive economic growth and innovation:** Gender-neutral approaches can overlook women's potential contributions to innovation and economic development in digital and green technologies. For example, the rapid growth of the digital economy requires proactive efforts to close gender gaps in STEM education, digital skills and the labour market. While Norway's AI Strategy considers the role of gender in relation to the skills and education needed to use and develop AI, it would benefit from clearer linkages to workforce strategies. This missed linkage highlights the opportunity for Norway to further leverage growing AI markets to stimulate women's participation in STEM education and careers. Failing to address these gaps reduces the talent pool and may slow overall progress in these critical sectors.
- **Unequal access to new technologies and services:** Digital transformation risks deepening inequalities if digital infrastructure, education, and services are not accessible or designed to meet diverse needs. Women and vulnerable groups may face barriers in accessing new digital tools or services critical for education, healthcare, or participation in economic activities (OECD, 2024^[18]). While Norway's first National Digitalisation Strategy is an important investment in digital infrastructure and places a central emphasis on digital inclusion and equal access, it does not recognise the role of gender or the importance of inclusive policymaking. Similarly, discussion of the risks of technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TF-GBV) is contained to a focus on young people. Given digital skills gaps remain and the prevalence of TF-GBV is increasing, a gender-neutral approach to policy design risks excluding women and girls from benefitting equally and safely from digital transformation.

Planning gaps limit coordination, performance measurement and accountability

Norway's large array of white papers and strategies across diverse policy sectors provide important policy positioning on emerging issues (see examples in Chapter 3), however, limited whole-of-government coordination and implementation planning may result in strategies that operate at cross-purposes. This approach could lead to duplicated efforts and inefficient use of public resources, which could otherwise be pooled for more impactful, coordinated initiatives.

The absence of a whole-of-government monitoring and evaluation framework can make it difficult to track performance over time or assess the contribution of individual ministries to national equality objectives

The absence of an overarching whole-of-government monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework that aligns equality work across agencies and ministries toward shared goals – including the Gender Equality

Strategy and other white papers and strategies that support equality – can lead to inefficient and ineffective policy combinations.

In addition to annual budget reporting on how allocated funds have been spent, for the past decade, Ministries have reported to Parliament on their equality work. While this exercise supports awareness raising and has led to important new initiatives following parliamentary debate, reporting is limited to cataloguing activities rather than monitoring progress over time against a set of shared outcomes or indicators. This disconnect also limits capacity to monitor the contribution of individual ministries to progress achieved under the outcomes set out in the new Gender Equality Strategy.

Without integrated strategic planning, data collection and evaluation efforts can also be fragmented across ministries, making it difficult to build a cohesive evidence base to inform policy adjustments and learning (OECD, 2023^[47]). This can weaken policymakers' ability to identify gaps, overlaps, or unintended negative interactions between policies.

The strategic allocation of core policy priorities could be strengthened

Norway's public finance and budgeting system, while efficient, tends to reinforce siloed policymaking. This can make it more challenging to establish horizontal linkages across sector work, co-responsibility for implementation or shared accountability across ministries. As a result, equality work risks being treated as a compliance exercise rather than a strategic driver of systemic change and inclusive economic growth, which can undermine national progress. For example, the 'allocation letter' setting out ministerial or agency policy priorities is an effective mechanism for aligning cross-portfolio priorities. However, at present its strategic potential is under-utilised in that it does not link key government priorities and equality goals in a systemic and enforceable way. This mechanism could be strengthened as both an incentive and mandate for ministries to work together on equality goals. This could also improve the likelihood of innovative, intersectional approaches that address root causes of inequality.

Resource and capacity constraints hinder effective coordination and capacity building

Coordination across the government's equality work remains a significant challenge. While the duties contained in the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act are the responsibility of all public authorities and employers, the scale of this framework can make operationalisation and accountability a challenging task. This underscores the importance of a coordinated and results-oriented approach combined with centres of expertise who can provide advice on both how to support equality in the community through the integration of a gender lens into policymaking as well as how to advance equality organisationally.

Effective coordination of equality work across government requires a clear mandate, an overarching implementation plan and monitoring framework as well as a combination of monitoring and capacity building (OECD, 2023^[47]). Capacity building is key to effective implementation of equality goals and includes a combination of guidance, outreach and communication, networking, meaningful policy translation of centralised evidence and research, supported by a large network of professionals with diverse expertise and a strong commitment to intersectional equality approaches (OECD, 2023^[50]). Sound data and analysis capacity is also key to ensuring an equality lens is integrated across sectoral policymaking.

Further, while the equality and non-discrimination team in Bufdir has been tasked by the Ministry for Culture and Equality with supporting implementation of some aspects of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act, there is a degree of overlap with other institutions in the ecosystem of equality institutions such as the Ombud. This may lead to inefficiencies, reduces their capacity to guide ministries and agencies in applying an equality lens in policy development and risks causing confusion among duty-holders, the public and other stakeholders.

Institutional arrangements could be strengthened

In addition, the Bufdir equality and non-discrimination team's ability to sustain its support functions over time may be influenced by broader political prioritisation and associated funding decisions. While the team's current positioning within the Ministry for Children and Families provides valuable access to institutional support and coordination mechanisms, future resourcing levels may depend on how equality and non-discrimination objectives are prioritised across government portfolios. In periods where these objectives receive less political emphasis, there is a risk that funding constraints could limit the team's capacity to support the Ministry for Culture and Equality as effectively as intended. In such circumstances, clarity around roles, expectations, and accountability becomes particularly important to ensure continuity of support and to safeguard the visibility and effectiveness of equality and non-discrimination efforts across government.

5 Resilient leadership: A roadmap for equality amidst global transformations

As global transformations accelerate, Norway faces a critical window of opportunity to embed equality at the core of its future-ready economy. Without timely action, these transformations risk widening existing gaps in access, participation, and opportunity, particularly for women and underrepresented groups.

To address these challenges, the OECD recommends:

- Targeting persistent gender gaps in both labour force participation and hours worked, including through inclusive employment pathways for immigrant women and women with disabilities.
- To drive further economic growth, continue efforts to narrow gaps in education and labour markets through targeted incentives, educational reforms, and public-private partnerships that support women's entry into STEM, green, and digital fields.

Addressing these challenges requires a deliberate shift from fragmented equality initiatives to a coordinated, government-wide approach: one that treats equality not as a side objective, but as central to Norway's national competitiveness and long-term resilience.

Norway, like all OECD countries, faces institutional challenges in advancing equality mainstreaming, particularly in a context where resources are finite, trade-offs are unavoidable, and decisions are often made under pressure during times of uncertainty and crisis. This highlights the importance of ensuring that implementation approaches are not only ambitious but also pragmatic and results-oriented. When the focus leans too heavily on formal compliance, there is a risk of missing practical entry points and quick wins that can deliver tangible impact and build momentum.

Against the backdrop of global transformations, there is a timely opportunity to rethink how equality policies are delivered in practice. Norway is well placed to lead this shift globally and help shape a more strategic and flexible approach within the OECD. The Roadmap put forward in this Scan is intended to support that vision and help position Norway at the forefront of this evolving agenda. It is also designed to support all duty holders to fulfil their obligations under the Anti-Discrimination Act (including the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 24) and the Employer Equality Duty (section 26)). The recommendations are divided into short-term and medium- to long-term actions and include suggestions for which parts of government could lead or support implementation.

Working together to create an enabling environment for equality policy

In the context of accelerating global transformations, ensuring that equality considerations are systematically integrated across government policies is both a strategic imperative and a governance challenge. In Norway, the CoG institutions (including for example, the Office of the Prime Minister (*Statsministerens kontor*) and Ministry of Finance (*Finansdepartementet*), play a critical role in creating an enabling environment where equality policy is recognised as a shared responsibility across all ministries. The CoG can help reinforce the coordinating role of the Ministry for Culture and Equality by more visibly

integrating equality objectives across national priorities, budget processes, and policy implementation frameworks, with the Ministry of Culture and Equality providing leadership and expertise. By signalling high-level commitment and embedding equality mainstreaming in government-wide routines, the CoG can contribute to greater competitiveness and more coherent, inclusive, and resilient policy outcomes for all.

Short-term Recommendation 1: Strengthen existing mechanisms to accelerate whole-of-government progress

Norway has a range of existing regulatory tools and administrative mechanisms that support the implementation of equality priorities. These tools, including the policy priority allocation letters, Instructions for Official Studies of Central Government requirements, and reporting requirements under section 24 of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act (including budget and parliamentary reporting) are vital for organising coherent action across ministries and agencies. These tools could be strengthened to recognise the critical coordination role of the Ministry of Culture and Equality as well as ensure that equality is not only a stated priority but a measurable and accountable driver of policy and progress across government.

A. Integrate equality commitments as vital cross-cutting objectives in overarching political platform, policy priority statements and national strategic planning

To drive enduring whole-of-government action on equality, the Norwegian Government could more visibly recognise equality goals as cross-cutting objectives within its overarching political platform, policy priorities and strategic planning instruments, such as long-term plans. Embedding equality commitments at this level, alongside climate action, digital transformation, and economic resilience (Government of Norway, 2025^[46]), would signal that equality is a core strategic objective relevant to the achievement of goals across all ministries, and not solely the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture and Equality. This explicit recognition would help align sectoral policies, enhance inter-ministerial coordination, and strengthen accountability for progress. By integrating equality more visibly into Norway's long-term priorities, the government can ensure inclusive responses to global transformations and reinforce its international leadership on gender equality and inclusive governance.

B. Use policy priority allocation letters to integrate equality across whole-of-government action

Policy priority allocation letters (*Tildelingsbrev*) are a powerful lever to steer public institutions towards shared goals. Norway has a strategic opportunity to strengthen this mechanism to ensure all ministries and agencies recognise the critical role of equality policy in achieving shared goals such as full employment and enhanced competitiveness. For enhanced coherency and accountability, the priority allocation letters could embed clear equality objectives and expectations for cross-ministerial and cross-agency collaboration such as joint deliverables or pooled funding arrangements, where feasible. This approach has been adopted in Canada, where mandate letters from the Prime Minister to Ministers often include commitments to advance equity and inclusion, which helps embed these priorities across departments. Where practicable, the Ministry for Culture and Equality alongside Bufdir could assist in the drafting process to provide advice on sector-specific equality objectives. The letters could also reinforce and link more concretely to section 24 reporting requirements under the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act by requiring ministries and agencies to move beyond activity-based reporting to focus on results and impact achieved at the policy, programme and service level.

This approach would formalise accountability and reinforce efforts to ensure that equality is not siloed within a single ministry but instead reflects a coordinated government-wide commitment, in line with the principle of sector responsibility. This approach would also recognise the critical role of the Ministry for Culture and Equality in coordinating equality policy across government.

C. Strengthen Instructions for Official Studies guidance by establishing a set of minimum equality standards for decision-making processes in sectors responding to rapid change

Government policy is more likely to achieve overarching equality goals when decision-making tools, from policies and legislation to budgets, regulations and procurement, take into account the different circumstances, needs and challenges of all Norwegians. Embedding inclusive practices early on can prevent costly redesigns and promote more effective, equitable outcomes (OECD, 2023^[50]). To improve the consideration of equality by civil servants designing policies across ministries, Norway could:

- revise the Instructions for Official Studies to make explicit reference to ‘equality and non-discrimination’
- mandate the consideration of equality and non-discrimination dimensions for measures of major public importance (similar to Spain, see Box 8 below)
- update and strengthen the previous methodological guidance on equality linked to the Instructions for Official Studies (Government of Norway, 2010^[51]) to include minimum standards specifically designed for decision-making processes in sectors experiencing rapid change, such as energy, health, security, and technology. This can help ensure that essential equality considerations are integrated from the outset of policy and legislative design through to evaluation (see Box 8 for examples of how other OECD countries have integrated accountability and minimum standards into gender impact assessment practice). Ensuring the Instructions and general guidance link to this methodological guidance will be important for improving uptake.

The minimum standards could include guidance on the use of equality data and analysis for evidence-based decision making, stakeholder engagement, impact assessment and risk mitigation, accessibility and non-discrimination principles, capacity and resource allocation and proposed linkages to a Monitoring and Evaluation framework. Minimum equality standards are a growing practice across OECD countries. For example, in 2021, 11 out of 34 OECD countries (32%) reported having practices in place to conduct rapid assessments of gender impacts during emergencies and other urgent policy making situations (OECD, 2023^[47]). Additionally, accompanying the minimum standards with case studies and targeted training for decision makers will enhance their practical application. Given the fast-paced nature of decision making in sectors experiencing rapid change, policymakers should be encouraged to adopt an adaptive policy design approach that can respond dynamically to emerging data and changing circumstances. In the context of national crises and emergencies for example, it may be necessary to strike a balance between the rigour of policy design and the speed required to address urgent, large-scale needs.

Box 8. Good practice systems for maintaining quality and accountability in gender impact assessment

Australia

The Australian Government Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet has developed instructions for policy makers to include gender across decision making including budgeting as part of the 2025-26 federal budget. In effect, all ministries must undertake a minimum level of gender analysis for new policy proposals and cabinet submissions that meet set criteria.

Canada

All federal departments or agencies are required to provide evidence that they have taken GBA Plus considerations into account and to report relevant findings in their Memoranda to Cabinet and Treasury Board Submission. GBA Plus can be used to inform the entire policy process, from research and early investigation through to the development of options and strategies in Memoranda to Cabinet. It should also inform the implementation (e.g. MOUs, terms and conditions), monitoring, evaluating and communicating of an initiative.

To monitor the implementation and rigour of gender mainstreaming efforts, Canada's central agencies (i.e. the Privy Council Office, Treasury Board Secretariat and Department of Finance) provide a 'gatekeeper' function by ensuring that requirements in relation to gender-based policy analysis are upheld, as well as a 'challenge' function with regard to questions of analytical rigour and quality.

Chile

Chile has embedded gender mainstreaming at the core of its ageing, decent work and workforce policies, with a strong focus on improving older women's participation in the labour market, reforming the care economy, and challenging gender stereotypes. Policy frameworks include the IV National Plan for Equality between Women and Men (2018–2030), the National Strategy for the Exercise of Economic Autonomy in Women, the Ministerial Gender Commitments 2022–2026 and the interministerial initiative "Chile For All" (Chile Para Todas). Implementation of these frameworks is guided by a gender mainstreaming methodological guide issued by the Ministry of Women and Gender Equality in February 2025, which establishes minimum standards for gender impact analysis, training, and policy planning, implementation and evaluation. Ministries are required to explain how they will apply gender mainstreaming in their programmes, report regularly on progress against gender indicators, and are supported by a network of gender experts and a dedicated gender mainstreaming fund.

Spain

Spain's Equality Law (Organic Law 3/2007) sets out the legal obligation to undertake an ex-ante gender impact assessment when drafting laws and policies, including bills of a general nature and plans with particular economic, social, cultural and artistic relevance. In addition, each ministry must prepare a gender impact report for legislative proposals presented before parliament.

Note: Information for Chile was provided to the OECD Secretariat by the Chilean Ministry of Women and Gender Equality.
Sources: Australian Government (2025) Including Gender An APS Guide to Gender Analysis and Gender Impact Assessment <https://www.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/resource/download/including-gender-guide.pdf>
OECD (2018), *Gender Equality in Canada: Mainstreaming, Governance and Budgeting*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264301108-en>.

Building whole-of-government action and evidence to demonstrate the value of equality as a strategic driver of competitiveness and economic growth

To drive the integration of equality across all areas of government work, all Ministries and with leadership from the CoG and the Ministry for Equality and Culture, can take targeted action to demonstrate the value of equality as a strategic driver of national goals. It is critical that responsibility for whole-of-government action and accountability is shared across all Ministries. This includes building the evidence base to show how equality contributes to competitiveness, innovation, and inclusive growth. Central to this approach is identifying strategic entry and alignment points between equality objectives and the core goals of other ministries, such as full employment, industry competitiveness and disaster risk management and preparedness, areas highlighted in the government's policy priorities. While some of these areas have strategies and white papers in place, there is limited consideration of the crucial role equality objectives and actions could play in supporting achievement of sectoral goals.

Medium-term Recommendation 2: Develop a series of whole-of-government flagship initiatives to achieve core government priorities through the equality policy framework

To accelerate equality mainstreaming and enhance cross-government engagement, all Ministries, with leadership from the Centre of Government and Ministry for Culture and Equality could initiate a series of flagship initiatives that centre equality as a driver for achieving the government's most pressing policy priorities such as full employment, industry competitiveness, disaster risk management and preparedness, and digital transformation. These initiatives would serve as high-visibility, cross-sector efforts that demonstrate how equality contributes to innovation, economic resilience, and inclusive growth.

Anchored in the legal duty to promote equality under the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act, identifying key entry points to embed equality across these policy areas shifts the focus from compliance to strategic opportunity. By framing equality as instrumental to the success of broader government goals, the Ministry for Culture and Equality can more effectively engage sector ministries and agencies, ensuring that equality considerations are systematically integrated into planning, budgeting, and implementation processes. This strategic approach can help unlock new levers for cooperation, generate measurable impact, and position equality as an essential component of delivering on the government's political platform and long-term national objectives.

A. Consider developing an inaugural whole-of-government flagship initiative on achieving inclusive full employment

A key priority for Norway is to intensify efforts towards achieving full employment, an objective widely endorsed across Ministries as urgent and foundational to the nation's socio-economic resilience. This consensus reflects the critical importance of harnessing the global transformations to ensure inclusive and equitable labour market participation.

Importantly, the goal of full employment aligns directly with the first objective of Norway's first Gender Equality Strategy, which focuses on increasing women's labour force participation and removing structural barriers that perpetuate labour market inequalities. Given the breadth and complexity of equality work currently underway, Norway could adopt a staged, focused approach to implementation by concentrating resources and political capital on a single major goal at a time.

As a starting point, Norway could launch a whole-of-government flagship initiative dedicated to achieving full employment through equality measures. This flagship would serve as the focal point for coordinated efforts, fostering cross-Ministerial collaboration and leveraging existing policy frameworks. The staged approach allows for:

- concentration of budgetary and human resources on a clear, measurable priority
- streamlining accountability and monitoring mechanisms linked to this goal
- building political momentum and public support through visible, impactful outcomes
- providing a tested model that can later be adapted and expanded to other priorities, including those within the Gender Equality Strategy.

By focusing on full employment as a flagship priority, Norway can set a clear direction for all Ministries and agencies that integrates equality into broader economic and social policy reforms, maximising the potential of global transformations to foster inclusive growth. An important aspect of this flagship initiative could be supporting pathways and addressing gender gaps in education and employment, particularly when it comes to structural changes that would encourage more men and boys into health, care and education sectors and more women and girls in STEM.

B. Introduce a whole-of-government M&E framework to build the evidence base showing how equality contributes to competitiveness, innovation, and inclusive growth

Effective implementation of whole-of-government policy priorities demands a robust framework for tracking progress and adapting strategies. Without meaningful reporting on equality outcomes, the ability of government actors to generate evidence on what works, and to demonstrate the full potential of equality as a driver of impact becomes limited. Without clear metrics and visibility on results, the opportunity to show how equality strengthens the effectiveness of government strategies, whether in employment, innovation, or resilience, is often missed. Strengthening outcome-focused monitoring is therefore essential not only for accountability, but also for making the strategic case for equality mainstreaming across policy domains.

Norway's Gender Equality Strategy already includes a broad set of both quantitative and qualitative measures and indicators measuring both outcomes (for example, employment rates, pay equity, leadership) and systemic changes (for example, reduction in occupational segregation or increased access to out of hours school care). In addition, ministries and agencies are also individually responsible for reporting on the results of their efforts to integrate a gender lens into their sectoral strategies under the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act. However, knowledge of this requirement among public officials is not widespread. There is therefore currently no systematic way of identifying whether current policy strategies and other activities such as grants and funding across all sectors are contributing to positive gender equality outcomes or whether policy design changes may be needed. Introducing a whole-of-government monitoring and evaluation framework, including existing indicators from the Gender Equality Strategy, can support evaluation of whether existing actions (including budgetary, policy and legislative) across ministries respond to existing gender disparities and also help assess alignment between needs, gaps and funding priorities.

To fill this crucial information gap, the CoG working closely with the Ministry for Culture and Equality could pilot an enhanced M&E system for the inaugural flagship initiative, including a results framework with the following features:

- identification of all white papers, strategies, policies and services/programmes that contribute to the flagship goals
- a breakdown of clearly defined short-, medium-, and long-term process and impact outcomes, measures and associated data sources aligned with the full employment goal
- identification of an initial set of short-, medium-, and long-term targets across sectors
- a theory of change that articulates causal pathways and identifies key levers and process mechanisms for impact

- identification of an initial set of priority cross-sectoral policies, programmes and services for impact evaluation and dissemination of learnings.

The M&E framework could also provide advice for ministries and agencies who fund national programmes and services (for example, in the not-for-profit or voluntary sectors) on how to systematically measure equality improvements achieved through service/programme funding. For example, standardised advice to front line delivery services on how to assess the equality outcomes of their services and programmes (including through data collection).

This framework would allow for regular assessment of whether the flagship and associated education and capacity building activities are on track to achieving short- and medium-term goals, what adjustments may be needed, and what lessons can be applied more broadly across the implementation of white papers and strategies including the Gender Equality Strategy.

C. Standardising performance reporting across ministries and agencies to focus on the results and impact of strategies and promote the measurement of outcomes, not just reporting of activities.

Standardising reporting to focus on results and impact, not just activities, is essential for making meaningful progress toward the goal of full employment through equality. Piloting a revised set of standardised performance reporting practices across ministries and agencies can serve as a critical first step to identify existing data gaps, improve comparability of information, and promote consistent measurement of outcomes. This pilot could be jointly led by the CoG and Ministry for Culture and Equality. This approach can enable policymakers to move beyond tracking inputs and outputs to evaluating the real-world effects of their initiatives. Results-oriented reporting fosters stronger policy learning by revealing what strategies are effective and where adjustments are needed, thereby improving the government's capacity to steer policy and make timely course corrections (OECD, 2023^[50]). Importantly, framing equality efforts in terms of tangible economic and social outcomes helps integrate them into mainstream policy priorities, reinforcing that advancing equality is not a standalone goal but a key driver of sustainable employment growth and inclusive prosperity for all Norwegians. See Box 9 for an example of how Canada has implemented results-based reporting.

Box 9. Canada's Gender Results Framework

The Gender Results Framework (GRF) is a whole-of-government tool that articulates the Government of Canada's long-term vision for gender equality. The GRF enables Canada to track how it is currently performing, define what is needed to achieve greater equality and determine how progress will be measured going forward. Introduced in Budget 2018, the GRF sets out six priority areas – or pillars – where sustained action and measurable progress are essential to help close gender gaps. In this sense, it functions as both a performance and accountability framework leveraging disaggregated, evidence-based indicators to track outcomes and guide policy action to further advance gender equality.

Source: Government of Canada (2025) 'Gender Results Framework. <https://www.canada.ca/en/women-gender-equality/gender-equality/gender-results-framework.html>; OECD (2018), *Gender Equality in Canada: Mainstreaming, Governance and Budgeting*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264301108-en>.

Building capacity, awareness raising and knowledge translation for better policies and outcomes

Long-term Recommendation 3: Focus on awareness raising, capacity building and knowledge translation

To ensure all Ministries have access to the tools and information they need and a clear understanding of their role in achieving their equality objectives, Norway could strengthen the institutional infrastructure that supports policy design, implementation, and accountability. This could be led by the Ministry for Culture and Equality, with support from Bufdir, Statistics Norway in addition to all sectors involved in implementing equality policy. The flagship initiative provides a valuable opportunity to pilot and refine institutional tools that can later be rolled out across implementation of additional flagship initiatives as well as the wider Gender Equality Strategy.

A. Prioritise targeted awareness raising, capacity building and knowledge translation: Expanding evidence collection and use for greater engagement and impact

Implementing equality policy across sectors requires shared understanding, technical competence, and easy access to evidence-based practices. Given the government's policy priorities involve a large range of actors, understanding of the potential areas of inequality and disadvantage, and possible solutions, are not always aligned across different policy sectors. Further, the knowledge base and data is dispersed, including across different levels of government. Tapping into this collective intelligence is crucial to facilitate effective policymaking across sectors and contexts. In 2020, the Ministry for Culture and Equality tasked Bufdir with establishing a knowledge portal on equality, discrimination and living conditions among the Sami and national minorities, including migrants and people with disability (Bufdir, 2025^[52]). The knowledge hub provides publicly accessible statistics on gender equality, LGBTIQ persons, people with disability, and ethnic minorities (people with immigrant background, the Sami people and national minorities). These hubs serve as knowledge bases for combating discrimination and promoting inclusion and are regularly updated, however, at present it is underutilised and not widely known across ministries or at different levels of government.

To support broader engagement from policymakers across all sectors, the central knowledge repository could be expanded to include:

- best practices and case studies on how policies, programmes and services particularly in transforming sectors have considered gender and equality in their design and implementation and the resulting policy shifts, both from within Norway and internationally
- tools, guidance, and methodologies with practical examples tailored to various ministries and sectors
- capacity-building resources such as training modules, webinars, and briefing notes translating the latest data insights and research findings into practical and actionable advice.

Bufdir's existing e-learning modules⁹ and research findings from CORE and Cisero could also tie into the knowledge hub as well as provide instructions for integrating data and evidence into policy and service design. This repository would help translate research and strategic goals into practical actions for policymakers and practitioners. It would also support horizontal learning across ministries and agencies and foster a common vocabulary for equality work, ensuring that the flagship initiative is grounded in a shared evidence base.

B. Clarify the education and capacity building roles of Bufdir and the Ombud and continue investing in equality institutions, including equipping them with the expertise, tools and coordination mechanisms needed to deliver government-wide capacity for mainstreaming equality

Both the Ombud and Bufdir play vital roles in supporting implementation of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act through awareness raising and education initiatives. To strengthen the complementary roles and reduce overlap in the implementation of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act, the respective roles of Bufdir and the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud could be further clarified. This would underscore the importance of Bufdir's role in providing guidance and capacity building to ministries and agencies, particularly on the integration of equality perspectives across their work. Clarifying the different roles, tools and audiences of each institution can support effective and efficient implementation while minimising overlap.

C. Expand equality data and research in transforming sectors

Norway has a sound base of gender indicators, collected by Statistics Norway, complementing the range of statistics available on Bufdir's data hub. The collection and publication of more detailed gender data at multiple levels of disaggregation can further enhance data- and research-driven policy responsiveness, shape targeted equality training, help monitor policy impacts over time and support evaluation. When data is too general, it may signal that a problem exists, but it can fall short of informing effective policy responses. Without further disaggregation, it is difficult to see how different groups of women, men, girls, and boys are affected and who is most at risk. Access to detailed data can also help policymakers to strategically prioritise where limited resources should be targeted.

Norway may consider prioritising the collection, analysis and capacity building around additional indicators such as those listed below, complementing those in the Gender Equality Strategy and in Bufdir's data hub. While additional data collection would require close coordination with Eurostat, the OECD, the ILO and other international bodies to align on definitions and occupational codes, Norway is well placed to turn this coordination into an opportunity for leadership. By pioneering innovative approaches to measuring inclusion in the green, digital and energy transitions – areas where equality metrics remain underdeveloped globally – Norway could help shape emerging international frameworks and contribute directly to the refinement of OECD and EU methodologies.

Statistics Norway may wish to test experimental definitions and occupational codes through time-bound pilots. Such pilots could focus on select sectors with strong transformation potential, such as offshore renewables or digital services, and explore how equality dimensions including gender, migration background, disability or regional disparities, intersect with emerging skills and jobs. Insights from these pilots could be shared through the OECD and other international organisations to accelerate the harmonisation of equality-relevant classifications and indicators.

- **Sectoral workforce composition and wage metrics:** Gender-disaggregated employment and wages across emerging and traditional transforming sectors (for example, renewable energy, hydrogen, AI, advanced manufacturing) to track horizontal and vertical segregation including breakdowns by age, disability, geographic location and socio-economic status.
- **Digital and green inclusion:** Access to and participation in digital skills training, uptake of AI/green economy roles, disaggregated by gender, income and geographical location which will be important for tracking digital inclusion and supporting the full employment goal. Metrics on enrolment in STEM/green innovation programs, STEM doctoral programmes and participation in green start-ups or energy transformation workshops broken down by gender, disability and geographic location could also support monitoring.
- **The nature and geography of green jobs:** Occupational segregation within green sectors (for example, renewables, ocean economy), tracking entry, retention and barriers such as asset

ownership and availability of training or mentorship. To understand and monitor territorial inclusion in the green economy, Norway could collect geospatial mapping data on green job creation, broken down by gender, municipality and Sami inclusion (where this data is voluntarily collected).

- **Training, skills and mentorship access:** Participation in sector-specific training/mentorship programs for digital, green and energy sectors, disaggregated by gender, disability and Sami population to identify gaps and design inclusive upskilling strategies.
- **Access to assets and innovation participation:** Asset ownership indicators such as land, capital, enterprise ownership in green and digital sectors, to highlight structural inequalities that underpin sectoral participation. Additional indicators on start-up gender balance metrics and capital/funding success rates in transforming sectors could also support the design of government-funded innovation programs.

Using audits and gender data needs assessments to identify gaps between policymakers' gender data needs and available evidence may help Norway prioritise bridging data gaps, especially in sectors affected by the global transformations (see Box 10 for examples of how other OECD countries have audited and resolved data gaps). OECD countries are taking steps to produce more gender-disaggregated data, with 19 out of 33 responding countries to the 2021 GMG Survey reporting legal or binding requirements for the collection and dissemination of gender-disaggregated data. However, of 17 countries with a strategic framework for data and statistics at the central/federal level, only 7 include explicit commitments/actions on data disaggregated by gender and/or other relevant characteristics (OECD, 2023^[47]). Additionally, to improve the production of high-quality intersectional gender evidence and help government track real world improvements in equality, Norway can consider incorporating equality-specific data into results frameworks for national plans and strategies associated with the global transformations (including benchmarks and outcomes) that would link to an overarching M&E framework (discussed in further detail above).

Box 10. Leading practice integration of gender considerations into national statistical systems

Canada

Canada has created a dedicated Centre for Gender, Diversity and Inclusion Statistics within Statistics Canada which addresses gaps in the availability of information by gender and other intersecting factors such as Indigeneity, geography and disability. The Centre manages the Gender, Diversity and Inclusion Statistics hub, a focal point for gender and intersectional data.

Statistics Canada also requires internal annual reporting wherein each statistical programme is required to detail their statistical programme's commitment to gender equality, institutional GBA Plus governance (see Box 2) and capacity. Each statistical programme reports a metric based on a set of key performance indicators. For example, numbers of training, outreach, consultations related to gender, diversity, and GBA Plus; number of GBA Plus-related statistical products (for example, catalogued products, such as data tables, research articles, studies, fact sheets, infographics, interactive dashboards, reference products, and minor and major releases), which are made available on Statistics Canada's website.

Ireland

In 2020, the Central Statistics Office of Ireland conducted a data audit of 107 data sources from 31 public bodies in co-operation with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. The audit aimed to ascertain the availability of public service data disaggregated by equality. In 2021, an additional focused equality data audit was conducted, covering all national data sources held by Tusla, Ireland's Child and Family Agency. This work was guided by the Equality Budgeting Expert Advisory Group representing key internal and external stakeholders and the audit findings were published alongside Ireland's 2021 Budget. The information is also published on the Central Statistics Office's webpage and will continue to be updated as new data is identified. In response to the data audit, the Central Statistics Office and the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth are developing a National Equality Data Strategy.

Mexico

In 2010, Mexico's National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) established the Specialized Technical Committee on Information with a Gender Perspective (CTEIPG) to promote the incorporation of a gender perspective across the national statistics system, with the participation of INEGI units that serve as liaisons with the Specialized Technical Committees of the four National Information Subsystems. One of its specific responsibilities is to contribute to the development of technical standards, guidelines, methodologies, projects and processes that contribute to decision-making and the development of public policies for gender equality, among other relevant aspects of statistical work. Following this, Mexico developed guidelines to support the integration of a gender and intersectional perspective into the national statistics system. These were gazetted in 2015 and included in the regulations and technical manual of the National Statistical and Geographic Information System.

Source: Government of Ireland (2022), Minister O'Gorman announces the development of a National Equality Data Strategy <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/5a7f4-minister-ogorman-announces-the-development-of-a-national-equality-data-strategy/>
OECD (2024), Building government capacity for gender-sensitive data: Questionnaire for Policymakers in Central Gender Equality Institutions (unpublished).

C. Build capacity to apply data insights in decision-making

To ensure policymakers in sectors affected by global transformations effectively use equality and gender data in their everyday work, capacity-building efforts should blend both conceptual understanding and practical skills. Bufdir's existing e-learning materials provide a strong grounding for participants in the principles of discrimination and unconscious bias. This training could be further enhanced through real-life examples of harmful social norms and intersectionality. For example, exploring how gender intersects with age, disability, ethnicity, socio-economic status, and geography to shape diverse experiences and outcomes across policy areas – and how to practically use these examples in everyday work to avoid unintentional discrimination or bias. Training could also focus on highlighting the long-term value and importance of activities required under the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act. Together, this foundational knowledge can help policymakers and service providers across sectors appreciate the importance of disaggregated data to identify hidden inequalities and tailor policies accordingly. Participation in these trainings would ideally be required as part of induction for all new public sector workers, similar to health, environment and safety trainings.

Alongside this, developing data literacy is crucial: policymakers need to confidently interpret and critically analyse datasets, recognising gaps or biases that could influence decision-making and shape policy design choices (OECD, 2023^[50]). Hands-on exercises that apply intersectional data to real-world policy design and evaluation could further enable participants to integrate gender-sensitive indicators into the design and implementation of policy and legislative frameworks, ensuring policy impacts are tracked and addressed over time.

Equally important is training on the use of relevant data tools and technologies to familiarise policymakers with the central knowledge repository as well as other relevant national databases, dashboards, and emerging AI-driven analytics to monitor evolving disparities.

Encouraging cross-sector collaboration through existing working groups or the establishment of communities of practice can build on this training, fostering a holistic approach. For example, by bringing together statisticians, equality and inclusion experts and practitioners to discuss implementation challenges and solutions and sharing learnings with public sector workers who perform policy development as part of their everyday work. Sustaining this capacity requires building ongoing learning networks, providing accessible guidelines and toolkits, and securing leadership commitment to embed intersectional analysis as a core policymaking competency. See Box 11 for examples of how other OECD countries have approached education initiatives.

This work is central to ensuring policy and legislative development across sectors considers and prioritises equality. It therefore requires adequate funding and leadership commitment to ensure all public sector workers across sectors and levels of government are able and encouraged to participate. Together, these elements can cultivate a data-informed culture that empowers policymakers to design equitable, effective policies that respond to the nuanced realities of all groups amid Norway's dynamic global transformations.

Box 11. Case study – sector specific guidance, communities of practice and equality focal points in Australia and Canada

Tailored guidance and communities of practice in the Australian state of Victoria

The Australian state of Victoria requires all public sector organisations with 50 or more employees to take positive action towards achieving gender equality in workplaces and the community including through mandatory gender impact assessments as part of policy, programme and service design (see the Gender Equality Act 2020 (Vic)). To support public sector organisations to meet their obligations under the Act, the Victorian Gender Equality Commission has created a hub of evidence and guidance including sector-specific case studies and videos. The case studies show how different sectors and services have considered intersectional gender data as part of policy and service design and the changes that were made as a result of impact assessment.

To further support implementation of the Act, the Victorian Gender Equality Commission has supported the establishment of communities of practice and discussion groups across sectors. The communities of practice span a broad range of industries including health, education, water, arts and culture and local government. They are run by individuals working within these sectors and are designed to be safe, online drop-in spaces to share insights, challenges, and experiences, and collectively seek solutions. Participants in communities of practice have provided feedback on the significant value and utility of these practitioner spaces for sharing crucial learnings about how to address sector-specific challenges in achieving workplace gender equality.

The role of gender focal points in Canada

Canada's 'Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus) Centres of Expertise', located in each Ministry, play a critical role in strengthening the integration of gender and diversity considerations across federal departments and agencies in Canada.

A core function of GBA Plus Centres of Expertise is to act as internal champions, building departmental capacity, raising awareness of substantive changes to GBA Plus, and developing tools and resources to support its application. They help ensure gender and diversity considerations are meaningfully embedded at all stages of policy and budget development by promoting the use of disaggregated data and intersectional analysis. To carry out these responsibilities, GBA Plus focal points and Centres of Expertise receive targeted training to strengthen analytical skills, enhance understanding of intersectionality, and support a consistent, high-quality approach to GBA Plus across departments.

Sources: Victorian Government Commission for Gender Equality (2025) Communities of Practice, <https://www.genderequalitycommission.vic.gov.au/communities-practice>; Victorian Government Commission for Gender Equality (2025) Leading Practice Resources, <https://www.genderequalitycommission.vic.gov.au/leading-practice-resources>; Victorian Government Commission for Gender Equality (2025) Gender Impact Assessment Case Studies, <https://www.genderequalitycommission.vic.gov.au/gender-impact-assessment-case-studies>; Government of Canada (2025) 'Gender-based Analysis Plus', <https://www.rcaanc-cimac.gc.ca/eng/1634051285522/1634051332385>.

Annex A. Methodology

This Scan was informed by data collected through various methods including circulation of an online questionnaire, desktop research and stakeholder interviews conducted during a fact-finding mission to Oslo, Norway in the first half of 2025. In the first quarter of 2025, questionnaires were circulated to a wide variety of stakeholders across sectors. The questionnaires focused on the following aspects: planning, data, policy, and legislative frameworks relating to equality amidst the global transformations, in addition to governance arrangements, challenges, priorities and opportunities within policy areas involved in the transformations, and across government broadly.

A wide variety of stakeholders participated in either the questionnaire or interviews, including:

- Anti-Discrimination Tribunal
- Centres for Equality including KUN Centre for Gender Equality, Reform Resource Centre for Men, Centre for Gender Equality University of Agder
- County Governor of Agder
- County Governor of Trondelag
- Cicero – Centre for International Climate
- Confederation of Unions for Professionals
- CORE – Centre for Research on Gender Equality
- Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud
- Ministry for Climate and Environment
- Ministry for Culture and Equality
- Ministry for Digitalisation and Public Governance
- Ministry for Energy
- Ministry for Education and Research
- Ministry for Families and Children
- Ministry for Labour and Social Inclusion
- Ministry for Local Government and Regional Development
- National Institution for Human Rights (NIHR)
- Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir)
- Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills
- Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training
- Norwegian Environmental Agency
- Sami Parliament
- Spekter
- Statistics Norway
- Virke

A representative from Canada's Ministry for Employment and Social Development joined the fact-finding mission to Oslo as peer and also provided critical input as part of the review of the Scan, along with a representative from Women and Gender Equality Canada. Early findings and recommendations were presented to the Norway Ministry for Culture and Equality in the second half of 2025, followed by an initial round of written comments. The revised draft was then presented to a broader array of stakeholders involved in the process from across sectors and received a second and final round of comments. In October 2025, the Scan was presented to representatives from the Working Party on Gender Mainstreaming and Governance at the annual plenary meeting in Prague and written feedback was incorporated into the final draft.

The Scan reflects the standards established in the 2013 and 2015 OECD Recommendations on Gender Equality. An OECD Scan is an abridged version of a full-fledged OECD review. It is grounded in the sound methodological approach of a review and aims to deliver a diagnostic in a shorter period of time and in a format with more concise outputs.

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Notes

¹ World Values Survey Wave 7 (2017-22) accessed at <https://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSOnline.jsp>.

² Statistics Norway, Time Use Survey – SBB.

³ While the explicit reference to gender equality was removed in the revision of the Instructions for Official Studies in 2016, the current Instructions state that the Instructions inter alia shall provide a solid basis for the adequate assessment of compliance with the Constitution and Norway's international obligations, including human rights (section 1-1). The guidelines to the Instructions on Official Studies and Reports (by the Norwegian Agency for Public and Financial Management) states that this may, for example, concern individual privacy and integrity, legal safeguards, issues of conscience and belief, or matters related to equality and non-discrimination, as well as measures that specifically affect Indigenous peoples, minorities, or children.

⁴ The Instructions set out minimum requirements for assessments, stating that, among other things, the following questions must be answered: What are the principal issues raised by the proposed measures? What are the positive and negative effects of the measures, how long-lasting are they, and who will be affected? (section 2-2). The guidelines clarifies that issues related to equality and non-discrimination may be considered as principal issues. Further, the guidelines mention equality in the context of assessing the positive and negative effects of proposed measures.

⁵ Institutions considered to be part of the Centre of Government vary across OECD member countries. Often the Centre of Government would include the office of the head of state and/or head of government such as the Prime Minister's office, and the Ministry of Finance.

⁶ The Sami people are Indigenous to Norway, they have historically faced discrimination and continue to experience barriers to participation in public life, access to culturally appropriate services, and recognition of their knowledge systems. It is therefore important to ensure the needs and interests of the Sami population are included in data and research related to equality and discrimination.

⁷ Institutions considered to be part of the Centre of Government vary across OECD member countries. Often the Centre of Government would include the office of the head of state and/or head of government such as the Prime Minister's office, and the Ministry of Finance.

⁸ Universal design refers to the proactive creation of products, environments, services and systems that can be used by all people – regardless of age, ability or background – to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialised design. Bufdir (2025) Universal design – terms and terminology. www.bufdir.no/en/likestilling/terms-and-terminology/.

⁹ 'Introduction course for employers and employees on equality, diversity and inclusion' and 'E-learning course on the follow up and coordination of work on equality, diversity and human rights'.

Harnessing the global transformations to accelerate equality in Norway

OECD Scan

Strengthening equality is central to Norway's economic resilience, labour supply, long-term competitiveness and its capacity to respond to major global transformations. This OECD paper looks at how Norway can strengthen gender equality in a rapidly changing world. It highlights Norway's strong foundations, including high levels of women's participation in the labour market, supportive family policies, and a strong legal and institutional framework. At the same time, it shows that persistent challenges, such as high rates of part-time work among women, the motherhood penalty, and gender segregation in education and jobs, continue to limit opportunities. The paper offers practical recommendations to turn ambition into action across government, strengthen accountability, and ensure equality policy remains fit for the future.