Chapter 13 from the 2017 Budget Proposal from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs


UN Sustainable Development Goal 16: ‘Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels’
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Background

About policy coherence for development

The main objective of Norway’s development cooperation is to assist developing countries in promoting their own economic and social development. Norwegian policy in areas that are not targeted at development is primarily intended to promote Norway’s own welfare and security. Nevertheless, policy in these areas can also have repercussions for living conditions in poor countries and for global issues that affect all countries. Policy coherence for development means that when promoting national interests, we should seek to avoid undermining development in poor countries, and – where possible – to enhance development in these countries. This involves identifying and realising synergies between development policy and other national and foreign policy. Policy coherence for development also increasingly involves ensuring that national policies promote global public goods that benefit all countries, not least the poorest, for example in the area of climate change and the environment.

Norway’s reports on policy coherence for development

In Recommendation no. 269 (2008-2009) to the Storting, the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs requested that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs draw up an annual report on Norway’s policy coherence for development. Five such reports have since been produced: on global public goods (2011), on investments in the energy sector (2012), on promoting social and economic equality and economic growth (2013), on the new development goals (2014), and on peace, security and development (2015).

This year’s report – SDG 16

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which were adopted by all UN member states in 2000, provided a roadmap for the global fight against poverty up to the deadline of 2015. During this period, extreme poverty was halved, the number of children in school increased substantially, and millions of deaths from malaria and HIV/AIDS were prevented. Nevertheless, lack of development is still a major challenge for certain countries. The international community has also acknowledged that there are crucial supranational challenges that must be addressed in order to eradicate poverty worldwide. In 2015, UN member states therefore adopted an ambitious agenda Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,1 which sets out why and how countries must develop coherent policy in many areas in order to create a better world, intensify poverty reduction efforts and boost development. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)2 summarise what needs to be done to achieve all this. They apply to all countries, not just to developing countries, and they focus more on global public goods than the MDGs did.

SDG 16 – ‘promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels’ – is perhaps the most innovative of these goals. It builds on the vision of Rio+20 and the MDGs, and covers a wide range of factors that are crucial for sustainable and equitable development, such as reducing violence, developing the rule of law and the judiciary, combating corruption and crime, promoting broad participation in decision-making, protecting fundamental rights, and establishing effective and accountable institutions.

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2 https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs
Clear wording on human rights, governance and democracy in SDG 16 was a priority for Norway in the negotiations on the 2030 Agenda. Although we would have liked the wording to be even clearer, these issues have been given a prominent place both in many of the targets and in the political declaration that provides the overall framework for the SDGs. The fact that all UN member states agreed on the wording of SDG 16 gives grounds for optimism.

**The content and structure of the report**

SDG 16 consists of 12 specific targets. In this report, a separate chapter is devoted to each of the targets. Each chapter discusses the challenges involved in reaching the target, both in a global context and in Norway. The main focus is the impact that Norwegian domestic, foreign and development policy has on these challenges. Each chapter is rounded off with an examination of whether Norwegian policy undermines or promotes development, in other words how coherent Norwegian policy is in the area concerned.

**SDG target 16.1: Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere**

**Background and challenges in a global context**

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are even more closely interdependent than the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were. The eradication of extreme poverty (SDG 1) will depend on such factors as food security (SDG 2), health (SDG 3), access to clean water and sanitation (SDG 6), and sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11). Moreover, in most cases, achieving one or several of the SDGs will almost inevitably bring about progress in others. Each of the SDG targets focuses on a key aspect of the development process needed to reach that goal. Target 16.1. stands out as being particularly far-reaching, and the work towards achieving it will have ripple effects on progress on the other SDGs.

Violence in all its forms affects the lives and quality of life of millions of people worldwide. In addition to the direct consequences, in terms of deaths and destruction of property and infrastructure, a great many people are affected indirectly through political instability, economic downturn and its effect on their own financial situation, and psychological problems caused by persistent insecurity. Areas of war, conflict or extreme states of lawlessness also tend to have weak institutions, which in normal circumstances play an important role in binding society together to everyone’s benefit. Established norms and rules may no longer be respected, and public authorities that would normally enforce the law and provide services that the population depend on may be weakened. The result may be that personal security is no longer provided by a professional police force, but is left in the hands of soldiers, militia groups and criminals, while social and political rights are disregarded.

One fifth of the world’s population live in situations that are fragile, affected by conflict, and/or affected by other forms of violence. These situations are to be found in more than 35 countries. More people were killed in violent conflicts in 2014 than in any other year since 1989. This was due to an intensification of existing conflicts and the extreme violence seen in the Syrian civil war, and in Iraq and Afghanistan. As a result of this violence, more than 60 million people have fled their homes. This is the highest number of refugees and internally displaced people since the Second World War.

However, violence affects far more people than those affected by violent armed conflict. Violent crime is a major problem in many countries. Organised drug-related crime has led to extreme violence and has undermined governments in parts of Central and Latin America, West Africa and Asia. In some countries, the government itself can pose a threat to the population, and may itself use
violence, in contravention of international law and human rights. Violence also colours daily life for many people living in countries where there is little violent crime or conflict. It is estimated that 35% of women worldwide have experienced violence at some point in their life, most commonly from an intimate partner. There is a widespread lack of legislation against violence as well as inadequate implementation of such legislation where it does exist, especially in the area of domestic violence.

In many cases, conflicts and other forms of violence are not just local problems, but extend to other parts of the country or even across national borders. As we have seen in countries like Syria, Iraq, South Sudan, Somalia, Libya and Afghanistan, political and religious extremists as well as criminal groups can gain control of new areas, with the result that acts of violence and criminal activities are extended to other countries. Armed conflict and other forms of violence can also have serious economic implications for the neighbouring areas. Investing in businesses in areas close to conflict zones or areas under threat may be considered risky, and these businesses can suffer as a result. Trade and other economic ties with other countries in the region may also be impeded.

The drivers of violence and conflict and the interests involved can vary considerably. This makes efforts to reduce violence in all its forms a major challenge, both for the individual governments concerned and for the international community. As the world becomes increasingly globalised, the consequences of armed conflict and the most serious acts of violence also become global. The refugee crisis in the Mediterranean is due in part to the insecurity and violence that people have experienced in many countries for several years.

**How is Norway using domestic policy in relevant areas to address these challenges?**

In the white paper on global security challenges in Norway’s foreign policy, the Government presented a more coherent policy to address conflict and violence. In order to improve our ability to prevent and combat these challenges, we need to make use of a broad range of foreign policy, justice policy and development policy tools.

**How is policy in areas other than development policy contributing to progress towards this target?**

The level of violent crime in Norway is low, and there has been no armed conflict since the Second World War. Statistics Norway has reported that in 2015 only 3.3% of a representative sample of the Norwegian population had been subject to threats or violence in the last 12 months. This is a reduction from 5.1% in 2004. Nevertheless, there are still considerable challenges that need to be met.

National efforts are underway to reduce all forms of violence – both premeditated and impulsive acts of violence. Since 2006, the authorities have had an increased focus on gender-based violence, and in 2013, the Government presented an action plan on domestic violence. A broad, cross-disciplinary effort is crucial for preventing and combating most forms of violence.

In recent years, we have seen an increase in criminal networks and terrorist cells, originating from both in and outside Norway. Norway cooperates with other countries to reduce the threats posed by these networks, for example through police cooperation with organisations such as Europol and Interpol. The cooperation between the Norwegian Police Security Service and security services in other countries is also important.

At the international level, Norway plays an active part in efforts to prevent conflicts and participates in international operations under the auspices of the UN, NATO and the EU. Cooperation of this kind has its basis in the UN Charter, and should have a clear UN mandate. Priority is given to UN-led peace

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operations. Norway emphasises the importance of UN Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security\(^4\) wherever relevant. UNSCR 1325 promotes not only the protection of women in armed conflicts and other violent situations, but also the participation of women in peace and reconciliation processes.

Norway has also played a prominent role as facilitator in a number of peace processes.

Unexploded ordnance has killed and injured hundreds of thousands of people. Norway has played a key part in the work to ban anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions. Norway is also actively involved in the efforts to gain greater control of small arms and light weapons, and has played a central role in the negotiations on the Arms Trade Treaty.\(^5\) It is difficult to control the sale of these types of weapons, yet they can cause serious damage in armed conflicts and in connection with violent crime.

Norway takes active part in a number of international initiatives in this field, including activities under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons,\(^6\) the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty,\(^7\) the Chemical Weapons Convention,\(^8\) the Biological and Toxin Weapons Conventions,\(^9\) the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons,\(^10\) and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court,\(^11\) which all seek to control and limit the use of different types of weapons.

**How is development policy contributing to progress towards this target?**

Norway’s current development policy seeks to address global security challenges to a greater extent than previously. For example, a development programme to prevent radicalisation, violent extremism and terrorism in countries and areas affected by fragility, conflict and violence has been established.

For several decades, Norwegian development policy has sought to combat violence, especially in conflict areas. Norwegian aid has been used for demining operations, reconstruction of infrastructure and restoration of institutions that can consolidate peace and security. Norway has also drawn attention to the needs of the victims of conflicts, emphasising that it is not enough just to provide health care and medical rehabilitation, but that it is also vital to promote real social, economic and political inclusion.

Norwegian aid has also been used to combat sexual violence in conflict areas, with particular focus on women and children. This has been a priority in Norway’s efforts in DR Congo, for example. In Haiti, Norwegian police officers are part of a team under the UN operation MINUSTAH\(^12\) that is building the capacity of the Haitian police force to investigate cases of sexual and gender-based violence.

Experience from particularly difficult operations, such as in Afghanistan, has shown that in practice the distinction between military activities and civilian development efforts can be unclear, and that this can create considerable challenges for development efforts. In contrast to certain other

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\(^6\) [https://www.iaea.org/publications/documents/treaties/npt](https://www.iaea.org/publications/documents/treaties/npt)

\(^7\) [https://www.ctbto.org/the-treaty/](https://www.ctbto.org/the-treaty/)

\(^8\) [https://www.opcw.org/chemical-weapons-convention/](https://www.opcw.org/chemical-weapons-convention/)


countries, Norway has maintained a clear distinction between military and civilian efforts to prevent any misconception on the part of the population that aid is related to military activities, and to ensure that aid efforts are effective and sustainable.

**Does Norway’s overall policy promote progress towards this target?**

For years, Norway has worked actively to reduce violence of all forms at both national and international level. At the national level, there is an extensive framework for dealing with violence, and the general level of violence is low. However, more work still needs to be done to address certain forms of violence, such as domestic violence and sexual violence. Apart from the possible existence of criminal networks based in Norway, whose activities extend into other countries, and the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters, the situation in Norway is considered to have little impact on violence in other countries.

At the international level, Norway has been at the forefront of efforts to gain more control of weapons that can end up in conflict situations, and to ban weapons that have particularly devastating effects on civilians. Norway has taken part in many peacekeeping operations and has won considerable recognition for its work in peace processes. Norway has also been engaged in efforts to rebuild post-conflict societies and strengthen established institutions to prevent a return to conflict. Norway has highlighted the issue of sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict situations.

Norwegian policy helps to combat violence as described in SDG target 16.1, and it is reasonable to say that Norway is contributing to the achievement of this target.

**SDG target 16.2: End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children**

**Background and challenges in a global context**

Children and young people are vulnerable to violence. No form of violence against children is acceptable and all violence against children can be prevented. Nevertheless, the United Nations Study on Violence against Children of 2006\(^\text{13}\) shows that violence against children occurs in all societies, at all levels of society, and in all parts of the world, including Norway. While some abuse is perpetrated by strangers, most is perpetrated by those responsible for care of the child or by other people the child depends on. Children are entitled to protection from abuse. This is set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which almost all states have ratified. Despite this, violence against children is an extensive and serious problem.

The concept of violence against children used in the UN study includes all forms of violence from physical to psychological abuse such as humiliation, discrimination and negligence. The study shows that violence occurs in the home, at school, in welfare organisations, in care services and the justice system, at the workplace, and in the local community.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates that around 5.5 million children are living in slavery\(^\text{14}\) or in slave-like conditions. Millions of children are subject to forced labour, slavery, early marriage, sexual exploitation and abuse, or genital mutilation, or used in prostitution and pornography. A large number of children are in prison, either because their mother is in prison or because the justice system has not given them the protection they are entitled to. Many are forced

\(^{13}\) [http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRC/Study/Pages/StudyViolenceChildren.aspx](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRC/Study/Pages/StudyViolenceChildren.aspx)

to become child soldiers for the state or for non-state armed groups. According to the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) six in every ten children worldwide are regularly subjected to physical violence and one in ten girls are forced into sexual activity at some point in their lives. It has also been found that 11% of women aged 20-24 were married before the age of 15. Child brides are often taken out of school, tend to have more children than those who marry later, and are more often exposed to violence, sexual abuse and exploitation.

The fundamental human rights of millions of children are violated daily, depriving them of an education and undermining their personal security. Achieving SDG target 16.2 will be crucial for ensuring that these children can live in safety, become well-functioning adults and contribute to sustainable development.

**How is Norway using domestic policy in relevant areas to address these challenges?**

Human rights are a global public good in their own right. When children are protected against abuse and ensured opportunities for education, they are better equipped to assert their rights themselves and to take part in shaping society. Protection of children and young people has long been an important part of Norway’s foreign and development policy, with particular focus on implementation and follow-up of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, education opportunities, and children’s rights in conflict situations.

**How is policy in areas other than development policy contributing to progress towards this target?**

In Norway, the protection of children and of children’s rights has a strong standing – legally, institutionally and morally. Well-established independent institutions such as the Ombudsman for Children monitor the situation and ensure that the rights of children and young people are respected in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The school system, which all children are to be enrolled in from the first to tenth grade, also plays a key role in exposing violence against and exploitation of children, for example by making children aware of their rights. The Children’s House scheme is designed to ensure that children who have been subject to violence and abuse receive help, care and treatment. The Government has allocated funds to improve staffing at the Children’s Houses, to introduce a new interviewing system, and to strengthen the investigation of child abuse cases.

In addition to legislation in this area and mechanisms for exposing violations of children’s rights in Norway, such as the dedicated police units that investigate violence against and exploitation of children, Norway takes part in extensive international police cooperation to expose organised abuse and exploitation of children.

Anonymous telephone and internet services have been set up to make it safe and easy to report violations of children’s rights. The Norwegian authorities are obliged to intervene in all cases where children’s rights are violated. This also applies to cases where the rights of children from other countries are violated in Norway, and to cases where the rights of Norwegian children are violated abroad. At the international level, Norway is actively promoting bilateral and multilateral human rights dialogues. Norway takes active part in the UN Human Rights Council’s Universal Periodic Reviews (UPRs) of the human rights situation in the UN’s 193 member states, which include a review of children’s rights. Norway is among the countries that have ratified the new ILO protocol on

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15 [http://www.unicef.org/newsline/01pr42.htm](http://www.unicef.org/newsline/01pr42.htm)
16 [http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/UPRMain.aspx](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/UPRMain.aspx)
forced labour and trafficking in persons, P029 Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention 1930,\(^\text{17}\) which also covers child labour.

Norway played an active role in setting up the post of UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, and has since supported the operation of the office and participated in cooperation in several areas within this field. Norway is working actively at both national and international level to prevent violence against children in the justice system. For example, we have taken active part in the development, adoption and implementation of the United Nations Model Strategies and Practical Measures on the Elimination of Violence against Children in the Field of Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice,\(^\text{18}\) and supported the call for the UN’s New Global Study on Situation of Children in Detention\(^\text{19}\).

Education is a key focus area for the Government. Education is one of the most important tools for giving children and young people the opportunity to be independent and to help shape the society they are part of. Seeking to ensure that all children complete their education is part of our work in this area. It is therefore crucial that educational institutions are felt to be safe and secure even in conflict situations, when children and their rights are particularly vulnerable. Norway played a leading role in the development of the Safe Schools Declaration\(^\text{20}\), which is intended to ensure that educational institutions are protected against attack from all parties to an armed conflict. Norway is following up this work and helping to ensure that the Declaration is implemented.

*How is development policy contributing to progress towards this target?*

Norway is one of the largest contributors to UNICEF, and is thus helping UNICEF to assist individual countries with ratifying and implementing the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its optional protocols.\(^\text{21}\) Other organisations promoting the implementation of the Convention, such as Child Rights International Network and Child Rights Connect also receive support from Norway. In addition, Norway’s Ombudsman for Children receives support for providing information to partner countries about the monitoring systems for the Convention.

Norway supports the UNFPA/UNICEF Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting. The Programme is mobilising a wide range of actors in society including youth organisations, human rights organisations, religious leaders and parliamentarians engaged in local efforts. The Programme has strengthened the health system in relevant countries in terms of both prevention of FGM and treatment of survivors, for example by providing training in the treatment of complications. As a result of the Programme’s work, several countries have introduced a ban on FGM and drawn up national strategies to combat this practice.

Norway supports the ILO’s International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC),\(^\text{22}\) which operates in 90 countries in cooperation with UNICEF, UNDP, other UN organisations, NGOs and private companies.


\(^{21}\) Norway has not ratified the Third Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which gives children the right to appeal to the UN.

The use of children by armed groups as soldiers or for other purposes is a serious violation of children’s fundamental rights and freedoms. Norway supports organisations such as Child Soldiers International\(^2\) that work with demobilisation and reintegration of child soldiers.

**Does Norway’s overall policy promote progress towards this target?**

Norway works to protect children against violence and other forms of abuse. All children living in Norway, regardless of their nationality, are protected by Norwegian law, and the authorities are obliged to intervene in cases of child abuse. In cases of child abuse that are uncovered in other countries, for example in connection with paedophile rings on the internet, the authorities notify and cooperate with the police in the country that has jurisdiction.

At the international level, Norway seeks to ensure that the same rights apply to all children regardless of their nationality. This work involves engaging in bilateral and multilateral human rights dialogues and providing support through international organisations such as UNICEF.

The Government emphasises the importance of education for all, and has expressed concern over the number of children, especially girls, whose education is interrupted due to violence and abuse. A major effort is therefore underway to ensure that all children are able to complete their education in a secure environment.

The impact of Norwegian policy internationally is generally consistent with Norway’s development policy goals of ending abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children. Norwegian policy – at both national and international level – is based on the principle that the rights of children and young people are inalienable and that they must be upheld as a global common good on the same lines as other human rights.

Generally, it can be said that Norwegian policy contributes to the achievement of SDG target 16.2, but that domestic policy has little effect on conditions in developing countries. On the other hand, Norwegian development policy is clearly contributing to the achievement of this target.

**SDG target 16.3: Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels, and ensure equal access to justice for all**

**Background and challenges in a global context**

The rule of law and equal access to justice for all are key components of good governance and essential for sustainable development. Although many countries have adopted legislation that in principle ensures equal rights for all, significant challenges often remain in implementing these laws. In many countries, the legal protection provided to people varies according to factors such as gender, ethnicity, level of physical and mental functioning, religion and sexual orientation. In some areas, factors such as religion and tradition can influence the extent to which legislation is enforced, resulting in discrimination against vulnerable and marginalised groups. Moreover, a number of countries have legislation that does not ensure equal rights for all.

In addition to the problem of discrimination, a number of other factors can weaken and undermine the legal protection of individuals and legal persons. In many of Norway’s partner countries, insufficient capacity and/or insufficient resources and expertise in the judicial system and the police are preventing the development of the rule of law. Corruption is a widespread problem. It exacerbates existing weaknesses in a country’s legal system by allowing those who have power and

\(^2\) [http://www.child-soldiers.org/]
wealth to circumvent the law, while those who are without means or political contacts are further marginalised. In some countries, a lack of confidence in the judicial system, often combined with the high cost of initiating legal proceedings or hiring a defence lawyer, means that many choose not to use the system at all.

Another cause for concern is the way several countries use laws and law enforcement to silence journalists, human rights defenders, other representatives of civil society and the political opposition. Environmentalists may also be persecuted. Legislation relating to national security and allegations of misuse of funds may also be used as an excuse to arrest people taking part in the public debate and dismiss them from their jobs.

In an international context, there is considerable tension between the principle of state sovereignty and immunity of heads of states on the one hand, and the resolve of the international community to hold individuals – including heads of state – accountable for violations of international law, including international criminal law, on the other. The work of strengthening states’ commitment to fulfilling their obligations under national and international law is a continual process.

**How is Norway using domestic policy in relevant areas to address these challenges?**

Legal protection is recognised as an important public good, and promoting the international legal order is a mainstay of Norway’s foreign policy. For many years, Norway has supported the development of international criminal law. In addition, Norway has extensive experience of helping to create the conditions needed to establish institutions that can uphold the rule of law.

In Norway, the principle of independent rule of law is well established and inextricably linked to human rights. Both the Norwegian Constitution and other national legislation establish mechanisms that ensure the independence of the judiciary. The right to appeal and equal access to the courts ensure legal protection. Even so, challenges relating to discrimination and differential treatment still exist in Norway, and a continuous effort is made to reduce discrimination in practice.

**How is policy in areas other than development policy contributing to progress towards this target?**

Norway promotes the principles of the rule of law through dialogue with other countries and participation in international and regional bodies. Norway also raises the issue of violation of these principles and failure to fully implement international commitments both bilaterally and multilaterally. Norway actively supports the European Court of Human Rights and is providing funding for the reform process to ensure the effective functioning of the Court in the long term. In addition, Norway is a member of the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe, whose task is to advise member states on legislative issues, particularly constitutional issues.

The Crisis Response Pool, which was established in 2004, consists of personnel from various segments of the Norwegian justice sector: the prosecuting authority, the courts and the correctional services, together with a number of defence lawyers. Personnel from the Crisis Response Pool are seconded to international organisations or deployed under bilateral agreements and provide advice and assistance in connection with the development of the rule of law and relevant institutions.

Norwegian police officers also play a part through their participation in various international operations.

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24 http://echr.coe.int/Pages/home.aspx?p=home
25 http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/events/
How is development policy contributing to progress towards this target?

Human rights, including legal protection of the individual and the accountability of authorities, have been included as a cross-cutting issue in Norwegian development aid as of 2016. Human rights are to be taken into account when planning development projects and are to be followed up more closely where relevant. Norway contributes to the institutional framework for developing and strengthening the rule of law by providing multilateral and bilateral support to individual countries and to key international players in this area, such as the UN Development Programme (UNDP).

Norway finances and operates Training for Peace (TfP), a capacity building programme in connection with peacekeeping operations in Africa. Since it was established in 1995, this programme has trained employees in civil institutions in African countries, including the police, to participate in peacekeeping forces under the auspices of the African Union (AU) and the UN. Norwegian police officers have taken part as instructors and mentors.

Does Norway’s overall policy promote progress towards this target?

There are several reasons why this question can be answered in the affirmative.

Firstly, high priority is given to the principles and institutions of the rule of law in Norway. One of the consequences is that corruption involving Norwegian actors in developing countries is prosecuted in Norway.

Secondly, Norway is actively engaged in efforts in the UN and other international forums to promote this key component of human rights. In many countries, the links between human rights and the rule of law are not recognised. Norway seeks to draw attention to these links and to keep this issue on the agenda. The rule of law is an important topic in bilateral talks as well.

Thirdly, in its aid efforts, Norway has for many years been engaged in capacity building and institution building to support the rule of law based on human rights – including in countries affected by conflict. This work will be continued.

SDG target 16.4: By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organised crime

Background and challenges in a global context

Globalisation has led to increased flows of goods and people across national borders. In many respects, for example in terms of flows of international trade and technology, this has had a very positive impact on development at both national and global level. However, globalisation has also led to an unprecedented level of illicit cross-border flows.

Illicit financial and arms flows have a particularly negative impact on social and economic development and pose considerable challenges both to development efforts and to efforts in other areas. Illicit financial flows reduce tax revenues and thus also the amount of resources available for development. Illicit trade in arms is a primary source of weapons for terrorist groups and criminal networks. Strengthening control of the illicit arms trade would make it more difficult for terrorist, rebel and criminal groups to operate, and would also limit the ability of repressive governments to oppress their populations.

Illicit financial flows: In recent years, more attention has been directed to the issue of international financial transactions associated with illegal activities. Every year, huge profits from environmental crime, illegal drugs trafficking, embezzlement and theft are moved out of both developing and developed countries. Some of this money could have been used to finance schooling, health services, welfare and other development projects, if it had been taxed in the country of origin. Stopping illicit financial flows would also have the effect of cutting off an important source of financing for terrorism. It was recognition of this fact that led to the adoption of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, which highlighted the importance of efforts to combat illicit financial flows in mobilising the resources needed to achieve the SDGs by 2030. The leaking of the ‘Panama Papers’ has given us further insight into the scale of illicit financial flows globally.

In many cases, it is difficult or almost impossible to trace illegal transactions without extensive, expert investigations in several jurisdictions. It should in theory be possible to make this work more effective by strengthening the capacity and ability of national tax authorities to monitor individuals’ taxable income and wealth, and by participating in processes that enhance transparency in the financial sector and the global economy as a whole. However, this depends on the political will being present, and this may not always be the case.

Illicit arms flows: The illicit arms trade is a primary source of weapons and ammunition for criminal networks, terrorist groups and countries that are subject to an arms embargo. Most illicit weapons were originally produced and registered legally, but corruption and inadequate arms trade controls and reporting on arms transfers has made it possible for them to find their way to the illegal market. The illegal arms market is not only an important source of weapons and ammunition for criminal networks and other non-state armed groups, it is also an important source of income for many of these groups.

Organised crime: A review of convictions in Norway shows that in total about a hundred individuals, from more than twenty different countries, have been convicted of organised-crime offences by Norwegian courts.

Like corruption, violent extremism and terrorism, organised crime has a significant impact on state fragility. We are also increasingly aware of the interrelationship between these activities, for example the proceeds of organised crime being used to finance terrorist, militia and rebel groups. Criminal networks often operate across borders, and their activities thus have implications for regional stability.

The links between organised crime, terrorism and fragility are complex. The recent white paper on global security challenges (Meld. St. 37 (2014–2015) discusses how these issues are connected and describes the negative impact they have on efforts in other areas. The white paper sets out a number of measures to reduce fragility, and highlights the need to target efforts towards factors that exacerbate state fragility, such as organised crime.

Trafficking in drugs, human trafficking and people smuggling, trade in weapons, and environmental and ICT crime account for most organised crime worldwide. In some developing countries, violence associated with organised crime is widespread, and poses a constant threat to the life and health of the population, undermines legal business activities, and leads to a huge loss of tax revenue and resources. Political institutions, the business sector, development targets, the environment and security are all threatened.

29 https://www.politi.no/kripos/organisert_kriminalitet/ (Norwegian only)
How is Norway using domestic policy in relevant areas to address these challenges?

How is policy in areas other than development policy contributing to progress towards this target?

Illicit financial flows: The scale of illicit financial flows both into and out of Norway is limited. This is due to the high level of transparency in Norway combined with the work of various supervisory bodies, such as the Financial Supervisory Authority of Norway. Norway has an extensive network of agreements with other countries that ensures the exchange of tax information. Together with the other Nordic countries, Norway has also entered into agreements on exchange of tax information with countries that were previously on the OECD list of uncooperative tax jurisdictions. These initiatives help to ensure that the Norwegian Tax Administration receives information about Norwegian taxpayers’ assets and income abroad.

The Government has set clear expectations of Norwegian state-owned companies with regard to their anti-corruption efforts. These are set out for example in the annual state ownership reports (see also the white paper Diverse and value-creating ownership (Meld. St. 27 (2013-2014))). The authorities also maintain a close dialogue with Norwegian private companies on corporate social responsibility (CSR), and expectations of both public and private sector enterprises relating to CSR are set out for example in Business and Human Rights, Norway’s National Action Plan for the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles. Norway has adopted anti-corruption legislation, in line with the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) and the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention. In addition, work is underway to implement the EU’s Fourth Anti-Money Laundering Directive and the Financial Action Task Force ( FATF) recommendations.

The United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) review mechanism and the Council of Europe’s anti-corruption body, the Group of States against Corruption ( GRECO) have concluded that Norwegian anti-corruption legislation is fully in line with our obligations under international law. As a party to UNCAC and the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention, Norway is required to prosecute individuals and enterprises based in Norway that have been charged with corruption abroad. According to Transparency International, of nine proven cases of corruption in 2014 and 2015, three involved bribes being paid to people in other countries.

For the last decade or so, Norway has been at the forefront of political efforts to put the issue of illicit financial flows on the international agenda. We have, for example, successfully led efforts to put this issue on the World Bank agenda. Together with the other Nordic countries, we have insisted that the World Bank – the world’s largest development institution – takes active part in the efforts to combat illicit financial flows. In the UN negotiations on the SDGs, Norway worked hard to ensure that the fight against illicit financial flows was included in SDG 16, along with an indicator to measure reductions in illicit financial flows.

Norway was one of the first countries to introduce country-by-country reporting for multinational companies in the extractive industries, and last year the Storting (Norwegian parliament) asked the Government to consider the need for further improvements to the legislation in this area. The Storting has also asked the Government to present a proposal for a public register of company

31 https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dokumenter/business_hr/id2457944/
34 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32015L0849
36 http://www.oecd.org/corruption/oecdantibriberyconvention.htm
ownership, to ensure transparency surrounding the ownership of Norwegian companies and strengthen the efforts to fight tax crime, corruption and money laundering. The Storting has recommended that this register should comply with the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Recommendations from 2012, which set an international standard for combating money laundering and the financing of terrorism, as well as with EU legislation in this area. The Government’s work to follow up the Storting’s requests is well under way.

Norway also supports new initiatives to combat tax evasion such as the Addis Tax Initiative and the establishment of an OECD anti-corruption centre.

Illicit arms flows: At the national level, a number of bodies cooperate on weapons control, with a view to limiting the number of illegal weapons in circulation in Norway. The number of firearms in private hands in Norway is relatively high. Most of these privately-owned firearms are intended for use in hunting and competitive shooting. Although Norway has an extensive framework for firearms control, it is estimated that the number of illegal weapons in circulation is high. Despite the relatively high weapon density, the level of armed crime in Norway is very low.

Norway has implemented a number of measures and established control bodies to ensure that weapons produced in Norway do not end up in areas affected by conflict or in the hands of repressive regimes. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Section for Export Control) and the Ministry of Defence, which has a number of control schemes in place, are responsible for ensuring that Norwegian-owned or Norwegian-produced weapons do not fall into the wrong hands. The recent sale of old naval vessels to Nigeria illustrated the challenges that can arise in this context and the importance of continued efforts to improve routines.

In international forums and organisations, Norway actively supports measures to restrict uncontrolled arms flows of all kinds. In Norway’s view, control regimes designed to prevent the spread of illegal weapons are vital in the work to reduce armed violence and human suffering in conflict areas. This applies both to weapons of mass destruction and to small arms and light weapons. In 2014, Norway became the 11th country to sign the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). The ATT is crucial because it contains important prohibitions and criteria relating to export licences, human rights, or acts of organised crime, and gender-based violence.

The fight against organised crime: Norway works to combat organised crime in several ways. For example, a national expert group is being established to analyse how serious and organised crime is affecting countries where Norway has foreign and development policy interests, and to propose coordinated measures to address this issue. This will include dialogue with the private sector.

International IDEA maintains that global efforts to combat organised crime are being addressed by various organisations that are effective in themselves, but that are working in a situation where no one organisation has been given clear, strategic, overall responsibility. In IDEA’s view, this points to a systematic inability to tackle organised crime effectively. For this reason, Norway supports the Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime, a network of close to 100 international experts who are working together to draw up a global strategy for fighting organised crime that also takes into account issues relating to development, justice and security at global, regional and country level.

Norway will also draw up a strategy for its international efforts to combat organised crime, and this too will look at development and security issues.

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40 http://www.idea.int/
41 http://globalinitiative.net/
Norway took the initiative to the establishment of the Interpol’s Fisheries Crime Working Group, and has played an active role in the Working Group, which it is currently chairing. Norway was also behind the initiative to establish UNODC’s expert group on transnational organised crime at sea.

Closer international police cooperation is important in order to be able to investigate those responsible for transnational organised crime in the fisheries sector, particularly in developing countries. Norway also actively promotes the FATF standards on combating money laundering and terrorist financing, with a view to ensuring that more countries implement them properly and effectively.

As set out in the white paper Global security challenges in Norway’s foreign policy (Meld. St. 37 (2014–2015), the Government is open to the possibility of developing new instruments and standards that are binding under international law to counter new forms of serious and transnational organised crime.

How is development policy contributing to progress towards this target?

Illicit financial flows: Norway will not enter into development cooperation with countries on the OECD’s or the EU’s lists of non-cooperative tax jurisdictions. This also applies to Norfund (the Norwegian Investment Fund for Developing Countries), Norway’s main instrument for combating poverty through private sector development. Norfund does not invest in any third countries with which Norway does not have a tax information exchange agreement, or which do not comply with the OECD’s guidelines on taxation.

In 2015, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs provided NOK 68 million to support the work of the World Bank, the regional development banks, the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), civil society organisations and think tanks to combat illicit financial flows. Most of this support was continued in 2016. Funding was also provided for the IMF’s efforts to prevent money laundering and the financing of terrorism.

Norway also cooperates with partner countries on this issue, for example by providing support to strengthen national tax institutions. One example is Norway’s cooperation with the Zambia Revenue Authority, which was launched in 2011 under the Tax for Development programme. This cooperation has resulted in a significant increase in tax revenues from the copper mining industry in Zambia.

Illicit arms flows: Norwegian efforts to combat illicit arms flows focus on a few key areas. One of these is disarmament and demobilisation of armed groups and, where relevant, the destruction of collected weapons. Norway provides support for this work both through large, intergovernmental organisations and directly to NGOs. In some situations, smaller partners and organisations are more flexible than large multilateral organisations. This two-pronged approach is particularly important in areas where confidence in the authorities of the country concerned and in the UN is low.

The fight against organised crime: Norway’s development efforts have helped enhance understanding of the links between organised crime and corruption, violent extremism and state fragility. This has served to strengthen the focus on organised crime at the planning stage of development efforts.

In its efforts to combat international crime and people smuggling, Norway provides support to the UN, the EU, several international and intergovernmental organisations, and to a number of international initiatives. Norway’s cooperation with the EU and other partners to map and reduce

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44 http://www.norfund.no/
people smuggling in Africa is part of this work, as is Norway’s participation in efforts to support countries that are receiving large numbers of migrants.

Several development cooperation programmes seek, directly or indirectly, to combat organised crime. The support provided through Norway’s International Climate and Forest Initiative to improve governance in partner countries is closely related to efforts to fight crime in the forestry sector and other illegal exploitation of natural resources such as illegal logging, and hunting and trade in threatened species. These criminal activities are extensive and growing, and are closely linked to other international organised crime. The Climate and Forest Initiative cooperates with multilateral organisations such as the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and Interpol on issues such as the illegal exploitation of natural resources. Similarly, combating fisheries-related crime is one of the focus areas of the Fish for Development programme. Norway has contributed to the establishment of a regional fisheries law enforcement academy at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University in South Africa, where fisheries control officers and police officers will receive training in how to investigate fisheries crime.

A development cooperation programme to fight organised crime and illicit trade was launched in 2016, and its funding is to be gradually increased. Efforts to combat organised crime in developing countries are to be strengthened through the development of analysis capacity, systems for sharing information and targeted measures to strengthen the police, customs authorities and judiciary in the countries and regions concerned. Efforts to fight crime in various specific areas, such as the environment, fisheries, illicit capital flows, are to be intensified, as are efforts at regional and country level.

**Does Norway’s overall policy promote progress towards this target?**

Norway’s efforts to combat illicit financial and arms flows and organised crime are wide-ranging. Norway has worked for years to put the issue of illicit financial flows on the international agenda. Extensive legislation has been put in place in Norway to prevent Norwegian companies from contributing these flows, and Norway has established cooperation with a number of countries on the enforcement of this legislation. Norwegian aid has also been used to strengthen the capacity of partner countries to reduce illicit financial flows and prevent illegal tax evasion.

Norwegian policy in areas other than development affects illicit arms flows more than Norwegian development policy. Norway has, for example, pushed for more stringent international controls and better exchange of information on the arms trade as a whole. This has included supporting efforts to strengthen the marking of weapons and ammunition, to control the sale of small arms and light weapons and to ban cluster weapons. In the context of Norwegian development cooperation, Norway’s efforts in this area have focused primarily on disarmament and demobilisation of armed groups in post-conflict situations. This work also helps to prevent further flows of arms, by ensuring that weapons are collected and destroyed.

In recent years, more attention has been given to the issue of organised crime, partly because there is now greater understanding of the ways in which it makes countries more fragile. Norwegian policy, including development policy, is therefore targeted towards areas such as resource management that are vital in terms of generating state revenues, but where criminal groups also see significant opportunities for theft, embezzlement and other forms of corruption. It is for this reason and because the negative ripple effects of organised criminal activity on other developing countries and globally are so huge, that the decision was taken to establish a development cooperation programme to fight organised crime and illicit trade.
Overall, it is reasonable to say that Norwegian policy promotes the achievement of SDG target 16.4. However, closer international cooperation on combating corruption, illicit trade in arms and other forms of organised crime is needed if real progress is to be made towards this target globally.

**SDG target 16.5: Sustainably reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms**

**Background and challenges in a global context**

Corruption is a significant cause of inequality and a major challenge in the fight against poverty. It undermines confidence in the authorities, the business sector and the market, and impedes growth and development. Corruption has a disproportionate negative impact on the poor, as it creates a situation where they cannot afford basic services. The OECD defines corruption as the ‘active or passive misuse of the powers of public officials (appointed or elected) for private financial or other benefits’. According to the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (NHO), corruption occurs when a person in a position of trust in the private or public sector sets aside their responsibility, and uses that position for their own personal benefit or gain, or to unfairly seek advantages for their organisation or firm. This may take the form of bribes, unwarranted gifts or other advantages, or promises of advantages, in return for carrying out, or not carrying out, a service.

Corruption arises in many contexts, such as in the interaction between public officials and the general public, in complex business agreements, and in the way resources are distributed to maintain the power and wealth of a country’s political leaders. At the global level, the scale of this problem is huge. At the anti-corruption summit in London in May 2016, where Prime Minister Solberg presented Norway’s efforts in this area, it was pointed out that more than USD 1 billion is transferred out of countries in the form of illicit financial flows every year. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) estimates that between USD 1 500 billion and 2 000 billion are lost through corruption. This is equivalent to around 5 % of global GDP.

Corruption affects society in many ways. It is a major obstacle to the development of democracy and the rule of law because institutions and political positions lose legitimacy when they are misused for personal gain. Corruption also undermines economic development and creates inefficiency as less competitive actors are able to gain contracts unfairly. Corruption can deter potential investors and can cause major economic losses in countries where renewable or non-renewable resources are not managed properly.

**How is Norway using domestic policy in relevant areas to address these challenges?**

There is little corruption or tax evasion in Norway compared with the levels in many other countries. There is a high degree of confidence among the general public that politicians and the civil service are managing our common resources properly, and are not using them for their own gain. Transparency is key. This confidence is partly due to the fact that Norwegian society is relatively open. It is easy to find out who owns companies, who has significant assets, how much people earn, how tax money is spent, and how decisions are made in the civil service. Under the Freedom of Information Act, which sets out a general right to access to information, it is possible to find out how the government administration makes decisions and what factors have been taken into consideration. User-friendly systems make it easy for the public to access information. These systems are continually being improved. There are various ombudsmen who protect the rights of specific groups such as consumers, patients, children and people who have experienced discrimination in

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45 https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/corruption/id2500615/
their dealings with the public sector. We have an effective Financial Supervisory Authority and Competition Authority, and very little corruption in our police and customs authorities. An active civil society also helps to ensure transparency, and thus build confidence and consensus.

Recent corruption cases involving Norwegian companies in certain high-risk countries emphasise the importance of maintaining a focus on this area. An international study carried out by Ernst & Young\textsuperscript{47} shows that 16\% of Norwegians believe that corruption and bribery are commonplace in the business sector. Although this percentage is considerably lower in Norway than in most other countries, it shows that Norway has room for improvement in this area. Corruption in Norway could extend to other countries, including developing countries, and thus help to maintain corruption at the international level. This makes national-level anti-corruption efforts even more important.

\textit{How is policy in areas other than development policy contributing to progress towards this target?}

Norway has ratified the global anti-corruption conventions, and has amended Norwegian legislation so that Norwegians and employees in Norwegian companies can be prosecuted for any involvement in corruption even outside Norway. Moreover, since 2007, companies have been required under the Working Environment Act to put in place whistleblowing systems. Employers have an obligation to ensure that this is done. All those who expose and report issues of concern or legal irregularities are important actors in the fight against corruption. Many irregularities are exposed due to sound and reliable whistleblowing systems.

Norwegian investments abroad are also regulated by domestic legislation and guidelines. There are clear expectations that Norwegian enterprises in which the state has an ownership interest\textsuperscript{48} will play a leading role in anti-corruption efforts. The state can promote anti-corruption work through its ownership dialogues with these companies. Ethical guidelines\textsuperscript{49} have been drawn up for the observation of, and where appropriate the exclusion of, companies from the Government Pension Fund Global portfolio.

At the international level, Norway takes an active part in anti-corruption efforts through its membership of and/or support of a number of global organisations and initiatives that work to promote transparency, fight corruption and prevent illicit financial flows. Examples include the Council of Europe, the OECD, the UN, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), and the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI). Norway also cooperates with Interpol on the investigation of cases of corruption and stolen assets, and on efforts to repatriate these assets.

Since 2005, Norad (Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation) has led the Corruption Hunter Network\textsuperscript{50}, in which some 18-20 countries take part. The members of the network are mainly from the police, prosecution authorities and anti-corruption agencies. The network meets regularly to exchange experience, information and views regarding best practice in the fight against corruption.

\textit{How is development policy contributing to progress towards this target?}

There is zero tolerance for corruption in Norwegian development cooperation. This means that funding is stopped as soon as any corruption is exposed, and recipients are required to pay back funding that has already been disbursed, and to ensure that those responsible are brought to justice.

\textsuperscript{47} http://www.ey.com/Publication/vwLUAssets/EY-corporate-misconduct-individual-consequences/$FILE/EY-corporate-misconduct-individual-consequences.pdf
\textsuperscript{48} https://www.regjeringen.no/en/topics/business-and-industry/state-ownership/id1336/
\textsuperscript{49} https://www.regjeringen.no/en/topics/the-economy/the-government-pension-fund/responsible-investments/id446948/
\textsuperscript{50} https://www.norad.no/en/front/thematic-areas/democracy-and-good-governance/corruption-hunters/
There are many examples of such action being taken in response to cases of corruption and bribery involving Norwegian aid funds.

Several Norwegian aid programmes include the fight against corruption and bribery as one of their goals. One example is **Oil for Development (OfD)**, an institution-building initiative based on long-standing cooperation between Norwegian institutions and partner institutions in the countries concerned. In 2015, OfD cooperation was established in 11 countries. The operational goal of OfD is defined as: ‘economically, environmentally and socially responsible management of petroleum resources which safeguards the needs of future generations’.

For a number of years, Norway has been one of the largest contributors to the UN Development Programme (UNDP), and since the 1990s, has promoted the inclusion of corruption on UNDP’s agenda for both its normative work and its operational activities at country level. Norway also supports the **Stolen Asset Recovery Initiative (StAR)**, a partnership between the World Bank and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

Aid itself can be a source of corruption. In this context too, transparency is crucial. The Government now requires all authorities and NGOs that receive funding from Norway to publish their funding agreements on the internet. The intention is to ensure that the general public in countries that receive aid from Norway can see how these funds are supposed to be used and, if necessary, report any misuse of the funds.

**Does Norway’s overall policy promote progress towards this target?**

Norwegian companies and individuals will be prosecuted if they are involved in corruption in Norway or abroad. Norway implements the international anti-corruption conventions. Work is also underway on the implementation of the FATF Recommendations and the fourth EU Anti-Money Laundering Directive. In response to a request from the Storting, open registries of beneficial ownership are to be established. Together, these efforts will restrict the opportunities for Norwegian companies and individuals to engage in corruption. They will also reduce the risk of Norway being used as a transit country or final destination for illicit financial flows or for money laundering.

At the international level, Norway’s support for organisations such as the Council of Europe, the OECD, the UN, FATF, EITI, the World Bank and UNDP also contributes to the fight against corruption. Norway’s continued engagement in the multilateral cooperation in this field is considered to be crucial, as is the police cooperation that Norway is involved in and the Corruption Hunter Network, which Norway leads.

It is reasonable to assume that zero tolerance for corruption in Norway’s development policy helps to reduce the incidence of corruption in international development.

It is also reasonable to say that Norwegian domestic policy, development policy and foreign policy are mutually reinforcing, and contribute to the fight against corruption and bribery in developing countries and globally.

**SDG target 16.6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels**

**Background and challenges in a global context**

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51 https://www.norad.no/en/front/thematic-areas/oil-for-development/oil-for-development-programme/
52 http://star.worldbank.org/star/
In this context, ‘institutions’ refers primarily to the government authorities and agencies that provide public services and implement policies, and to the legislation that forms the framework for the way society functions. The effectiveness of institutions and the scope of their activities depend on their capacity and on how much leeway they are given by the political authorities. Experience shows that effective, accountable and transparent institutions play a key role in the development of states. Correspondingly, weak institutions are a considerable obstacle to development and good governance. Institutions need a certain degree of transparency and freedom to carry out their tasks. Transparency makes it possible to see how the work of institutions is carried out, and means that they are required to report on their activities. Transparency makes it possible for civil society, the media and the general public to monitor activities in both the public and private sector, and to determine whether they comply with relevant legislation. Only if there is transparency can violations be discovered and those responsible held accountable. Freedom to carry out tasks means, for instance, that important supervisory bodies with statutory responsibilities are not subject to political interference.

**How is Norway using domestic policy in relevant areas to address these challenges?**

Norway ranks high in terms of global indicators for freedom of the press, independence of the judiciary, control of corruption and transparency of national political processes and budgets. One of the key reasons for this is the existence of effective, transparent and accountable institutions at all levels. Norway has long and extensive experience of establishing such institutions, and shares this experience in its development cooperation.

Norway’s membership of the Open Government Partnership (OGP) entails a commitment to promote transparency in Norway’s public administration and in international organisations and institutions. Norway’s third OGP National Action Plan (2016-2017) has recently been finalised. It sets out a number of concrete measures that the ministries are obliged to implement.

**How is policy in areas other than development policy contributing to progress towards this target?**

Norway emphasises the importance of effective, accountable and transparent international institutions and organisations. Including targets on good governance, the rule of law and democracy in SDG 16 was one of Norway’s main priorities in the UN negotiations on the Sustainable Development Goals. The goal that was adopted has a clear focus on good governance, the rule of law and effective institutions, with human rights as a cross-cutting theme.

A number of the targets for SDG 16 focus on developing and putting in place effective, transparent institutions, in particular target 16.3 (‘promote the rule of law at the national and international levels’), target 16.4 (‘significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows’), target 16.5 (‘substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms’), target 16.7 (‘ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels’), and target 16.10 (‘ensure public access to information...’).

**How is development policy contributing to progress towards this target?**

Norway supports and runs a number of development programmes and projects aimed at promoting the development of transparent and effective institutions. Through the Oil for Development (OfD) programme, for example, Norway shares its experience of sustainable management of petroleum resources. OfD also provides a forum for dialogue with partner countries on the principle of integrity in resource management. Much of the dialogue focuses on the importance of transparent, accountable institutions.
In addition to large-scale programmes such as this, a number of Norwegian institutions cooperate with partner institutions in developing countries. This includes cooperation between universities. In addition, the Office of the Auditor General of Norway has established cooperation with several countries, providing guidance based on international standards and other support to strengthen partner institutions. Statistics Norway (SSB) provides advice to countries where systems for collecting statistics are inadequate, with a view to improving their national capacity to gather and use national statistics.

The likelihood of succeeding in developing effective, transparent institutions through programmes such as OfD, or through cooperation between institutions in Norway and institutions in other countries, varies. Experience has shown that the chance of success is greatest when the partner countries themselves are aware of the advantages of strengthening the national institutions in question.

In addition to the initiatives mentioned above, Norway actively supports international organisations in their efforts to establish transparent, effective institutions. The UN’s many funds, programmes and agencies play an important role in strengthening public institutions within various sectors in a number of member countries. This work is largely financed through the various UN organisations’ core funding, to which Norway makes a significant contribution. In particular, Norwegian support is vital for UNDP’s institution-building efforts at the local level in the critical phase just after an armed conflict has ended. In addition, Norway channels considerable funds through the World Bank for the establishment of institutions.

**Does Norway’s overall policy promote progress towards this target?**

Norway works actively to develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels, through cooperation between Norwegian institutions and corresponding institutions in developing countries, through aid programmes, and by highlighting the importance of such efforts in international forums and organisations. This work is mainly carried out in the context of our development policy, particularly in our development cooperation in the petroleum sector, where Norway has substantial experience and expertise.

Norway’s experience of institution building has shown that aid is only effective in strengthening institutions and expertise in the long-term when there is sufficient political will in the country concerned. When that is the case, Norway’s overall policy has succeeded in promoting development. In countries where the political will is lacking, this work is very challenging, and it is rarely possible to build robust, transparent and effective institutions.

**SDG target 16.7: Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels**

**Background and challenges in a global context**

One of the hallmarks of good governance is that politicians and public authorities can be held accountable for their decisions and that people have opportunities to express their political preferences, for example by voting for a change of government. Norway’s view is that good governance must include the rule of law, democracy and respect for human rights. Good governance also requires effective, independent institutions that ensure inclusive, impartial and representative decision-making. In a large number of countries, many of these basic elements of good governance are lacking, even though formal democratic institutions are in place.
Ultimately, inclusive and representative decision-making depends on how deeply rooted democratic processes are among the general population in a particular country, and especially at the political level. It is in Norway’s interests for more countries to develop systems based on truly inclusive and representative decision-making, which may encourage more countries to support an international legal order based on the same principles. However, convincing countries that have weak democratic traditions and elites that are clinging on to power of the advantages of democratic governance, through development aid or in other ways, is not possible without changing attitudes and persuading elites to give up long-standing rights and privileges. This is a very difficult process.

How is Norway using domestic policy in relevant areas to address these challenges?

How is policy in areas other than development policy contributing to progress towards this target?

Norway has been working to promote democracy, the rule of law and human rights for many years, internationally, at regional level and through bilateral talks with other countries. We have emphasised the importance of inclusive and representative decision-making processes, as well as the vital role of civil society in promoting transparency and opportunities for the views of interest groups to be heard. This work is an important element of Norwegian foreign and development policy. The Storting contributes to this work through its dialogue and exchange of visits with parliaments in other parts of the world, and through its membership of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.53

Norway provides election observers and other election-related support in many countries. The Norwegian Resource Bank for Democracy and Human Rights (NORDEM), which is run by the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights54 with funding from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, recruits and deploys observers to international operations under the auspices of the EU, the OSCE55 and the UN to ensure that the concerns of all involved parties are taken as fully as possible into account in decision-making processes. Norway has also sought to ensure that civil society is able to play a part in setting the agenda in international processes, particularly in the UN.

How is development policy contributing to progress towards this target?

Norway played an important role in ensuring that democratic governance was included as one of UNDP’s main areas of work. UNDP now provides extensive support for the organisation of elections and the mobilisation of voters both prior to elections and in the context of long-term capacity building to strengthen electoral institutions, parliaments and local democracy. Norway also hosts the UNDP Oslo Governance Centre,56 one of six UNDP Global Policy Centres, and supports its work in the area of governance and peacebuilding.

Human rights is one of four cross-cutting issues in Norwegian development policy, and public participation is a criterion for all projects funded by Norway. Norway also provides support for various democracy-building initiatives, which vary depending on the situation. Key focus areas include election processes, support for journalists and the free media, promoting respect for human rights including gender equality, and support for civil society. Funding is provided both bilaterally and through multilateral channels such as the UN and the World Bank.

Research has shown that inclusive peace processes, particularly those that involve women, are more likely to lead to lasting peace. In line with its National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2015–18), Norway seeks to ensure that the needs, rights and priorities of both women and men are

53 http://www.ipu.org/english/home.htm
54 http://www.jus.uio.no/smr/english/
55 http://www.osce.org/
addressed in all peace and security efforts where Norway is involved. This includes peace processes, peacebuilding initiatives, humanitarian efforts and international operations. Promoting the inclusion of women is also an important part of Norway’s work to prevent and combat violent extremism. The core funding provided by Norway to UN Women\textsuperscript{57} is an important contribution to the organisation’s work to increase the representation of women in democratically elected bodies and decision-making processes. In 2015, Norway was the third largest provider of core funding to UN Women.

**Does Norway’s overall policy promote progress towards this target?**

Norway seeks to promote inclusive and representative decision-making in many different contexts. The fact that Norway is a well-developed democracy is of limited significance in terms of setting an example for other countries to follow. However, the high degree of participation in national decision-making processes in Norway gives Norway legitimacy in its work to promote democracy in other countries.

Promoting democratic governance in all countries is one of the objectives of Norwegian foreign and development policy. We work, for example, to strengthen the capacity of partner countries to conduct elections and we support institution building and competence building in a wide range of areas. Our development policy can thus be said to promote the achievement of this target.

**SDG target 16.8: Broaden and strengthen the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance**

**Background and challenges in a global context**

Norway has been actively involved, together with the other Nordic countries, in the ongoing negotiations in the UN on the reform and expansion of the UN Security Council. In Norway’s view, the Council should be expanded to increase the representation of developing countries and reflect the political and economic changes that have taken place in recent decades. At the same time, it is important to ensure that the Council maintains its effectiveness and legitimacy. Like most other countries, Norway believes that the number of both permanent and non-permanent Security Council members should be increased. The Nordic countries’ joint position is that Africa should have permanent representation on an enlarged Security Council.

The legitimacy of international institutions rests partly on their ability to represent and promote the views of their member states. The UN system covers a wide range of tasks and areas, and ensuring broad legitimacy has been a key aim throughout its development. The World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the regional development banks and the World Trade Organization (WTO) play a crucial role in the development of the global framework for trade and economic relations. The IMF and the banks are, however, governed by different principles from those of the rest of the UN system.

The World Bank, the regional development banks and the IMF do not follow the UN system’s ‘one country, one vote’ principle. The level of representation and voting power of member countries are determined on the basis of capital contributions, which in turn are determined by the country’s economic weight, and, in the case of the IMF, the country’s relative position in the world economy. On the whole, the governing bodies of these institutions make decisions on the basis of consensus, but

\textsuperscript{57} http://www.unwomen.org/en
the way quotas and voting power are allocated is important for the perceived legitimacy of these institutions.

The last review of quotas and voting power within the IMF and World Bank took place in 2010. Changes in the global economic landscape had made it necessary to increase the representation of developing countries and emerging economies. In the World Bank, voting power for these countries was increased by nearly 5% to 47%. It was also decided to increase African countries’ representation on the World Bank Boards from two to three members. France, the UK, the US and Germany also had to give up some of their voting shares, and the Nordic countries lost 0.25% of their voting shares.

In the IMF, too, the 2010 reforms resulted in an increase in the quotas and voting shares of emerging economies and developing countries. In addition, political agreement was reached on the need to reduce by two the number of IMF Executive Board members representing advanced European countries. The intention is for these two members to be replaced by representatives from emerging economies and developing countries, including Central and Eastern European countries, which were classified as emerging economies in 2010. So far, the number of Board members representing advanced Western European countries has been reduced by 1.64. Norway is part of the Nordic-Baltic Constituency, and membership of the Board rotates between the constituency members. So far, the Nordic-Baltic Constituency has given up 0.14 seats on the Board, and has thus contributed to the reduction in the number of Western European Board members. Both the World Bank and the IMF have begun a new review of quotas. Any move to strengthen the influence of developing countries will require the support of the majority of the IMF’s and World Bank’s governors. In the World Bank, the emerging economies are seeking to strengthen their formal influence based on their increased economic weight, whereas poorer African countries are seeking representation based on other criteria. It will therefore be difficult to find a solution that is acceptable to all countries – from the poorest countries to middle-income and wealthy countries. The joint Nordic-Baltic position is that the World Bank needs to develop a new simple, comprehensible and dynamic quota formula that will remain valid over time, and that takes account not only of a country’s economic size (GDP), but also of its contributions to the World Bank’s International Development Association (IDA). The Nordic–Baltic Constituency is also working to protect the voting power of the small and poorest countries in the World Bank.

In the IMF, much of the discussion currently centres on the relative importance of economic weight and other key criteria relating to the IMF mandate, such as openness and position in the world economy. A great deal is said about the need to give greater influence and responsibility to dynamic developing countries. The most concrete proposals for change, however, are leaning towards preserving the influence of large economies at the expense of small ones, whether these are developing or developed countries.

The Nordic-Baltic Constituency considers it important that quotas are allocated in a way that reflects the IMF’s mandate and the member countries’ relative position in the global economy. The Constituency therefore supports proposals to transfer responsibility and voting power to emerging economies and developing countries as they become more important players in the global economy. At the same time, the degree of openness in the economy must also be taken into consideration, in line with the IMF’s mandate. The Norwegian-Baltic Constituency is also seeking to protect the voting power of the small and poorest countries, along the same lines as in the World Bank.

Trade can be an important driver of development, and there is still considerable potential for developing countries to benefit from the opportunities offered by international trade. The World Trade Organization (WTO), which regulates international trade, is the most important organisation in this context. The WTO now has 164 members, after Liberia and Afghanistan became full members in
summer 2016. A further 19 countries, all of them developing countries, are currently negotiating membership. The WTO’s aim is to further develop a rule-based, open multilateral trading system that will create better conditions for economic growth and prosperity, not least in the developing countries.

The successful integration of developing countries into the multilateral trading system and the global economy is a key goal. Multilateral trade negotiations are demanding, and have become more so as a result of changes in the global economic balance of power. Determining the way forward for the WTO, in particular clarifying its future role as a global arena for trade negotiations, is a challenge. At the WTO’s Tenth Ministerial Conference in Nairobi in 2015, lack of agreement between the members on matters of principle meant that it was not possible to formally conclude the Doha Round. Agreement was reached, however, on a package of decisions and a ministerial declaration outlining the future work of the WTO.

All the OECD committees have temporary mandates that have to be renewed on a regular basis. The mandate of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) was due to expire on 31 December 2015, but was extended until the end of 2016, to allow time to consider the results of an internal review that was originally due to be completed in the second half of 2015. The review has been delayed and the results are still not available. The Secretary-General of the OECD has initiated a separate review of all OECD activities of relevance for development. In the meantime, DAC has also established the High Level Panel on the Future of the Development Assistance Committee, which is to present its recommendations during the course of 2016. The panel is made up of 17 people with extensive experience of development work, and is chaired by Mary Robinson, former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

**How is Norway using domestic policy in relevant areas to address these challenges?**

**How is policy in areas other than development policy contributing to progress towards this target?**

In the World Bank, the IMF and the regional development banks, Norway has played a very active role in the discussions on quota and voting power reform. Norway is working to promote rule-based and dynamic quota formulas, based on objective economic criteria, as well as to ensure transparency in negotiation processes. This will mean a further upward adjustment of the quotas of developing countries and emerging economies as their position in the world economy becomes stronger.

Norway is also working to promote a system whereby countries are credited for their contributions to the World Bank’s International Development Association (IDA), its soft loan window for the world’s 77 poorest countries. The Nordic countries currently provide 7 % of the funding for the IDA.

Norway has supported the establishment of new development banks and institutions such as the [Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank](http://www.aiib.org/) (AIIB), which was set up at the initiative of China. Like the [New Development Bank](http://ndb.int/) (NDB), which was established in 2015 by Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, the AIIB can be seen as an alternative and possible competitor to the World Bank and the regional development banks. These initiatives can also be seen as an expression of the emerging economies’ growing influence, and also perhaps as a sign of their dissatisfaction with the speed of voting power reform in the IMF and World Bank.

Norway has a strong interest in participating in a broad multilateral trading system based on binding cooperation. In Norway’s view, it is crucial that the WTO retains its position as a global actor and the
primary forum for international trade negotiations. The WTO plays a key role in establishing the global framework for trade and economic development, and stable and predictable conditions for Norwegian businesses.

At the WTO’s Tenth Ministerial Conference in Nairobi in December 2015, a historic decision was taken to phase out export subsidies for agricultural products, along with a number of decisions that benefit the least developed countries. The work to follow up the Nairobi Package will be crucial.

The Nairobi Ministerial Declaration sets out guidelines for the future work of the WTO and obliges WTO members to continue negotiations on issues such as agriculture, industrial goods, services, rules and development. It also opens up the possibility of multilateral negotiations on new areas, if all WTO members agree to this. Norway’s main aim will continue to be to ensure that the WTO retains its position as the leading global forum for trade negotiations. Issues relating to graduation and differentiation between developing countries will continue to be challenging.

How is development policy contributing to progress towards this target?

Norwegian development policy has limited direct impact on developing countries’ participation in the institutions of global governance. It could, however, be argued that both previous and current Norwegian development policy aimed at strengthening the capacity of government institutions has improved the ability of developing countries to make use of the opportunities to exert greater influence that are gradually opening up.

Greater participation by developing countries in the institutions of global governance is expected to affect the way these institutions operate, particularly in the longer term. Given the importance of these institutions for Norwegian development policy, greater participation by developing countries may therefore have implications for Norwegian development policy.

Norway supports the reviews being carried out by the OECD/DAC.

Does Norway’s overall policy promote progress towards this target?

Norwegian policy in areas other than development and foreign policy probably has limited impact on developing countries’ participation in international institutions. One exception is Norway’s cooperation with the IMF, which is managed by the Ministry of Finance, and where Norway’s monetary and financial market interests play a part in determining the decisions it supports.

Norway works actively to ensure that the balance of power in international institutions, such as the World Bank, the IMF, the regional development banks and the WTO, is representative and ensures maximum legitimacy. These institutions and organisations have played, and will continue to play, a key role in developing the global framework for trade and economic relations, and thus in enhancing the opportunities of poor countries to promote their own development.

SDG target 16.9: By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration

Background and challenges in a global context

A legal identity is essential for individuals to be able to claim their rights as citizens of a country. Civil registration systems contain key information about individuals, such as their name, birthdate, gender, birthplace and national identity number. This information may be registered at birth or later.
The authorities need to have basic information about who lives where, and how many people live in any one place, in order to implement effective policies and provide government services. However, a large number of births are not registered. In 2011 it was estimated that worldwide only 72% of children under the age of 5 had been registered at birth. The corresponding figure for sub-Saharan Africa was only 50%. Inadequate legal identity and civil registration systems make it difficult for individuals to claim their rights and for the authorities to provide services and plan effective policies. Achieving SDG target 16.9 will be vital for achieving all the SDGs.

**How is Norway using domestic policy in relevant areas to address these challenges?**

Whenever anyone is born in Norway, their basic data is routinely registered. Norwegian citizens born abroad are normally registered when they are issued with a passport. Citizens of other countries who come to Norway to live are registered when they report to the authorities and apply for a residence permit. The Norwegian authorities have considerable expertise in managing civil registration both in Norway and at the missions abroad. Virtually everyone in Norway is registered and has a legal identity.

Key events such as births, marriages and deaths are registered in the Norwegian National Registry. This information is shared with other government bodies, such as the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV) and Statistics Norway (SSB), and the same information can therefore be used in different contexts.

Norway is planning to introduce national ID cards that use biometric data such as fingerprints. Recently issued Norwegian passports already contain biometric data. Residence cards are issued to individuals from developing countries who have been granted a residence permit.

Norway supports UN initiatives to introduce systems for establishing legal identity in countries that do not have such a system. This will enable the authorities in the country concerned to plan effectively, and will make it possible for individuals to claim their rights, including property rights.

**How is development policy contributing to progress towards this target?**

Norway is an important contributor to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and its work in the area of population and development. Norwegian funding helps UNFPA to support countries in carrying out a national census, and in using and disseminating the data collected. Censuses provide important information about particularly vulnerable regions and groups, including women and girls, the elderly, and people with disabilities. This information can be used to strengthen the implementation of UNFPA family planning programmes. However, such information may also be politically sensitive, and not all governments want it to be freely available.

Norway is a major contributor to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and UN Women, and provides funding for projects aimed at improving civil registration and establishing legal identity. As a result, women in many countries, including Egypt, are able to vote in elections and claim other rights.

Norway has supported research on the use of new biometric identification technologies at the Center for Global Development (CGD). Previously, Norway also provided funding to support work carried out by the Institute for Liberty and Democracy to enable people to register rights of use to the land they live on.

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60 http://www.cgdev.org/blog/right-personal-identity-alan-gelb
61 http://www.ild.org.pe/
Does Norway’s overall policy promote progress towards this target?

Norway has systems to ensure that Norwegian citizens or citizens of other countries with a residence permit in Norway can have a clearly defined legal identity, and thus can claim the rights they are entitled to. Other than that, the impact of national policy on SDG target 16.9 is very limited.

Norway has supported efforts in all relevant international forums to ensure that everyone has a legal identity, and follows up this work by providing funding for research and to organisations such as UNFPA.

Norway’s efforts in this area are on a smaller scale than its work to achieve other SDG 16 targets. Even so, our efforts in this area, although limited, must be said to promote development.

SDG target 16.10: Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements

Background and challenges in a global context

Access to information is both a prerequisite for and an integral part of freedom of the press and expression. People need information in order to know what is going on in their country and in the world, to be aware of their statutory rights, to understand the basis for the authorities’ decisions, the way public funds are spent, and to be able to make informed decisions about matters that affect them.

The authorities must facilitate access to information and make all information of public interest, for example information about threats to the environment or public health, readily available. When this kind of information is withheld, people’s ability to take part in the public debate and hold the authorities accountable is undermined. In many countries, access to information is poor, and fundamental rights, such as freedom of expression, are under threat.

According to Reporters Without Borders (RSF), the situation has deteriorated in recent years. In the 2016 World Press Freedom Index, RSF reports that the authorities in a growing number of countries are exerting greater control over the press and social media. In many countries, individuals and organisations that criticise a lack of transparency, social conditions or the authorities face threats and reprisals.

In times of tension and unrest, the authorities in some countries may seek greater control of the media. National security interests, anti-terror legislation, anti-corruption legislation and laws on blasphemy and defamation are misused to stifle criticism and restrict the public debate. In some countries, there is little opportunity to criticise the authorities or to question the large-scale commercial exploitation of limited natural resources. Government control of the media and a high concentration of media ownership can also restrict freedom of expression and the diversity of information.

Restrictions on public access to information and inadequate protection of fundamental rights can undermine efforts to achieve several of the targets under SDG 16, such as the work to: promote the rule of law and ensure equal access to justice (target 16.3); reduce illicit financial and arms flows (target 16.4); reduce corruption (target 16.5); develop effective, transparent institutions (target

and ensure inclusive, representative decision-making (target 16.7). Reaching these targets is necessary in order to achieve several other SDGs, such as SDG 4 on education, SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 8 on decent work and sustainable economic growth, and SDG 10 on reduced inequality.

**How is Norway using domestic policy in relevant areas to address these issues?**

**How is policy in other areas than development policy contributing to progress towards this target?**

The right of access to information and other fundamental rights are strongly respected and protected in Norway. Freedom of expression and the right of access to public documents are enshrined in **Article 100 of the Constitution** and the right to information about the natural environment in order to safeguard the right to a healthy environment is set out in Article 112. These rights are also protected in the Freedom of Information Act, and the Environmental Information Act sets out the right to environmental information and public participation in decision-making processes relating to the environment. On the whole, the state shows great respect for the independence of the media and promotes open, well-informed public debate, for example by providing financial support to ensure diversity in the Norwegian press. The state’s opportunity to exempt information from public disclosure is very limited. For these and other reasons, Norway and the other Nordic countries are at the top of indexes that measure access to information and freedom of the press such as the **World Press Freedom Index** and the **Freedom House** freedom of the press index.

Norway also promotes human rights and fundamental freedoms through a range of international bodies. Freedom of expression and freedom of the press are frequently raised in the UN Human Rights Council Universal Peer Reviews (UPRs). Norway is party to the **Aarhus Convention (the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters)**. This means that we are also obliged to promote the principles of openness and participation, and the use of complaints mechanisms and judicial reviews in other international organisations and processes of relevance to the environment.

Norway highlights the importance of fundamental rights and freedoms in bilateral talks with a number of countries, for example with reference to ratified human rights conventions. Norway’s international efforts to promote freedom of expression include efforts to protect human rights defenders, and guidelines have been drawn up for the Foreign Service’s work in this area.

**How is development policy contributing to progress towards this target?**

Human rights is a cross-cutting issue in Norwegian development policy, and public access to information and protection of fundamental rights such as freedom of expression and freedom of the press are continually in focus. The importance of these rights is reflected in the Government’s **strategy for promoting freedom of expression and independent media in foreign and development policy**, in which access to information is identified as one of three thematic priority areas.

Norway reacts to violations of fundamental freedoms in partner countries at the bilateral level, jointly with other countries, and through the UN. Aid from Norway and other countries to Uganda was frozen for a period in 2014 in response to the country’s adoption of an anti-homosexuality bill. The law was subsequently annulled and aid resumed.

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64 https://rsf.org/en/ranking  
66 https://www.regjeringen.no/en/aktuelt/presentation_strategy/id2470714/
Does Norway's overall policy promote progress towards this target?

Norway attaches great importance to promoting freedom of expression and public access to information. The state promotes open, well-informed public debate, and financial support helps to ensure diversity in the Norwegian press. However, Norway’s achievements in relation to this target at national level can only be assumed to have a limited effect on other countries’ performance in this area.

Norway’s foreign and development policy can, however, be said to make a greater contribution towards the achievement of SDG target 16.10. At the international level, Norway promotes human rights and fundamental freedoms in the organisations where we are members and which we support financially, as well as in bilateral talks with other countries. Protection and promotion of fundamental rights is a guiding principle in our development policy.

SDG target 16.a: Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international cooperation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime

Background and challenges in a global context

Oppression, violence and killings are part of everyday life for millions of people living in areas where criminal and terrorist groups have taken hold. This obviously has a profound impact on their living conditions and quality of life. In addition to those who are directly affected, a great many people both in the areas concerned and in neighbouring areas experience psychological problems due to the constant lack of stability and security.

Terrorism and violent crime can be just as detrimental to development as other forms of conflict-related violence. Organised crime often leads to a high level of violence and insecurity in the affected communities. The drug war in Mexico, which has been ongoing since 2006, has resulted in tens of thousands of deaths and a high degree of insecurity in parts of the country.

There are many definitions of terrorism, but violence against apparently random targets, often civilians, with the aim of spreading fear, is fundamental to most of them. Terrorist groups such as ISIL, Al-Qaeda and Boko Haram use extreme violence. Some terrorist groups have demonstrated an ability to destabilise large areas and to carry out attacks far from their core areas. Terrorism and violent extremism pose a considerable challenge to the affected countries. Strengthening relevant national institutions is an essential part of the work to prevent and combat terrorism and crime.

Researchers have reached different conclusions about what drives recruitment to terrorism. However, there is general agreement that economic development, if it alleviates poverty and increases education and employment opportunities, can reduce the number of potential recruits to extremist and terrorist groups.

Independent courts and a police force that enjoys the confidence of the population are vital to combating crime. Democratic bodies that monitor these institutions and ensure their independence are also essential.

Crime and terrorism may also be state-sponsored. Governments may provide funding or other forms of support to groups or networks in other countries. Sometimes the army and the police are used to oppress a country’s own population. The existence of strong government institutions in itself is no guarantee that efforts will be made to fight crime and terrorism. These institutions must be subject
to democratic control and must carry out their tasks in accordance with legislation that protects human rights.

**How is Norway using domestic policy in relevant areas to address these challenges?**

In Norway, there is widespread agreement that transparency and the rule of law are public goods that should be preserved. Norway has a relatively low incidence of crime and terrorism.

**How is policy in areas other than development policy contributing to progress towards this target?**

Norway supports the development of a framework to combat international economic crime, tax evasion and money laundering, which are also used to finance terrorism. Norway took part in the work to develop the OECD’s Common Reporting Standard for the automatic exchange of tax-related information. This is part of a push to collect information on capital movements in order to give countries and the international community better insight into, and tools to fight, organised crime.

Norway cooperates extensively with police and intelligence services in other countries in order to ensure the exchange of information that can be used to combat international crime and terrorism.

**How is development policy contributing to progress towards this target?**

Norway participates in international efforts to prevent violent extremism, for instance through the UN, and supports the Secretary-General’s Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. Since 2008, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has helped to strengthen institutions responsible for monitoring compliance with human rights obligations in more than 90 countries. Norway also provides earmarked funds for the UNDP/DPA Joint Programme on Building National Capacities for Conflict Prevention. These funds are being used to support capacity building at country level, including efforts to strengthen key institutions and initiatives that contribute to conflict prevention and transformation.

Norway supports work to strengthen the institutional framework for fighting crime. This includes efforts to build competence within the judiciary and increase the independence of courts in developing countries. It also includes providing support for the work of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to combat environmental crime, an area that has low priority in many countries because of insufficient expertise. Norway’s Crisis Response Pool deploys personnel from the Norwegian justice sector who provide advice and assistance to international organisations and individual countries for example in connection with the development of legal institutions.

In addition to its general efforts to fight environmental crime, Norway also supports the work of Interpol and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to combat transnational organised fisheries crime. Norway cooperates bilaterally with Indonesia and South Africa in this field, and has contributed to the establishment of a regional fisheries law enforcement academy at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University in Port Elizabeth, South Africa.

**Does Norway’s overall policy promote progress towards this target?**

All forms of violent crime and terrorism-related violence are destabilising and destructive, and even if moderate in duration and intensity, can set development processes back by decades.

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69 https://jobs.undp.org/cj_view_job.cfm?cur_job_id=59250
Combating these kinds of violence is a priority in Norwegian development and foreign policy, both because it is important in itself, and because countries characterised by stability, transparency and predictability make good international partners and neighbours. It is reasonable to say that Norwegian policies promote progress towards achieving SDG 16a.

**SDG target 16.b: Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development**

**Background and challenges in a global context**

The pledge to leave no one behind and the principle that the SDGs apply to all countries are at the heart of the 2030 Agenda. Non-discriminatory laws for sustainable development must be adopted and enforced if we are to achieve the goals.

Even though many countries have formal legislation in place that is designed to ensure equal rights for all their citizens, there are still major challenges when it comes to enforcing this legislation. In many countries, for example, despite legislation to protect women’s rights, women’s economic independence is restricted, their employment conditions are poorer than those of men, and many are subjected to domestic violence or structural violence such as female genital mutilation and forced marriage. Attempts are often made to justify these forms of gender-based violence on the grounds that they are traditional practices. In many places, the poorest, the casteless, ethnic minorities, LGBTI people, people with disabilities and indigenous peoples face frequent and severe discrimination. It is often difficult both for governments and for humanitarian and development actors to reach these people.

Considerable progress can be made towards achieving the SDGs by focusing on those who are easiest to reach. However, if we are to fulfil the commitment to leave no one behind, we must address the major challenges mentioned above, and target efforts towards the most marginalised groups. Reaching these groups requires more resources, however, and significantly more funding will need to be mobilised for this purpose both by the countries that are facing the greatest challenges, and by the international community.

**How is Norway using domestic policy in relevant areas to address these challenges?**

Non-discriminatory laws and policies are essential to achieving the SDGs and fulfilling the commitment to leave no one behind. All countries are facing challenges, to a greater or lesser degree, and have to work actively to address them. In Norway, despite extensive gender equality legislation and awareness-raising work, women still earn less than men, and occupations where the proportion of women is high still offer lower salaries than male-dominated occupations. Norway works actively to promote non-discriminatory norms and policies in international forums and by providing support to partners.

**How is policy in areas other than development policy contributing to progress towards this target?**

In international normative processes, Norway actively promotes policies that foster the development of legislation and institutions that address all forms of discrimination. Norway has, for example, pushed for the inclusion of men in gender equality efforts, and has sought to involve faith-based organisations in efforts to challenge gender stereotypes and change attitudes that encourage discrimination and harassment of girls and women.

Given the UN’s role as an international actor and forum for developing norms, combined with its high level of legitimacy, the UN country teams are particularly well placed to help host countries develop
policies and laws in this area, in line with international norms and standards. The Government considers this to be one of the main tasks of the UN country teams in all countries that are on the DAC list of ODA recipients.

*How is development policy contributing to progress towards this target?*

As of 2016, human rights has been included as a new cross-cutting issue in all Norway’s aid efforts. The principle of non-discrimination is one of the factors that must always be taken into account in this context. Women’s rights and gender equality is another of the four cross-cutting issues in Norwegian development policy.

People with disabilities are a priority target group in Norwegian development cooperation. Discrimination issues are taken into consideration in the planning and implementation of all development projects funded by Norway. Norway also has extensive experience of providing aid for the development of accountable institutions, which are vital for ensuring that the rights and needs of the most vulnerable groups are addressed. Norway actively supports the development of accountable institutions in a number of partner countries and through multilateral aid efforts.

*Does Norway’s overall policy promote progress towards this target?*

Overall, Norwegian policy, both at the national and international level, can be said to promote non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development in other countries. Norway has considerable experience of developing non-discriminatory legislation and practices, and shares this experience through its work in international organisations, other forms of international cooperation and through its aid efforts.