



## European network of legal experts in gender equality and non-discrimination

### FLASH REPORT

<b>Country:</b>	Norway
<b>Title:</b>	Discrimination of Sami people in Norway
<b>Date:</b>	29 June 2020
<b>Expert:</b>	Lene Løvdal
<b><u>Context</u></b>	
<b>Issue at stake:</b>	Discrimination of Sami people, Kvens and Finns in the northernmost region of Norway, Troms and Finnmark
<b>Grounds of discrimination:</b>	Racial or ethnic origin
<b>Field of application:</b>	All fields
<b>Source:</b>	Policy development
<b>Applicable law:</b>	The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act (GEADA), 16 June 2017

### Content

**Policy development:** A new report on the living conditions of three of the national minorities in the northern part of Norway: Sami people (the indigenous people in Norway), Kvens and Norwegian-Finnish people (both descending from people migrating from Finland from the 16<sup>th</sup> century or later), was published in May 2020.<sup>1</sup> There is no registration of ethnicity in Norway, so it is uncertain how many people define themselves as belonging to each of these groups. Kvens and other Norwegian-Finnish people constituted between 10 000 and 15 000 people in 2001 in Norway as a whole. Most of them live in northern Norway, in the region of Troms and Finnmark. The people who can vote for representatives for the Sami Parliament are defined on the basis of geography, not ethnicity, and constitute 55 544 people.<sup>2</sup>

5 645 of a total of 21 761 respondents in the survey on which the newly published report was based survey, i.e. 26 %, answered that they either spoke Sami, Kven or Finnish, had one of these ethnic backgrounds or defined themselves as belonging to one of these groups. Among these people, 5 624 answered the question on whether they had been discriminated against on the basis of their ethnicity or other grounds. Among Sami people, 11 % reported that they had been discriminated against the last 2 years, and a further 21.8 % that they had experienced discrimination prior to the last 2 years, i.e. a total of 32.8 %. 8.5 % did not know whether they had been discriminated against. Among those with both Sami and Kven background, 7.9 % had experienced discrimination the last 2 years, and another 17.7 % prior to that, i.e. a total of 25.6 %. 7.9 % did not know whether they had been discriminated against. Among those with Kven background only, 3.7 % had experienced discrimination last 2 years, 7.2 % prior to that, i.e. a total of 10.9 %. 6.8 % did not know whether they had been discriminated against.

<sup>1</sup> Norwegian Government, white paper, *St.meld. nr. 15 (2000-2001) Nasjonale minoriteter i Norge- Om statleg politikk overfor jødar, kvener, rom, romanifolket og skogfinnar* (National minorities in Norway – on government policy regarding Jews, Kvens, Roma, Travellers and Forest Finns), p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ssb.no/befolkning/statistikker/samisk/hvert-2-aar/2018-02-06#content>.

Of the persons reporting being discriminated against, about 60 % reported being discriminated against on the basis of ethnicity, and about 30 % on the basis of where they live or come from in the geographical sense.<sup>3</sup> The 3<sup>rd</sup> largest category was 'other grounds', and the fourth was sex/gender. About 7 % reported being discriminated against on the basis of sexual orientation, as many as those reporting being discriminated against due to age, as well as learning difficulties, or nationality. About 4 % reported being discriminated against on the basis of disability. It was possible to report discrimination on several grounds, but it was not specified whether it had happened at the same time or during different events.

**Key points of analysis:** The report is of interest because we have little data on discrimination of Sami and Kven people, and it provides useful insights into the living conditions, including discrimination issues, of these people in the region where the majority of them reside. The report does not use the categories of characteristics defining the protected grounds of discrimination in the GEADA and does not provide any further explanation of the categories used or how they are explained in the survey.

**Internet link source:** Melhus, M. and Broderstad, A. R. (2020), Folkehelseundersøkelsen I Troms og Finnmark. Tilleggsrapport om samisk og kvensk/nordfinsk befolkning. Tromsø, Centre for Sami health research, [https://www.tffk.no/f/p1/i2c5ac7f4-6b0d-485d-96d2-a68d9de030c2/rapport\\_troms\\_finnmark\\_sshf\\_redigert\\_april2020.pdf](https://www.tffk.no/f/p1/i2c5ac7f4-6b0d-485d-96d2-a68d9de030c2/rapport_troms_finnmark_sshf_redigert_april2020.pdf).

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<sup>3</sup> Table 31, page 49.