



Office International de l'Enseignement Catholique (OIEC)
Catholic International Education Office
(in special consultative status with the United Nations
ECOSOC)

HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Universal Periodic Review (UPR)
19th session

(May-June 2014)

NORWAY

Submission

**The right of education and its economical support by
Norway**

Geneva, September 2014

OIEC is a NGO in special consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Founded in 1952, OIEC is present in 103 countries and its aim is to promote educational catholic projects in relation with the principles of United Nations. OIEC represents about 50 millions pupils and students in more 210.000 schools around the world.

This report is established on the observation led by the persons in charge of the Catholic Schools in Norway. The Catholic Schools in Norway are a member of the international Association for Catholic education.

The report brings to light the main concerns connected to the problem of the freedom of the education and teaching such as being a matter of the **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, ratified by Norway in 1978**, in its article 13:

“(…)

3. The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to have respect for the liberty of parents and, when applicable, legal guardians to choose for their children schools, other than those established by the public authorities, which conform to such minimum educational standards as may be laid down or approved by the State and to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions.

4. No part of this article shall be construed so as to interfere with the liberty of individuals and bodies to establish and direct educational institutions, subject always to the observance of the principles set forth in paragraph I of this article and to the requirement that the education given in such institutions shall conform to such minimum standards as may be laid down by the State.”

Number of pupils attending Catholic schools is the following :

Compulsory education in Norway are 10 years (grades 1 – 10) starting from age 6.

Most pupils also attend three years secondary education, VG 1, VG2 and VG3.

	Number of pupils/students			of them catholic
	Total	Private		
Preschool (Kindergarten)	286.000	137.500 (48 %)	--0—	
Primary Education. 1-10:	614.000	15.000	(2,4 %)	1.050 (0,17 %)
Secondary high, VG1-2-3:	194.000	12.500	(6,5 %)	50 (0,02 %)

*

Higher Education: 220.000 31.600 (14,3 %) --0—

A very low number of pupils in compulsory school age do homeschooling. Parents have to accept state supervision, but they don't receive any financial contribution.

A very low number of pupils are attending private school without public grants.

*(*First catholic school on secondary high opened august 2012.)*

Catholic schools receive governmental grants after “Private school law”.

Running costs: a fixed amount per pupil on base of average running cists in public schools.

Investment, financial expenses, rent etc.: ZERO public funding.

State allows private schools, but officials are wary of private schools especially in compulsory education. This skepticism involves control at a granular level. But it has

still been an improvement since 1970 when we got the Private school Act and the first public subsidies.

There have always been allowed to have homeschooling or choose private schools in Norway, but until 1970 there was no public funding. In Norway, the elementary school cause of historical are closely related to the understanding of the Norwegian identity. This skepticism was widespread in most population groups. There has therefore been a fundamental opposition to private schools that have been difficult to meet. This has been slowly easier since 1970. Private School Act was struggling through particularly of Christians (Lutheran) groups justified on human rights. Today's opposition to the private schools more and more become a political issue out from the left / right ratio.

(A very low number of pupils in compulsory school age do homeschooling. Parents have to accept state supervision, but they don't receive any financial contribution.)

Our primary requirements for public authorities are subsidies to rent / capital expenditures. We ask for (at least) 85 % of the total costs in public schools.

We also claim less rigorous requirements for government bureaucracy and control.

In Norway, requirements for school facilities very strict and high construction costs mean that up to one third of all spending in schools is linked to buildings and construction.

This third release no government grants and involve large loads being moved over to the school owners and families. Schoolfees are often around 2.000 Euro per student / year. We meet no understanding from the authorities that this implies a democratic problem for families with limited income. Schoolfees in schools receiving governmental grants are limited to 15 % of average running costs in public schools.

In general, Norway has come a long way in terms of assistance to students with special needs. In essence, all students at private schools receive similar help, paid for by the government, if they go to a municipal or public school.

Geneva, 12 September 2013