

# Evaluation of the Norwegian Manifesto against Bullying 2002-2004.

## A summary of the final report<sup>1</sup>

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### **Abstract**

This paper summarises the main results of the research-based evaluation of the Norwegian Manifesto against bullying. Besides schools, the evaluation was to include bullying also in kindergartens and publicly organised leisure activities. Furthermore, the work in Manifesto was to be covered on national, regional and local levels. The goal setting for the evaluation was two-fold. The first goal was to examine the incidence of bullying through existing surveys and to find clarity to the variety of the estimates presented for it. The second goal was to analyse how the Manifesto was implemented through the variety of measures adopted on national, regional and local levels, and how these were received among the end users, including parents. The mandate did not include evaluation of the effectiveness of the Manifesto in terms of incidence of bullying. The timing of the evaluation in regards completion of the Manifesto had not allowed that either. The evaluation has been based on a range of documents as well as new interview- and survey-data collected. Generally speaking the results showed that the Manifesto has made a difference when it comes to bullying in schools, although mostly in elementary schools. The surveys carried out towards the end of the Manifesto period showed that the long term trend of increasing bullying has halted and for some groups turned. The situation was less clear and the results less pronounced for kindergartens and organised leisure activities, however. Nevertheless, for these two contexts the success of the Manifesto has been in raising the issue about bullying also in educational environments outside the school. The main central measures used to implement the Manifesto were information delivery, financial support to a range of bullying programmes, and a new paragraph to the education law about pupils' right to good psycho-social work environment at schools. Besides bringing legitimacy, the Manifesto has increased the visibility of the bullying problem through strong media involvement. Somewhat ironically, it was a problem for the Manifesto that it got a strongly political face through the involvement of top politicians and through their media appearance. For most people the connection seem to have been missing to their local work against bullying. All in all, the two year's Manifesto period clearly was too limited to realise the parties' zero-vision about bullying at schools.

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<sup>1</sup> Tikkanen, T. & Junge, A. (2004). *Realising a bullying free educational environment for children and youth. Final report to the evaluation of the Manifesto against bullying 2002-2004*. RF-Rogaland Research. Research Reports 223/2004. Stavanger. [In Norwegian]

<sup>2</sup> The paper is also available at the OECD website *Network on School Bullying and Violence*: <http://oecd-sbv.net/Templates/Article.aspx?id=336>

## 1. Introduction and background: the Manifesto against bullying 2002-2004 in Norway

*Focus on schools, kindergartens and leisure activities.* The Manifesto against Bullying 2002-2004 was signed 23. September 2002 by the Prime Minister, Parents' Committee for Elementary School (FUG), the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS), the Ombudsman for Children (BO), and the Union of Education Norway (UDF). In the beginning the Manifesto was strongly focused on school environment, but after six months of its existence was extended to include also kindergartens (early childhood care) and publicly organised leisure activities. The work in the Manifesto has been coordinated by the Directorate for Primary and Secondary Education.

*The vision of zero-tolerance.* As a foundation for their work the Manifesto parties shared a common vision of zero-tolerance of bullying among children and youth. All the parties committed themselves to promote that goal, and to actively support their regional and local actors for developing and strengthening initiatives and measures to realize it.

*Adults' responsibility and local manifestos.* The rationale behind the Manifesto underlined the broad responsibility adults have in regards bullying among children and youth, particularly morally. Therefore, besides parents, the Manifesto set a requirement that the personnel in schools (on all levels, up to age 18), kindergartens, and in after-school care (skolefritidsordning), as well as in publicly organised leisure activities, would all work actively against bullying in these environments. To strengthen this work, the central Manifesto-partners encouraged their local partners to initiative-taking and commitment to this work by calling for local manifestos.

*Values and attitudes in focus.* The activities within the Manifesto aimed to strengthen and promote the work done in schools, kindergartens, and organised leisure activities in regards attitudes and values as fundamentals to their work.

## 2. The evaluation mandate

An important part of the program plan was to initiate research-based evaluation to follow up and assess the realising of the Manifesto and, to some degree, its effects. The evaluation was initiated and funded by the Directorate for Primary and Secondary Education (referred to as the Directorate from here on). It focused on the process and activities through which the Manifesto was carried out. Evaluation of the outcomes in terms of reduced incidence of bullying was not part of the mandate. The purpose of the evaluation was

- (i) to provide a basis for an assessment of the effects of the various measures taken related to the Manifesto (e.g. programs against bullying), and
- (ii) to create a basis for consideration of follow-up measures and for further strategy related to combating bullying.

The following main goals were set for the evaluation by the Directorate:

1. An analysis of prevalence of bullying in schools, kindergartens and organised leisure activities, based on the results from existing surveys.

The starting point here was the confusion caused by the different figures, which various surveys showed for incidence of bullying. Our task was to explore this variety and to provide clarification to the situation.

2. Description of the process of implementation of the national Manifesto to realise the vision of zero-tolerance. The focus was on various measures taken nationally, regionally and locally to combat bullying in schools, kindergartens and publicly organised leisure activities.

A central idea here was to look at the chain of effects from the national initiative to regional and all the way down to local measures adopted in kindergartens, schools, and organised leisure activities for children and youth. When it comes to the measures on local level, the evaluation task was to describe them, not to assess their effects on occurrence of bullying in these environments. As the evaluation was started about a year after initiating the two-year Manifesto in September 2002, and as it only extended to three months after its completion, until the end of 2004, the time frame did not allow examination of the effects on that level either.

In a nutshell, our mandate was to describe what, in fact, came out of the shared idea for the Manifesto nationally, regionally and locally, and how did it come about. The initial idea from September 2002 was elaborated into a plan only about a half a year into the planned two years' period. Most of the implementation of the measures that fell under the Manifesto took place then only during about a one and a half remaining years.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Design

Following the two-fold goal-setting, the evaluation was carried out in two main phases. Design and main aspects of the methodology for these two phases are summarised in box 1. The rest of this chapter describes the methodology in more details.

<b>PHASE I: Secondary analysis of bullying incidence</b>		<b>PHASE II: Analysis of the process and measures to realise the vision of zero-tolerance and the national goals of the Manifesto</b>	
<b>Target group(s)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seven research institutes/groups, which had carried out bullying surveys in Norway</li> <li>• Indirectly schools, kindergartens, and publicly organised leisure activities.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>National</i>: Manifesto parties and representatives of the government</li> <li>• <i>Regional</i>: Representatives from 5 counties and their municipalities, representatives of regional administration in leisure organizations for children and youth, staff in teacher training institutes</li> <li>• <i>Local</i>: Children and youth at schools, school head-masters &amp; teachers, personnel in kindergartens, parents</li> <li>• <i>Media through internet</i> (media's role in realizing the zero-vision)</li> </ul>
<b>Data &amp; method</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project documents: project and methodology descriptions, final reports</li> <li>• Survey instruments</li> <li>• Other publications from the seven (plus two) bullying-surveys</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews (face-to-face, telephone, groups)</li> <li>• Documents</li> <li>• E-mail surveys and large internet-based surveys</li> <li>• Web-pages of the Manifesto parties and of selected newspapers, and radio and TV-channels</li> </ul>
<b>Analysis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secondary document analysis</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secondary document analysis</li> <li>• Content analysis</li> <li>• Statistical analysis</li> </ul>
<b>Reporting</b>	I Intermediate report	II Intermediate report	Final report
	October 2003	March 2004	September 2004      December 2004
<b>Time-span for the evaluation</b>			
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">           Closing of the Manifesto with a high-level national conference         </div>			

Box 1. Design and methodology for the evaluation

#### 3.2 Method, data and analysis

Phase I: Focus on bullying incidence in schools, kindergartens and organised leisure activities

Data and method. The first part was carried out as a document analysis. The various documentation of the results of several surveys undertaken to estimate the incidence of bullying in schools, kindergartens and organised leisure activities formed the data for this part. The documents provided for our analysis varied from a single final report to a range of various articles and other publications. A total of seven surveys were initially included in the analysis at this phase.

However, during the second phase some new surveys were finalised and included in the final analysis, three from schools and two from kindergartens. Most of the surveys were targeted to *schools*. On the level of primary and secondary school national surveys were included from three

research organisations, one survey was carried out on upper secondary level, one on upper secondary and on high school level (ages 16 - 18/19 years), and one focusing only on high schools. Only two surveys had been carried out in *kindergartens* with some focus on bullying. One was targeted only on the heads of these institutes and one more broadly on the staff, parents and children. For the third context, *publicly organised leisure activities*, there were no surveys on prevalence of bullying carried out at all at the beginning of the Manifesto. During the Manifesto period some new studies were carried out in these two environments, including also some questions about bullying. An active dialogue with the researchers, who had conducted these surveys, was a part of carrying out this task. A half day seminar with these researchers was organised shortly before the completion of this phase. As a part of the evaluation, and together with the Ministry of Family and Children, a new survey was also carried out about bullying in organised leisure activities.

Analysis. Our analysis on documents on prevalence of bullying focused on three main aspects: definitions of bullying, methodology used in surveys, and results (estimates for the incidence of bullying). The methods used were content analysis and comparative statistical analysis.

Phase II: Focus on realising the Manifesto and the measures against bullying

A complex task – A multi-method approach. The second evaluation task was a highly complex process. Not only were there three levels to be covered – national, regional and local – but also three different contexts – kindergartens, schools and publicly organised leisure activities for children and youth. Information available about bullying on all of these levels and contexts was scattered and of varying quality at best, if existing at all. Table 1 describes this complexity, together with availability of data for our analysis.

Table 1. Complexity of the second phase of the evaluation and availability of data for the analysis.

Levels of analysis	Three contexts to be covered by the evaluation		
	Kindergarten	School	Publicly organised leisure activities
National	*	***	*
Regional	0	**	0
Local	*	**	0

*Explanations:* 0 = no data available; \* = little data available; \*\* = officially reported data available from schools and school authorities to central administration; \*\*\* = rich data available

Data. As shown in box 1 above, various data were used. Besides various documents (e.g. annual reports), we carried out interviews of representatives of all the central manifesto partners, the Minister of Education and Minister of Family and Children, and the Directorate. We also conducted several internet-surveys during 2004 and a media-study. The latter was targeted on the internet-sites of the Manifesto-partners and on how they used media when implementing the Manifesto, as well as on the response they got from media.

Analysis. The analysis in the second part focused on the central process of realising the Manifesto by the central Manifesto partners, and on the various measures taken to stop bullying in schools, kindergartens and organised leisure activities. Furthermore, opinions and reactions among school children, staff in schools and kindergartens, parents, and among public in general were surveyed and analysed. Due to the various data and the complexity of the task, both quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods were used.

### 3.3 A group of Nordic competence partners supporting the evaluation work

While RF Rogaland Research was responsible for carrying out the evaluation, a Nordic group of competence partners was called to support the work with knowledge exchange. All of these partners were responsible for the WHO School Health Surveys in their own countries. Additionally, we had one partner, STAKES the National Research and Development Centre for Welfare and Health, from Finland with whom we some had more intensive cooperation during the project. All competence partners provided additional, first-hand information about the situation

and work done around bullying in their country. STAKES, with their solid experience on evaluation work, was additionally involved in some methodological discussions concerning the evaluation of the Manifesto.

#### 4. Main results

##### *Part I: Incidence of bullying in schools, kindergartens and organised leisure activities*

The final results from the work within the Manifesto should be visible in reduced bullying in the three educational contexts for children and youth. There is a solid body of research on prevalence of bullying and on developmental trends of bullying in the schools in Norway. This research is also internationally highly recognized. While the targets groups for the national surveys have varied, most of them have focused on school children on elementary and lower secondary levels. The fact that the various national surveys targeted at schools have produced different results of the prevalence of bullying, has caused some confusion. The first part of the evaluation focused on this variation and reasons behind it, with a goal to clarify the incidence of bullying in the three educational contexts.

The evaluation showed that the most important reason for the different estimates for the incidence of bullying is the different methodological solutions taken in these surveys. Even if the definitions used for bullying were relatively close, methodological solutions concerning formulation of question about bullying, the time reference within which the possible incidence(s) of bullying were requested to be reported, the categorisation of the answering alternatives, etc. were often quite different. These differences also made it often impossible to compare the findings from these surveys. At the end only three surveys provided comparable results.

##### *4.1 Bullying at schools and developmental trends*

###### 4.1.1 Peer-bullying

The results from the three most recent surveys from 2004 (Olweus-group, SAF Center for Behavioral Studies at University of Stavanger, Elevinspektørene – Annual Web-based survey targeted school children) are shown in figure 1 for those being bullied. In sum, the results showed that

1. about 5 % of pupils in elementary school

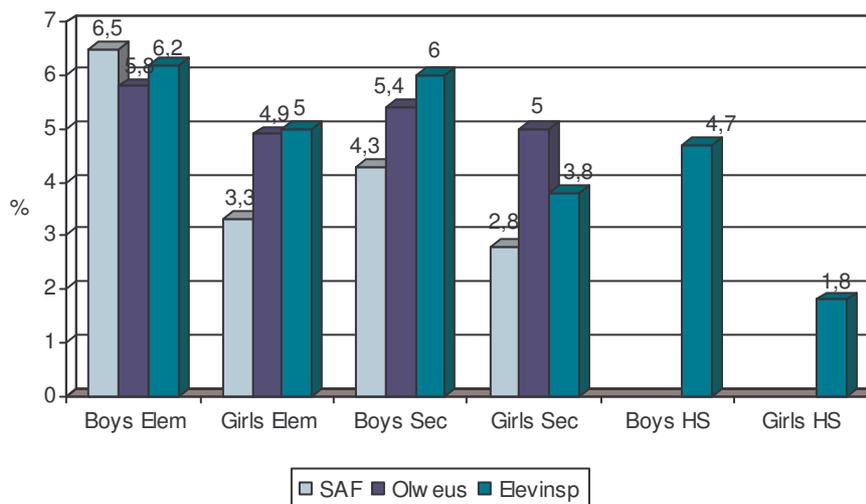


Fig 1. Bullying (being bullied weekly or more often) in Norwegian schools in 2004 according to three various surveys, SAF Centre for Behavioral Studies, Olweus-group, and Elevinspektørene internet-survey to school children.

(Elem = elementary school, Sec = lower secondary school, HS = high-school/upper secondary)

2. 4-5 % in secondary school, and
3. 3 % in high-school

were bullied weekly or more often in 2004, boys more frequently than girls. About 1 % of pupils in elementary school and about 3 % in both secondary school and high-school bullied others, again boys more often than girls. Bullying among girls in elementary school was close to zero (0%-0,8%). All of these figures are presented on a level of 'weekly or more often'. It is only on this level that the various surveys give comparable results.

If we also include in these figures the less serious bullying, which takes place two or three times per month, the incidence rates are 11% in elementary school, 8% in secondary school, and 5% in high school. The survey carried out as a part of the evaluation gave more detailed information about where does the bullying take place. The answers from school children showed that bullying takes place most often at school, and there almost as often during the breaks as in the classroom.

Developmental trends in bullying incidence over time, if any, were also traced through the existing bullying surveys. The results showed that after a long period of an upward trend, the development has now halted. For some groups, most notably for girls who are being bullied in elementary schools, the findings from the most recent surveys from the year 2004 showed a reduction of bullying.

It is early days to say much about the particular effects that the Manifesto may have had on this positive turn of the long-time negative trend. Nevertheless, it is reasonable to assume that the attention it has attracted to bullying in media and among the general public, together with the various bullying programs adopted in use at schools, and other measures taken by the Manifesto parties, have had a significant role to play in this development.

#### 4.1.2 Other forms of bullying

Besides traditional bullying between pupils, the existing surveys have also covered other forms of bullying in the Norwegian schools. The results from an internet-based survey instrument developed for schools (Elevinspektørene) showed that about 1% from elementary school pupils reported that they have been bullied weekly or more often by one or more of their teachers during the last a few months. A corresponding proportion of pupils at secondary school was 3 % and at high school 2.4%. If we add to these figures the less severe bullying, which takes place 2 or 3 times per month, they increase to 2%, 4.5% and 4% respectively. Bullying through mobile telephones had increased as they have become more common also among children and youth. Between 13-15% of pupils reported that they had been bullied through a mobile every now and then or more often.

#### *4.2 Bullying in kindergartens?*

When it comes to bullying in kindergartens and before the school-age, there were very few studies to build on. The first studies, carried out during the Manifesto-period, suggest that the kind of activity, which at schools is characterised as bullying, also takes place in kindergartens. However, it is highly disputable, whether we can talk about bullying in kindergartens in the same sense of the word as it is used in the school context. More research is needed before we can speak about the prevalence of bullying in kindergartens with any accuracy and reliability.

#### *4.3 Bullying in publicly organised leisure activities?*

Situation in regards bullying in publicly organised leisure activities is by and large the same as in kindergartens. Before the evaluation there were no surveys carried out. Therefore the survey carried out in the evaluation has for the first time taken a look at this issue. The survey was targeted to the adults who work with children in various publicly organised leisure organizations. Additionally, and as a part of the evaluation, school children were, in an internet-based survey, requested to answer to questions about bullying when participating in these leisure activities. The results of these two surveys gave some evidence of bullying taking place also within leisure activities. A broader survey is needed among children and youth, however, before we can reliably and with accuracy talk about the incidence of bullying within the organised leisure activities.

## Part II: Realising the Manifesto and the measures against bullying

Bullying has received a lot of attention during the Manifesto-period, particularly in media. As a result, the awareness about bullying and that it can be successfully fought against, is now on a higher level in the Norwegian society, among the general public, at schools and to some extent also in kindergartens. New measures have been initiated and many actors have received support and got new motivation to carry on the already existing work against bullying. On the side of awareness rising, one of the most powerful results from the Manifesto is that it has gained legitimacy through the new paragraph added to the education law. The paragraph sets focus on the psycho-social working environment at schools.

This chapter will give a brief overview over the realising of the Manifesto from the central to regional and local levels. It gives of overview over the main measures adopted on various levels, as well as describes how these were received on local level, among school children and their parents, as well as among teachers and school management. The analysis on local level is based on the internet-survey carried out as a part of the evaluation.

### 4.4 Realising the Manifesto centrally, regionally and locally: The chain of measures and response to them

There was a large group of actors involved in realising the Manifesto all the way from the national to regional and local levels. Figure 2 shows an overview over these actors and describes how they formed a chain to implement measures to combat bullying at schools, kindergartens and publicly organised leisure activities.

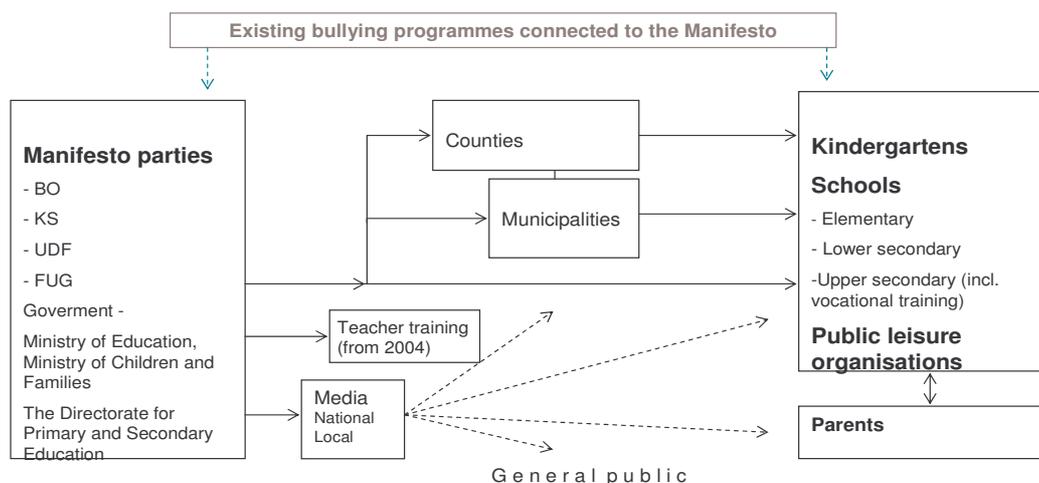


Fig 2. An overview of the main actors and description of the chain of measures taken (from central to the local) in the Manifesto against bullying 2002-2004.

The measures taken centrally by the Manifesto parties were of two types. On one hand they initiated various actions to increase awareness of and to deliver information about bullying problem among their members, to help them to work further against bullying among their members and target groups. On the other hand, albeit with least visibility, the central Manifesto parties financed implementation and further development of various existing programmes and tools to work against bullying at schools and, to a little extent, in kindergartens. We will now take a look at some of these central measures and how they were spread down the line in the chain of measures towards the local actors and activities.

#### 4.4.1 Information delivery and awareness rising as the main goals and activities

Generally speaking the purpose of the Manifesto-generated measures was most often delivering of information and awareness rising. This is in line with the central goal setting for the work within

Manifesto, which was primarily focused on these two issues. Thus, most of these activities were targeted to developing and spreading of relevant material, rather than to contributing to more direct action against bullying. The range of measures adopted grew towards the end of the Manifesto period, resulting in adoption of other types of measures, such as for example competence building through teacher training.

Although the Manifesto parties had some arena for joint communication and planning, most of the work nevertheless seemed to be carried out separately by each party, with little integration on regional or local levels. Perhaps the most notable exception to this, however, was *The big task (Det store oppdraget)*, which was a joint initiative between the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS) and the Ombudsman for Children (BO) targeted to schools, with a goal to sign a local manifesto for joint local cooperation to combat bullying problems. Another joint initiative between these two parties, *Relay (Stafetten)*, was targeted towards the counties and their work against bullying. Both of these measures were well received in municipalities and counties. At the end of the Manifesto-period all counties and at least 113 municipalities (out of a total of 345) had signed a local manifesto. The work had gained positive publicity through one of the main TV-channels in Norway.

#### 4.4.2 The Manifesto gave legitimacy to bullying problems

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, the measure above all other in importance when it comes to consequences of the Manifesto, was the new paragraph to the school law. It took force in the beginning of April 2003, about a half a year after initiating the Manifesto. The new paragraph acknowledged pupils' right to a proper psycho-social work environment at schools. It practice it gave more rights to pupils and their parents in this regards. When it comes to school owners, they are now obliged to work out a school policy against bullying. Furthermore, schools are required to have an action plan and are under an obligation to react to every bullying case.

Regardless that the new add in the law gained force early in the Manifesto-period, awareness of it on the local level seemed to have spread surprisingly slowly. In the internet-survey we carried out in the evaluation among school children, school staff, and parents we asked whether they knew about the new law paragraph. The results are shown in figure 3. As figure 3 shows, pupils in particularly were unaware of their increased rights, while their parents knew somewhat better – though mostly on the upper secondary level. Not surprisingly, teachers seemed best informed about the new law paragraph, although with great variation, depending on the school level in question. But a big proportion of teachers were also unaware of the change of school law. While three out of four teachers in lower secondary schools were aware of the new law paragraph, only a half in upper secondary schools and about a third in primary schools did so.

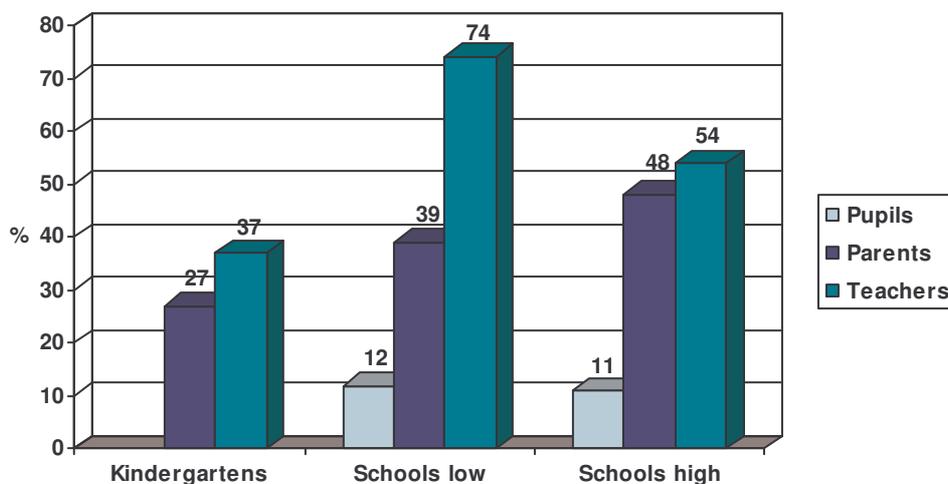


Fig 3. Awareness of the new paragraph, which was added to the school law as a measure in the Manifesto against bullying. (% 'yes'; Schools low = elementary and lower secondary schools, schools high = upper secondary schools). Pupils n=2254, parents n=590 and teachers n=867.

Whether schools should have been more active in informing pupils and parents about their new rights, and why had they not done so, are questions beyond the survey carried out. The consequent activities among the school owners (counties and municipalities) are being followed up annually by the Directorate for Primary and Secondary Education. The results from 2004 show that between the years 2002 and 2003 work against bullying increased by 13% in municipalities (school owner for primary and secondary schools), so that in 2003 more than a half of them had developed local plans against bullying. Contrary to that, the work against bullying in counties has been much less prioritised. The number of counties working with the problem had actually slightly decreased within the period 2002-2003.

#### 4.4.3 Media's role in realising the Manifesto

Media played a very important role in carrying out the Manifesto. Media is much to thank for the visibility and for reaching the central goal for awareness rising. Even if in the beginning media seems to have contributed to a negative image concerning the Manifesto's goal-setting, media's interest towards the Manifesto and bullying problematic remained high throughout the Manifesto period (September 2002 - September 2004). The sensation seeking style of reporting seemed to develop to a more factual-based one towards the end of the Manifesto. In media, adding visibility to the work among the Manifesto parties was usually channelled through the statements from top politicians (on ministerial level), as well as the political leaders of the partner organisations of the Manifesto. Much of this seemed coincidental, as there was no media-plan included in the planning of the Manifesto. As an unfortunate result, the Manifesto got a face of the top politicians, in particular of the Prime Minister's, which took a good deal of the attention away from the actual work done under the Manifesto in the partner organisations and on a local level. The results of the survey, carried out as a part of the evaluation, showed that on local level, in schools and among parents, the awareness of the connection between the media appearance of the top politicians and local activities against bullying was typically missing.

#### 4.4.4 Financial support to spread and further develop existing programmes against bullying – Strong effects, low visibility.

The financial support was given to implementing, spreading, evaluation, and/or to further development of a number of existing bullying programmes. Some support was also given to research on the bullying problematic. Financial support was probably the most significant measure, when it comes to the direct effects on bullying incidence on the local level during the Manifesto period. Through the role of an economic supporter, the Manifesto (parties) became also an important 'coordinator' for various activities targeted to combat bullying and to improve the organised learning and developmental environments for children and youth.

Taken that the Manifesto was targeted to the three educational contexts, and not solely to schools, kindergartens and in particular organised leisure activities were clearly left to sideline in regards economic support to their work for prevention of and against bullying and other behavioural problems. Furthermore, besides one, prior to the Manifesto the programmes that received financial support had not provided evidence for effects on bullying incidence from their work. Also, for most of these programmes it is not clear to what extent do they actively include children and youth themselves in their work. Nevertheless, much of the success or failure of the Manifesto on the longer run, that is, further decrease of bullying, depends on the results of the work done in these programmes.

#### *4.5 How did the measures initiated in the Manifesto reach the target groups on the local level?*

When it comes to the central Manifesto parties, their interviews showed that the work done and the results achieved (in regards awareness raising and information delivery) were in line with their expectations from the Manifesto - as far as these were explicated in advance. In addition, taken into account that the surveys from the year the Manifesto was completed (2004) showed that the long trend of increase in bullying at schools had halted or for some groups even reversed, there seems to be reasonable grounds for satisfaction for the outcomes from the Manifesto- even if not all the results can be granted by the work within it. This section will review the main findings from the evaluation when it comes to, how the end-users, school children, their parents and teachers experienced the Manifesto.

#### 4.5.1 The impacts of the Manifesto at schools

Earlier in this paper we have already discussed the low level of awareness of the new law paragraph among pupils, parents and to a degree also among teachers. When it comes to the measures adopted at schools, kindergartens and organised leisure activities, the results showed that the staff in these three organisations reported more often that they have adopted various measures than what the compared to children and parents reported of being aware of. Schools and teachers generally speaking appeared as somewhat protective in regards their systems, praxis and measures to combat bullying, measures which they claimed to have had in place “already long before the Manifesto”.

In the evaluation we also asked from the school children what they knew about the work done around bullying at their schools. The question was about, whether adults (head masters, teachers, parents or group leaders in leisure activities) had done something concrete against bullying during the school year in question (fall 2004), based on pupils’ own experiences. In the questionnaire we had listed three activities: ‘have talked with us about bullying’, ‘have shown us/delivered written material about bullying’, ‘have participated in a project or program against bullying’. Table 2 summarises the results.

Table 2. Concrete measures adopted by different groups of adults to combat bullying at school and during leisure, according to pupils in elementary, lower and upper secondary schools. N= 2070-2228 (%)

Activity	Group of adults	Elementary School	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	Total
Talked with pupils about bullying					
	Head master	43,4	35,0	20,8	39,9
	Teacher	58,5	43,7	22,2	52,6
	Parent	47,0	39,9	23,5	43,7
	Group leader in leisure activity	18,4	19,4	5,4	17,7
Delivered written material					
	Head master	16,2	14,5	7,1	15,2
	Teacher	11,9	10,5	6,0	11,2
	Parent	1,8	1,9	0,6	1,7
	Group leader in leisure activity	1,8	2,0	0	1,7
Participated in a project or a programme					
	Head master	16,4	11,1	10,1	14,7
	Teacher	10,5	9,8	9,6	10,3
	Parent	4,2	2,5	2,4	2,0
	Group leader in leisure activity	2,8	2,6	1,4	1,4
Nothing					
	Head master	4,4	13,8	16,1	7,3
	Teacher	4,4	14,7	23,4	8,0
	Parent	13,6	26,3	45,8	18,8
	Group leader in leisure activity	28,9	35,2	42,2	31,2
I don't know					
	Head master	19,6	25,6	45,8	22,9
	Teacher	14,7	21,2	38,9	17,9
	Parent	33,5	29,3	27,7	32,1
	Group leader in leisure activity	48,3	40,7	51,0	46,8

As table 2 shows, what can be considered as the minimum, to talk to the children and youth, is what had taken place most commonly, though mostly among the youngest school children. Also, a general finding was that the higher the grade in question, the more often they responded that they do not know what school has done to combat bullying, if any. The results were very similar when we asked about whether these groups of adults had changed their behaviour and become more

interested in and active towards the bullying problem at schools during the about last two years (the Manifesto period).

Parents in lower secondary school were best informed about the initiatives taken at schools, while the parents for children in kindergartens or upper secondary school were much less so. As we have already been into, the parents who were aware of the Manifesto against bullying, tended to relate it mainly to the top politicians and political “rhetoric”. They often did not see the connections to the work done in the schools where they had their children. For some reason the financial support granted in the Manifesto to the main bullying programs was not made visible to the end users in schools and kindergartens. It was not uncommon among teachers either to report that the Manifesto was distant to the actual work they did with the problematic at their schools. Nevertheless, the comments from many local actors generally both appreciated the top level political attention given to this problem, but also indicated that the Manifesto had not managed to reach them.

The school children did not do much better in this regards. Only a third of the pupils in the elementary school, less than a fourth in the upper secondary school, and only 16% at the lower secondary school had heard about the Manifesto (number of pupils who answered the question was 2276). This regardless of the fact that the survey was carried out after the Manifesto was completed.

#### 4.5.2 The impacts of the Manifesto at kindergartens and organised leisure activities

Compared to schools, there was both less awareness among parents of the activities carried out around the bullying thematic in kindergartens, and less of these activities taking place in general. This sounds understandable against the fact that according to studies available, bullying is the biggest problem at schools. The issue is largely open and unexplored in kindergartens and organised leisure activities. We asked from school children whether group leaders in the leisure activities they are participating in, have actively paid attention to bullying or initiated any measures to combat it. The results showed that this was not the case. In fact, in most cases the most typical answer from the children was that they do not know (40-60%), somewhat more so on the upper secondary level than on lower school levels.

#### 4.5.3 The Manifesto and the views among general public

In cooperation with the RF Rogaland Research, the Directorate for Primary and Secondary Education had an opinion survey carried out at the end of the Manifesto period among the Norwegian population. The survey (n=1104) covered three main questions: (i) change, if any, in the discussion around bullying in the society; (ii) change, if any, in the levels of activity to combat bullying in their local communities, and; (iii) whether parents had become more involved in the work against bullying during the last two years. The results indicated a very positive development. A total of 72% reported that discussion around bullying in society had increased, over 50% that there is now more activity in their local communities to combat bullying, and a third that parents are now more involved in the work against bullying than two years before. In regards the last one, another third reported of no change and a third that they do not know.

## **5. Summary and conclusions**

Albeit the two years’ Manifesto-period was way too short to realise the zero-vision about bullying, it did succeed in sowing a seed for a change in thinking and attitudes or encouragement for further action in regards bullying in schools, though most of all in elementary schools. When it comes to kindergartens and publicly organised leisure activities, what the Manifesto perhaps succeeded at best was to raise the issue about bullying and behavioural problems in these environments, not traditionally included in the bullying discussion. Thus, it challenged the more common, largely unproblematised line of thinking that among all educational environments bullying would be “isolated” only to schools. The Manifesto, and the broad publicity it got in media, has also resulted in greater awareness about the bullying problem among the general public. Bullying has got legitimacy. It is easier to rise bullying into a discussion now after the Manifesto than what it was before it. Even if we have not observed radical changes as a result of the Manifesto, it is fair to conclude that the Manifesto has made a contribution to a right direction, and added to the quality

of the educational environments for children and youth. There is no doubt that the work should be continued.

Having said that, the Manifesto also left behind a lot of schools, kindergartens, and leisure organisations untouched. It is still not difficult to find a school with bullying problem, nor a child being bullied. Furthermore, regardless of the change in the school law, it is not difficult to find a school where bullying still is not acted upon and put in the policy agenda. One of the most potential aspects in implementing the Norwegian Manifesto was that it was build on a broad cooperation among actors, representing all relevant parties to the problem in question. Besides horizontal breadth and cooperation, a potential strength in the Manifesto was that it allowed addressing of the bullying problem vertically, across different levels of the educational system. With this approach the Manifesto underlined how important it is that the work of all adults involved with educating children, pulls in the same direction, in each particular time as well as in the long run, within a developmental perspective. Even if this starting point was clear, the Manifesto seems to have succeeded only to a satisfactory degree to reach the local level and the end users and to generate integration and cooperation across the various actors. Furthermore, even if a lot of information has been spread about bullying to various actors, the central issue of increasing the competence among school teachers in regards bullying and other behavioural problems seems only to have taken place through the various bullying programmes and projects that the schools and some kindergartens had chosen for use. As most of these programmes really are not evidence-based as per today, a more solid and sustainable way forward is called for.

## **6. Recommendations**

Several recommendations were made for how to develop a further strategy to continue the important work that the Manifesto had contributed to.

1. Inasmuch as the Manifesto gave hope to many children and adults about better times to come when it comes to bullying and well-being at schools, it is of outmost importance that the work be continued nationally, regionally, and locally.
2. The work should be continued closer to go the end-users than what was the case during the Manifesto. A new Manifesto is not necessarily the best form for that, however. Hence, we do not recommend a new Manifesto.
3. The goal for the future work should be to establish the work against bullying as a permanent, integrated area of activity among all relevant parties and on all levels. That is, under the Directorate for Primary and Secondary Education, among each of the Manifesto parties, and also in the schools, kindergartens and publicly organized leisure activities.
4. The work against bullying at schools should be better integrated in the work towards improvement of work environments for children and youth. Existing support systems, such as the psychological and health services, should be integrated more closely to this work, as already is the case in many schools.
5. More efforts are needed in particular in the upper secondary schools and high schools to further the work against bullying and other behavioural problems.
6. More attention should be paid to involving parents to a still larger degree in the work against bullying at schools and kindergartens.
7. The work among teachers should be stimulated for further reflection over one's own practice and it should be viewed as a part and a parcel with continuous school development.
8. Further investments should be made in competence development in regards behavioural advancement and problems through teacher training.
9. Development and wider provision of continuing education and training for teachers and other pedagogic personnel in schools and kindergartens should be urgently invested in, with special attention to bullying and other behavioural problems.
10. Group leaders in organized leisure activities should be offered, and required to master, basic knowledge in pedagogical work among children and youth.
11. A monitoring system should be developed for a follow-up of the schools in their work under the new paragraph of psycho-social work environment.
12. The follow-up and increasing visibility of the work against bullying should be supported by annual conferences, covering and integrating various developmental aspects of the quality in

the various educational settings.

13. The various programmes against bullying at schools and kindergartens should be required to report of evidence for their work, if public funding is to be invested in them. This is not the case still today for most of these programmes. The goal should be a more critical approach to the use and usability of these programmes.
14. The website developed as an information resource for the work against bullying (mobbing.ls.no) should be further developed. As per today, it does not allow access to the existing initiatives and programs to a sufficient degree. Their visibility should be increased.

The final report is available at: <http://www.rf.no/Internet/Mobbemanifest.nsf> [in Norwegian]