

International Migration

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SOPEMI-report for Norway



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1 Overview

Record level of immigration

- In 2008 the total inflow of immigrants to Norway from all countries peaked at 66 900. The net immigration of all foreign nationals was 43 600, a further increase by more than 4 000 from the record level in 2007. Two thirds of the immigrants came from EU countries. Poland was the major country with a net immigration of 12 000. The net emigration of Norwegian nationals was 300 in 2008, which is a reduction of 200 from the previous year.
- Work was again the major reason for immigration to Norway in 2008; representing 48 per cent of the total from other than the Nordic countries. Family-related immigration represented 35 per cent. Nine per cent of the immigrants had been granted a residence permit based on a need for protection or on humanitarian grounds, and eight per cent were granted a permit for the purpose of education, training or cultural exchange.
- Of the 376 600 non-Nordic immigrants who have entered Norway from 1990 until the end of 2008, 40 per cent were admitted as family members of residents, while 24 per cent arrived as refugees and asylum-seekers, 24 per cent came as labour migrants, and 11 per cent arrived for education and training. Three out of four immigrants who entered during this period were still living in Norway by the end of 2008.
- 423 000 immigrants and 85 600 persons born in Norway with two immigrant parents were residing in Norway at the beginning of 2009, representing 10.6 per cent of the population of Norway. Of these 8.8 per cent were immigrants. For the second year the largest immigrant group residing in Norway originated from Poland, 42 500 persons.

Considerable, but falling labour migration

- The EEA-enlargement from May 2004 has significantly influenced labour migration to Norway. In 2008, 86 per cent of work permits (transitional regulations) were granted to persons from the new EEA-countries. The common labour market with the neighbouring Nordic countries is also important, also for workers on short-term stay.
- During the autumn of 2008 and spring 2009 the demand for labour fell. The reduction in first time issued work permits to citizens from EEA-countries reflects this falling demand for labour. The number of work permits issued to skilled third country nationals has also declined. However, there is still a relatively high level of labour migration to Norway, in particular from the common EEA labour market. Sweden and Poland are the most important countries of origin for labour migrants. Other EEA-countries, such as Germany and Lithuania, are also important. The main country of origin for skilled labour immigrants from third countries is India, followed by Russia, China, USA and the Philippines.

Increased family-related immigration, stricter rules

- The number of permits issued based on family ties increased further and reached almost 21 000 in 2008. The most important countries of origin were Poland, Thailand, Germany and the Philippines. Almost half of all permits were issued to persons from EEA countries. For one fourth of the family immigration permits, the reference person was a Norwegian national with no immigrant background. Among family immigrants over 18, four fifths of the permits were granted to women. In 2008 the largest groups of children in this category were from Poland, Germany and Somalia.
- The Government has tightened the rules regarding subsistence requirements in relation to family immigration. The motivation is both to combat forced marriages by strengthening the economic position and independence of young people in relation to their parents and to reduce the number of unfounded asylum claims. The new rules will come into force from January 2010. Other restrictive regulations concerning family immigration (“the four-year-work-or-study-requirement”) is in the process of being implemented.

Sharp increase in asylum claims, more restrictive measures

- During 2008, the number of applicants for asylum increased sharply and ended at almost 14 500. The major countries of origin were Iraq, Eritrea, Afghanistan, Somalia and Russia. During this year about 14 per cent of the permits granted through the asylum procedure, resulted in asylum. An additional 27 per cent of the decisions resulted in a residence permit granted on humanitarian grounds. 60 per cent of the latter category of permits was granted due to a need for protection other than as a refugee. The overall rejection rate in the first instance increased significantly to 59 per cent. In addition, 900 refugees were accepted for resettlement in Norway in 2008.
- Most of the restrictive measures, announced in 2008 to reduce the number of asylum seekers have been implemented. Nevertheless, the total number of asylum seekers continued to grow. In July 2009, the Government introduced new measures to ensure that Norwegian asylum practice in important areas differs as little as possible from other European countries. The aim is to limit the number of asylum seekers who are not in need of protection, and furthermore to prevent that Norway receives a disproportionate number of the asylum applicants arriving in Europe.

Improved integration and social inclusion of immigrants and their children

- The Norwegian policy for integration and social inclusion has both a *comprehensive* and an *inter-generational* approach. Since 2007, the Government has in connection with the fiscal budgets - as a response to challenges in the area of labour, welfare and social inclusion linked to some immigrants and immigrant families - outlined its policy and measures in a comprehensive *Plan of action for integration and social inclusion of immigrants and their children*. The plan has been co-ordinated with action plans against poverty and to prevent forced marriages. The plan of action for integration encompasses a series of measures in a broad range of areas. For each area the plan provides “goals for social inclusion”, based on an overview of the status quo – described by

quantitative indicators and a quantified target. These are linked with a series of concrete actions. The core areas are:

- additional funding for indirectly targeted active labour market policy instruments and closer follow up of participants
- additional funding to local communities for administering the Introduction program for newly arrived immigrants
- instruction in Norwegian for adult immigrants
- survey of language skills of four year olds
- free core time in kindergartens for all four and five year olds in some urban areas
- prevention of forced marriages.

The objectives of the plan of action are to prevent lower social participation and poorer living conditions among immigrants compared to the population in general; to ensure that immigrants as quickly as possible take part in the labour market and society; and to ensure equal opportunities for immigrants and their children.

➤ Reports on the effects of the measures in the Plan of Action for Integration and Social Inclusion indicate the following:

- *Kindergarten attendance*: The proportion of children with immigrant background attending kindergartens has increased significantly in 2008 and 2009.
- *Language test participation*: More adult immigrants with five years of residence complete the final test in Norwegian language and social studies.
- *Introduction Program results*: After completion of the Introduction Program, more than 50 per cent of participants take up employment or additional education.
- *Low income*: The number of immigrant families with low income has been somewhat reduced due to higher labour market participation.
- *Public sector integration*: The public sector has over the past five years contributed disproportionately to higher employment among non-OECD migrants (OECD, 2009). Initiatives taken include the obligation to interview at least one person of immigrant background for new positions, and on a trial basis since 2009, to give preference to immigrant candidates for a job offering if they have the same qualifications as natives. There is some evidence that these and other efforts in the public sector at all levels have paid off.
- *Employment among immigrants*: The employment rate among immigrants remains high. The register based employment rate increased from 63, 3 per cent in the 4th quarter of 2007 to 64.2 per cent in the 4th quarter of 2008. Over the past three years (4th quarter 2005 – 4th quarter 2008), the employment rate of immigrants has increased by 7.1 percentage points.
- *Unemployment among immigrants*: Unemployment has generally followed the same pattern as among the total population. The unemployment among immigrants is still nearly three times higher than for the population as a whole.

- *Young immigrants and Norwegian-born with immigrant parents in employment and education (16 – 34):* When it comes to the share that is in employment or in education, Norwegian-born persons with immigrant parents (mainly from Pakistan, Turkey and Vietnam) are almost similar to the majority population. The gap is lowest in the age group 16 – 19. For young immigrants the gap is larger irrespective of age, but it is most pronounced for young male immigrants with short periods of residence in Norway and for females irrespective of period of residence. In particular, the activity level of the Norwegian-born with immigrant parents is influenced by the degree of activity among females. Among these women employment participation is lower than for other young women in Norway. Many of these women take higher education, but among those over 25, there is a decline in labour market participation compared to those of the majority population in the same age group. This is linked to their civil status and family situation.

Employment growth, but increased unemployment due to economic downturn

- The employment rate of immigrants remains high. Apart from a decline in the employment rate of immigrants from the EU countries in Eastern Europe, all other immigrant groups experienced an increased employment rate over the course of 2008.
- Unemployment among immigrants has overall followed the same pattern as that of the total population, and the unemployment rate among immigrants has remained about 3 times higher than for the total population. Unemployment is highest for persons from Africa, followed by labour migrants from the EEA countries in Eastern Europe. Due to the economic downturn, the unemployment rate of immigrants increased from 4.0 per cent in May 2008 to 6.8 per cent in May 2009. The unemployment rate for the rest of the population increased from 1.2 per cent to 2.2 per cent during the same period. The unemployment rate of immigrants from the EEA countries in Eastern Europe increased in particular over this period, by 6.3 percentage points to 8.4 per cent. Only immigrants from Africa had a higher unemployment rate, at 12.1 per cent.
- The increased unemployment rate of immigrants from the EEA countries in Eastern Europe may be related to the fact that a large proportion of them have been employed in the building, construction and manufacturing activities, those hardest hit by the economic downturn. Male employees dominate these sectors, and the unemployment rate of male immigrants has consequently increased more than that of females.

New anti-discrimination measures

- From January 2009, a new general obligation to promote equality and prevent discrimination, entered into force with the new Anti-Discrimination Act. It applies in the world of work for public authorities, private and public employers and social partners.
- The Government intends to intensify efforts to combat ethnic discrimination. A new *Plan of action to promote equality and prevent ethnic discrimination*

was presented in 2009. In general, the measures outlined in the plan will target areas where people from minority backgrounds are particularly vulnerable to discrimination. Measures apply especially to working life, but also public services are a priority area. The plan furthermore focuses on discrimination that especially affects children and youth, in schools/education, on the housing market and in clubs/bars/restaurants. The plan includes 66 new measures which nine ministries are responsible for the implementation of.

2 Migration – general characteristics

2.1 Legislation and policy

The Immigration Act of 24 June 1988 regulates the entry of foreign nationals into Norway and their right to residence and work. A new Immigration Act of 15 May 2008 and the corresponding Immigration Regulation will enter into force on 1 January 2010, following necessary adaptations of administrative procedures and systems.

The new act modernises the current legislation. In particular it has clarified certain aspects of the immigration regulations and the international legal obligations. While the current act gives the Government the power to determine many of the main principles through regulations, the new act includes many of the more detailed provisions currently found in the Immigration Regulation. It has been seen as reasonable that Stortinget should decide more of the detailed contents of the provisions, because of the strong political concern with immigration issues.

In both the present and future regulations, four categories of immigrants are admitted:

- labour migrants, i.e. persons who have a concrete job offer
- persons with close family ties to persons residing in Norway
- students, trainees, au pairs and participants in exchange programs
- refugees and others in need of protection or who qualify for residence permit on humanitarian grounds

As a rule, students etc. are only granted temporary residence permits, but they may work part time and change their status after receiving a job offer on the completion of their studies. Depending on certain criteria, the other categories may be granted either a permanent or only a temporary residence permit.

At present, two kinds of permits may be issued to non-Nordic foreign nationals: residence permits and work permits. Residence permits only confer the right of residence, and the holder may not take up employment. Work permits confer both the right to reside and the right to take up gainful employment. Thus, foreign nationals who have a work permit do not receive a separate residence permit. In the new act, residence permits will include the right to work if not otherwise stated, and thus work permits will no longer be used as a legal concept. According to both the old and new regulations a permanent residence permit, conferring the rights of residence and work, is normally granted after three years of continuous residence, providing certain conditions are met.

In addition to the permits granted to those foreign nationals who meet the general immigration regulatory conditions for a work permit, residence and work permits may be granted to i) persons in need of international protection, ii) on humanitarian grounds, and iii) to family members of Norwegians or foreign nationals legally entering or residing in Norway to work, study or participate in various types of exchange programs.

The main legal migration categories are discussed in chapters three to six.

An important change in the new act is a broader concept of the term ‘refugee’. This group will not only include persons who meet the criteria of article 1A of the 1951 Refugee Convention, but also all other applicants covered by the non-refoulement provisions of any international convention to which Norway is a party. The most important of these, is the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. In other words: Those who are eligible for Subsidiary Protection Status under the EU Qualification Directive, will be granted refugee status under the new Norwegian act.

Because of this change, the right to family reunification for those who are included under the enhanced refugee concept will be strengthened. Today those who are eligible for subsidiary protection must be able to support their family economically for a family reunification permit to be issued. This will no longer be the case when somebody is conferred refugee status according to the new act.

The Directorate of Immigration (UDI) handles as first instance applications for asylum, as well as for residence permit, work permit, permanent residence and the question of expulsion. Applicants for a permit, whose applications are rejected, may appeal to the second instance, the Immigration Appeals Board (UNE), which is an independent appeals body.

Norway implemented the Schengen agreement on 25 March 2001 and the rules of the Dublin II regulation on 1 September 2003. EU regulations regarding free movement of persons apply to nationals of a country that is party to the Agreement on the European Economic Area (EEA), with the exceptions for Bulgaria and Romania outlined in chapter 4. Free movement applies to members of the EFTA Convention as well, which in practice means Swiss nationals.

2.2 Migration flows

With the exception of 1989, Norway has had net *immigration*¹ since the late 1960s, cf. table A10. The annual average flow almost doubled from 6 300 yearly for the period 1986-1990 to 11800 for the period 1996-2000, and increased further to 13 600 for the period 2001-2005, cf. table A6. From 2006 to 2007, net immigration increased by more than 16 000 persons, by far the largest yearly increase ever recorded. From 2007 to 2008 there was another increase of almost 4 000. Net migration in 2008 thus reached 43 300.

The level of registered *emigration* has also increased over the years, but at a much slower pace than immigration. It would seem that emigration is mostly determined by the economic cycles in Norway, as seen in the high figures for 1989-1990, or by exceptional events as the return of many Kosovars during 2000-2001. The total number of emigrations in 2008 increased with 1 500 persons, but the effects of the economic downturn will probably lead to a higher figure in 2009, as indicated by statistics from the first half of 2009, cf. below.

¹ Immigration is defined to include persons who have moved to Norway with the intention of staying 6 months or more, and who are registered as such in the Central Population Register.

In 2008 the *immigration of foreign nationals* to Norway increased by more than 5 000 compared with the very high level in 2007, cf. table A7 and A10. Almost 59 000 foreign nationals, 42 per cent of them women, were registered as immigrants by the Central Population Register. This means that they arrived with the intention to stay for more than 6 months, and had a legal basis for this.²

The increase in inflow from 2007 to 2008 consisted mainly of immigrants from other industrialized countries, particularly from new EU member countries. Of all immigrants, 64 per cent came from EU countries. The largest group came from Poland with 14 400 immigrants, equal to the very high level the previous year. After Poland, the highest inflow of foreigners was from Sweden (5 700), Germany (4 300), Lithuania (2 850) and the Philippines (1 800), cf. Table A7.

The *return-migration of Norwegians* from other countries has been quite stable over the years, mostly between eight and ten thousand. In 2008 the number was 8 100, only slightly lower than in 2007, cf. table A10.

The *gross inflow* to Norway in 2008 was approximately 67 000 persons; 58 900 foreigners and 8 100 Norwegians, cf. table A4 and A10. For most nationalities, the gender ratio was relatively balanced, but from important countries like Poland and Lithuania 72 and 66 per cent respectively were men. On the other hand, from countries like Thailand and the Philippines a large majority were women, (83 and 84 per cent respectively), cf. table A7f and A7m.

In 2008 we saw a *gross outflow* of 23 600 persons, close to 15 200 foreign nationals and 8 500 Norwegians; cf. table A5 and A10. This is, as mentioned above, an increase of 1 500 foreigners, compared to 2007. Of the total outflow 10 300 were women and 13 300 were men, cf. A5f and A5m. The largest outflows from Norway in 2008 were to Sweden (5 000) and Denmark (2 900). Half of the outflow to Sweden consisted of Norwegians. It is also worth noticing that both the outflow of Polish nationals and outflow to Poland doubled during 2008.

The *net immigration of foreign nationals* in 2008 was 43 700, 3 500 more than the record number in 2007, cf. table A10. The net immigration surplus of foreigners was particularly noticeable in relation to Poland (12 000), Germany (3 500), Sweden (3 000) and Lithuania (2 400). There was a very small net emigration of Norwegian nationals, only 300 in 2008, 200 less than in 2007, cf. tab. A10.

There are significant differences between various immigrant groups in whether they stay in Norway permanently, or whether their visit is temporary, cf. table A11. On average 59 per cent of those who immigrated between 1970 and 2003 were still residing in Norway after five years. Persons from countries in Asia had the highest proportion staying on (84 per cent on average), while persons from Oceania had the lowest proportion staying (29 per cent). With 95 per cent, Vietnam was the single country

² Asylum seekers are normally registered as immigrants only after having settled in a Norwegian municipality following a positive outcome of their application. Normally, an asylum seeker whose application has been rejected will not be registered as an 'immigrant', even if the application process has taken a long time and the return to the home country is delayed for a significant period.

with the highest proportion of its immigrants to Norway still residing here after 5 years.

Table 2.1 below, which is based on table A10 in the statistical annex, presents an overview of the migration flows of foreigners and nationals for the last seven years.

Table 2.1 Migration flows 2000-2008

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Inflow:	36 500	34 300	40 100	35 900	36 500	40 200	45 800	61 800	66 900
- foreigners	27 800	25 400	30 800	26 800	27 900	31 400	37 400	53 500	58 800
- nationals	8 800	8 900	9 300	9 200	8 600	8 800	8 400	8 300	8 100
Outflow:	26 900	26 300	22 900	24 700	23 300	21 700	22 100	22 100	23 600
- foreigners	14 900	15 200	12 300	14 300	13 800	12 600	12 500	13 300	15 200
- nationals	11 900	11 100	10 700	10 300	9 400	9 100	9 600	8 800	8 400
Net flow:	9 700	8 000	17 200	11 300	13 200	18 400	23 700	39 700	43 300
- foreigners	12 900	10 200	18 500	12 400	14 000	18 700	24 900	40 200	43 600
- nationals	- 3 200	- 2 200	-1 300	-1 200	- 800	- 300	- 1 200	- 500	- 300

Source: Statistics Norway

Immigration figures for 2009 indicate a significant drop in 2009. A net immigration of 26 300 during the first six months is 5 800 lower than the first half of 2008. 2 700 fewer immigrated and 3 100 more emigrated. Whereas 1 400 Polish citizens left Norway during the first nine months of 2008, 3 100 left this year, resulting in the net immigration decreasing by 60 per cent, from 10 100 in 2008 to 4 100 this year. The net immigration of German citizens decreased similarly, whereas the figures for the Swedish citizens remained unchanged from the previous year.³

2.3 Immigration according to entry categories

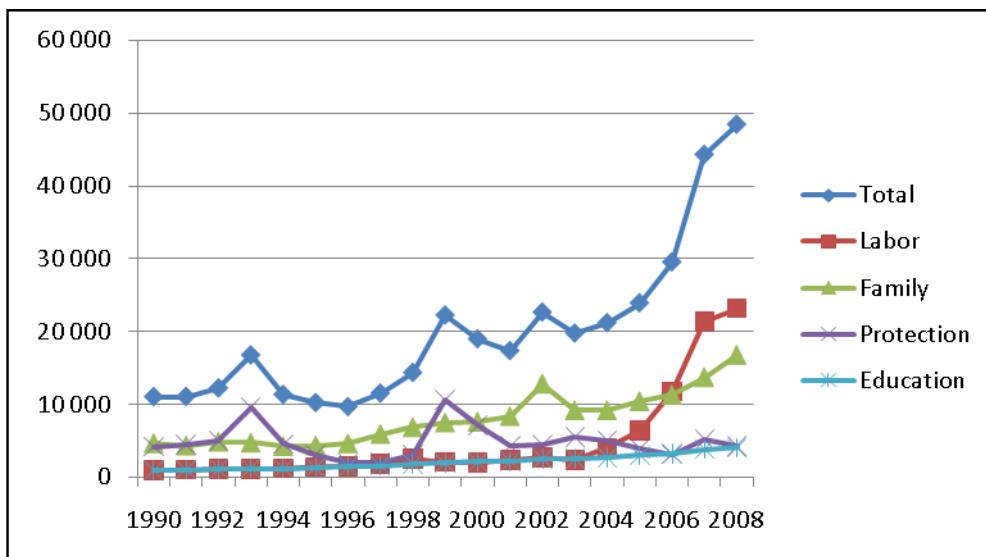
In the statistics on immigration according to entry category, published by Statistics Norway⁴, four such main categories are distinguished – family, labour, protection/humanitarian and education/training/exchange. These categories are determined from the type of first time permit granted to non-Nordic nationals who are registered as immigrants in the Norwegian population register. Nordic immigrants are not included in this figure, as they do not need any type of work or residence permit.

During the period from 1990 until the end of 2008 376 600 non-Nordic nationals immigrated to Norway, cf. Table A28. About 151 300, or 40 per cent of all registered immigrants, have been admitted as family members of residents. 24 per cent have arrived as refugees and asylum-seekers. 24 per cent have come as labour migrants, while 11 per cent have arrived for education etc. Since 2006, labour migration has been the major category, surpassing family migration, cf. chart 2.1.

³ See http://www.ssb.no/english/subjects/02/02/folkendrkv_en/

⁴ Based on recorded linkage to UDI registers

Chart 2.1 Immigration according to entry categories, 1990 – 2008

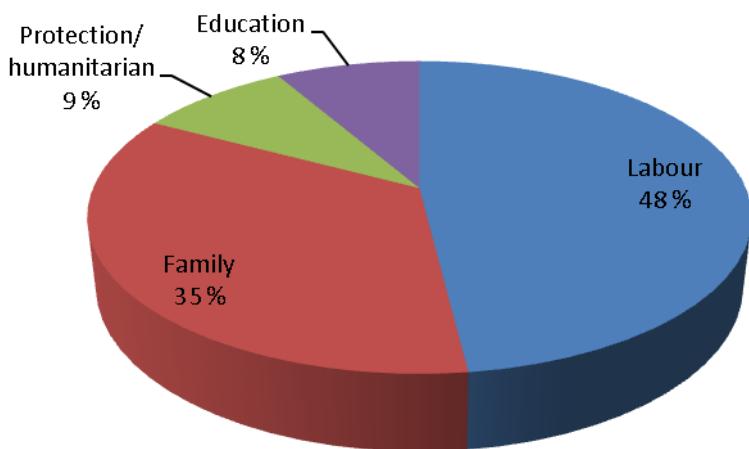


Source: Statistics Norway

During 2008 close to 48 400 new non-Nordic immigrants were registered. Labour immigration was by far the largest category, with 48 per cent of the total, as in 2007. Family-based immigration was 35 per cent in 2008, cf. chart 2.2 below. Two thirds of the labour immigrants were from new EU member states, and thereof two thirds from Poland. Labour migration was almost six times higher than in 2004.

Approximately 9 per cent of the immigrants were granted a permit due to a need for protection or on humanitarian grounds. Of 4 300 such immigrants 2 900 were granted a permit due to a need for protection, out of which 700 were resettled refugees. Immigration based on education, training and cultural exchange was 8 per cent of the total in 2008.

Chart 2.2 Immigration according to entry categories - 2008



Source: Statistics Norway

65 per cent of the immigrants in 2008 came from Europe, 22 per cent from Asia, incl. stateless persons, 8 per cent from Africa and 5 per cent from North-and South America or from Oceania.

For the period 1990 – 2008 the largest groups came from Poland with 44 600 immigrants followed by Germany (22 000), Iraq (20 400), Somalia (18 300) and Russia (15 200).

Of 16 800 persons who arrived in Norway as family immigrants in 2008, 11 900 came through family reunification. The largest groups were from Poland, Germany, Somalia, Lithuania and Thailand. Almost 4 900 immigrants came to establish a new family through marriage or partnership. The major groups came from Thailand, the Philippines, Pakistan, Russia and Brazil. 2 700, or 56 per cent of the 4 900, came to live with a person in Norway without immigrant background. 750 in this group were from Thailand.

For the whole period 1990 – 2008, 88 200 came for family reunification while 63 100 came to establish a new relationship, mostly through marriage. Of the latter 59 per cent involved a person in Norway without any immigrant background.

3 out of 4 of those who have immigrated since 1990 still live in Norway. Among refugees and persons granted residence on humanitarian grounds the figure is 83 per cent, while it is 41 per cent among students, au pairs and trainees. Since a large share of the recent arrivals in the latter category still is studying, the average figure for the whole period is somewhat misleading. If we look at those who immigrated to study(?) at least ten years ago, the percentage remaining in Norway is around 20 per cent for every year of immigration. This is quite high, considering that students initially are granted only temporary permits. This means that a significant number of students later qualify for permanent residence on another basis, mostly family or work.

For labour migrants the residence rate is 73 per cent while it is 81 per cent for family-related migration. Among labour migrants, we see a very large share remaining among those who have arrived in recent years, but it is below 40 per cent for those who immigrated before 2000.

3 Family-based immigration

3.1 Legislation and policy

The Immigration Act stipulates that close family members of Norwegian and Nordic nationals, and of foreign nationals who have been granted an unrestricted permit to reside in Norway, have the *right* to residence. The most important categories of close family members defined in the Immigration Regulations are:

- Spouse – both parties must be over 18. It is a condition that the spouses will be living together
- Cohabitant – both parties must be over the age of 18, have lived together for at least two years and intend to continue their cohabitation
- Unmarried child under the age of 18
- Specified groups of parents of an unmarried child under 18 years.

A wider range of family members, for instance parents of adults, may be granted a residence permit based on family ties, but they do not have the right to such a permit, unlike those belonging to the categories listed above.

In general, the family member living in Norway (the reference person) must meet an income requirement (subsistence requirement). This requirement is that the income should at least correspond to civil service pay grade 8 (NOK 217 600 as of 1 May 2009). The requirement was increased from civil service pay grade 1 (NOK 198 400 as of 1 May 2008) in 2008.

The subsistence requirement is satisfied when a person can maintain himself/herself and the applicant on his/her income alone or with the income of the applicant, or when the applicant is self-sufficient. The reference person must meet this requirement alone when the applicant and/or the reference person are younger than 23 years old. At present, the subsistence requirement does not apply when the reference person in Norway (i) is a Norwegian citizen and both reference person and applicant are over 23, (ii) a child, (iii) a Nordic citizen, (iv) has refugee status or (v) has a permanent residence permit.

In connection with the new regulations, the Ministry has tightened the subsistence requirement. One of the main reasons for this is to combat forced marriages. Stricter income requirements for the reference person will encourage young people to establish their own basis in life through education and employment. They will thereby become less dependent on their family both financially and practically. They will be in a better position to voice their own rights and preference in connection with marriage, and to resist possible pressure from their family. Furthermore, an objective of the proposed new requirement is to reduce the number of asylum seekers without a need for protection. According to the new regulation, only the anticipated income of the *reference person* may be included when assessing whether the subsistence requirement is satisfied. Today, the income of the applicant (spouse/cohabitant) is also included in the calculation (unless one of the spouses is under the age of 23, cf. above.).

Moreover, in addition to the documentation of future income, and in compliance with the new regulation, the reference person must also be able to document previous in-

come through the equation, and must not have received any social assistance during the previous year. The present arrangements, which imply that exceptions from the subsistence requirement are made when the reference person is a Norwegian citizen or has permanent residence permit, will be removed. There are, however, some exemptions made from the new subsistence requirement, e.g. when the applicant is a child under 15 years of age and has no caregiver in the home country, or the reference person is studying at a certain level.

One of the restrictive measures introduced in 2008, implies that four years of education or work experience in Norway is a condition for family immigration in certain cases. The four-year-requirement applies when the reference person has 1) asylum, 2) residence on humanitarian grounds, or 3) has residence on grounds of family ties. Furthermore, it only applies in cases of family *establishment* (i.e. family formation/intended family life), and not in cases of family *reunification*. The necessary amendment to the immigration act has been passed, and the regulation is in the process of being implemented. Whether the four-year-requirement also should apply in certain cases of family *reunification*, is under consideration.

3.2 Permits

For several years, family ties were the most important basis for long-term immigration to Norway, cf. chapter 2.3. In addition to the immigration figures outlined in chapter 2, the number of relevant permits issued by the UDI is also of interest when studying the entry of foreigners to Norway. The total number of new family-related permits granted increased from 18 000 in 2007 to 20 800 in 2008. A drop of 2 - 3 000 applications is expected in 2009, indicated by figures by the end of November.

Major countries of origin in 2008 were Poland, Thailand, Germany and the Philippines, cf. table 3.1 below. The largest increase was the 1 200 additional permits granted to Polish nationals. In total almost half of the family permits were granted to persons from EU-countries, mainly with reference persons who were labour migrants. For one fourth of the permits the reference person living in Norway was a Norwegian national, some of them a naturalised immigrant. Among those joining a Norwegian national the major groups of migrants came from Thailand, the Philippines, Russia and Pakistan.

More than half of the permits granted involved husbands, wives or partners, while the rest mainly concerned children reunited with parents, entering with (one of) the parents, or children born in Norway of non-Norwegian residents. The largest groups of children were from Poland, Germany, Somalia and Lithuania. Among persons over 18 of age, four fifths of the permits were issued to women. From Poland and Thailand, 95 and 98 per cent were women.

Table 3.1 Permits for family-immigration - major countries of origin. 2001 – 2008

Countries of origin	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Total, of which:	12 142	14 607	10 469	12 750	13 035	13 981	17 913	20 766
Poland	232	289	247	390	748	1 702	3 292	4 423
Germany	382	426	401	563	558	768	1 456	1 630
Thailand	650	918	780	1 099	1 014	943	1 073	1 214
Somalia	645	1 707	652	689	929	913	1 003	1 179
Lithuania	82	136	106	162	238	382	643	749
Iraq	1 696	1 737	940	909	933	626	436	654
Russia	637	905	797	742	653	595	658	607
Philippines	366	457	396	437	433	412	618	580
Stateless	57	135	94	109	88	131	205	534
USA	437	439	322	423	355	410	453	528
Nederland	214	188	171	271	358	424	509	501
India	159	161	132	162	176	246	496	478
Afghanistan	382	510	387	318	507	471	362	445
Pakistan	566	545	518	496	461	392	431	438
Other	5 934	6 517	4 823	6 236	6 010	6 443	7 892	6 806

Source: UDI

Among the 26 500 *marriages* contracted in Norway during 2008, 5 600 involved a Norwegian and a foreign national. Most existing and new trans-national marriages involve Norwegians and someone born in another European country or in North America, but there is also a sizable and growing number of Norwegian men who marry women from Asian countries, cf. table A13 and A14.

The large majority of the 10 700 *divorces* that took place in 2008 involved two Norwegian citizens, cf. Table A15.1 and A15.2. In transnational marriages most divorces happened in the following groups:

- Norwegian wife and husband from another European country
- Asian wife and Norwegian husband
- Norwegian husband and wife from another European country

4. Labour migration

4.1 Macro-economic background

Norway is a diverse industrial society with a free market economy and generally low trade barriers. A significant share of the Norwegian economy consists of service industries, including wholesale and retail trade, banking, insurance, engineering, transport and communications and public services. In 2008, the service sector as a whole accounted for approximately 48 per cent of GDP. Norway's petroleum industries, including exploration and extraction, accounted for 26 per cent of GDP and about 49 per cent of exports. Manufacturing accounted for close to 9 per cent of GDP.

Since 1970, annual economic growth has averaged 3.4 per cent. Norway experienced a strong economic expansion from 2003 to 2007, with an annual average growth in mainland GDP of five per cent. Growth in the mainland economy reached six per cent in 2007, but was reduced to 3.2 per cent in 2008, according to preliminary national accounts figures. The cyclical peak was passed at the turn of the year 2007/2008, and the Norwegian economy is now experiencing a downturn. The turnaround in the Norwegian economy began with a slowdown in housing investments, which became pronounced during the course of 2008. A decline in demand for consumer durables followed, and there was a clear downward shift in total consumption in 2008.

The turnaround in the Norwegian economy has been intensified by the international financial crisis and the global economic downturn. However, the impact of the crisis has not been as severe in Norway as in most other countries and the Norwegian economy is expected to fare better in the future. Strong demand impetus from both fiscal and monetary policy measures is expected to limit the downturn and private consumption is forecast to pick up in course of 2009. Petroleum investment remains high in 2009. Exports, mainland business investment and housing investments will contribute to lower economic activity. Mainland Norway GDP is estimated to fall by one per cent in 2009. Mainland GDP is expected to pick up in 2010 to an estimated ¾ per cent.

The weak economic development is also reflected in reduced demand for labour. Following several years of strong growth, employment growth came to a halt in the second half of 2008. Employment is projected to decline by 0.4 per cent both in 2009 and 2010, or by 12 000 persons per year. There has been a significant reduction in unemployment during the last years, and it reached a 20-year low of 2.4 per cent in the third quarter of 2008. Since then it increased to 3.1 per cent in the first quarter of 2009. The outlook for the Norwegian economy suggests that the unemployment rate will increase to 3.2 per cent in 2009 and to an average of 3.7 per cent in 2010.

There has been a strong growth in labour costs during the past few years. Wages increased by six per cent from 2007 to 2008. Weakened profitability and increased unemployment will dampen wage growth, which is forecast at four per cent in 2009.

4.2 Legislation

As a rule, third country nationals who intend to work or who want to run their own business in Norway must hold a work permit, cf. chapter 2.1. With the implementation of the EU directive 2004/38/EC on the right of citizens of the Union and their

family members to move and reside freely within the territory of their Member States, nationals from EEA countries no longer need a residence permit. However, they are required to register with the police when their stay in Norway exceeds three months. Nationals from the Nordic countries are exempted from the general rules on residence permit and registration.

General immigration regulations apply for job-related work permits to third country nationals. Firstly, there must be a concrete offer of employment. Secondly, pay and working conditions must not be less favourable than those of relevant industrial agreements or those prevailing in the relevant local labour market. Thirdly, as a rule, the employment offered must be full time.

A work permit for skilled persons may lead to a permit for permanent residence in Norway. Such permits are granted to skilled workers, professionals and others with special qualifications. It is a condition that their competence is deemed necessary for the type of job being offered. Since 2000, new permits for skilled workers issued within an annual quota of 5000 do not require that a specific labour market needs test to be conducted.

With the enlargement of the EEA-area from May 2004, transitional rules pertaining to the access of nationals of the new EEA member states in Central and Eastern Europe (EU8) to the Norwegian labour market came into force. The transitional rules for these countries were lifted from May 2009. The transitional rules pertaining for workers from Bulgaria and Romania will remain and be considered on a yearly basis.

4.3 Policies

In the context of the increased influx of labour migrants over the recent years, the Government in 2006 adopted an action plan against social dumping. The action plan was comprised of a series of measures aimed at preventing social dumping and thus protecting wage levels and work-life standards for labour migrants in Norway. The implementation is based on increased co-operation and co-ordination between public authorities and between the public authorities and the social partners. As a follow-up to the positive effects of the first plan, a new set of initiatives was introduced in 2008 as the second action plan to combat social dumping.

Among the most important measures to combat social dumping is the strengthening of the authority of the labour inspection authorities to carry out inspections on work places to ensure that laws, regulations and applicable collective agreements are adhered to, and to impose sanctions in the event of non-compliance. An obligation to register at the Labour Inspectorate has been introduced for all enterprises hiring out workers, and the rules governing the hiring of labour between production companies have been tightened. The principal contractors have an obligation to ensure that legal pay and working conditions are respected by sub-contractors. Identity cards for workers in the building and construction sector have been introduced. A general application of collective agreements has been introduced in the building and construction sector and in the shipbuilding sector.

The Government presented a white paper on labour migration to Stortinget in April 2008. The paper introduced a number of measures which will give a more user-friendly and transparent policy towards labour migration. The main regulations will be implemented through the new immigration act, which will be effective from 2010. An outline of the foreseen changes to the immigration act and other measures were presented in the SOPEMI-report for Norway 2007-2008. Some measures have al-

ready been implemented, mainly with regard to better information and service to labour migrants:

- A booklet with practical information from public agencies to labour migrants has been published in Norwegian, English and Polish. This is available at various web-sites, amongst others www.nyinorge.no, which is run by the The Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi). The booklet is available on the web, and will be distributed at relevant public offices and other contact points.
- The Labour Inspection Authority, the Police, the Tax Administration and the Directorate of Immigration have established a joint Service Centre for Foreign Workers in Norway in Oslo. At the Service Centre, both employers and employees can obtain information, and initiate a fast-track handling of applications. The Service Centre has been established to serve EU/EEA nationals whose main purpose of staying in Norway is employment, and their family members; nationals from outside EU/EEA with qualifications as a skilled worker or specialist, and their family members; employers of both categories. In the autumn of 2009, service centres are opening in Stavanger and Kirkenes.

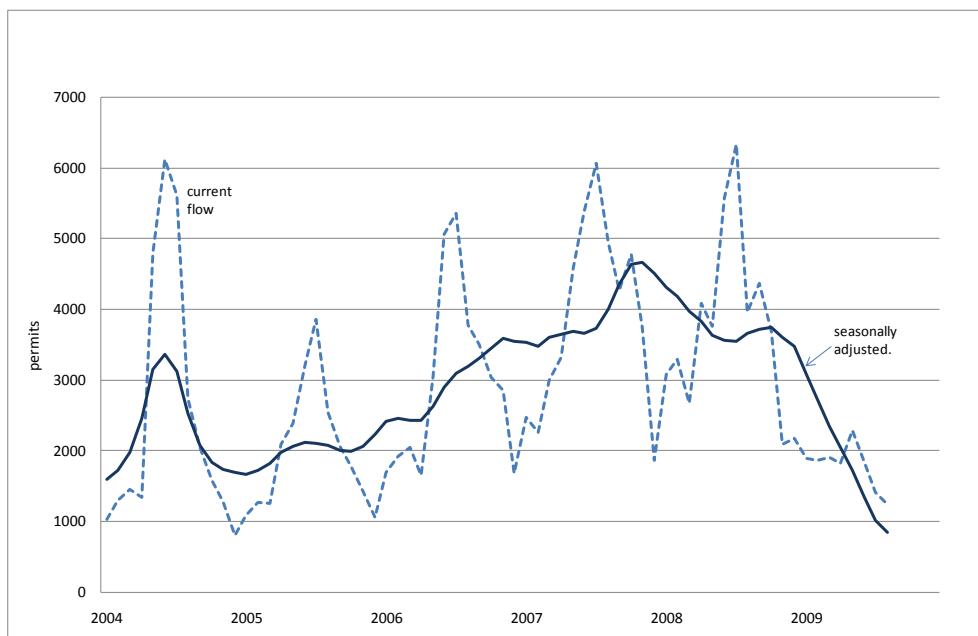
4.4 Permits

The EEA enlargement from May 2004 had a substantial impact on labour migration to Norway. The accession of two more members to the EEA from 2007, Romania and Bulgaria, further contributed to this increase, although they represent a relatively small share of the total. In 2008, altogether 101 000 work-related permits were issued, an increase of 3 per cent from 2007. Nine out of ten such permits were given to citizens of the EEA countries.

In 2008, 52 600 new permits for employment were granted, and 86 percent (45 100) of these permits were granted to persons from the EEA-countries. The number of renewals continued to increase in 2008, reaching 48 500, up from 43 000 the previous year. On October 1 2008, there were 104 000 valid work permits in Norway. 66 per cent of these were held by persons from the EEA-countries.

Due to the economic downturn, the demand for labour started to fall in the autumn of 2008. The number of issued first time permits to persons to the EEA reflects this falling demand for labour, cf. chart 4.1. Although the inflow of labour has been significantly reduced, these figures have to be seen in context with the high number of labour migrants from the EEA-area who still held a valid work permit in the first months of 2009. From May 2009, the transitional arrangements for the free movement of labour from eight countries which became part of the EEA in 2004, were lifted.

Chart 4.1 First time EEA permits -current monthly flow, seasonally adjusted. 2004 – 2009 (May).



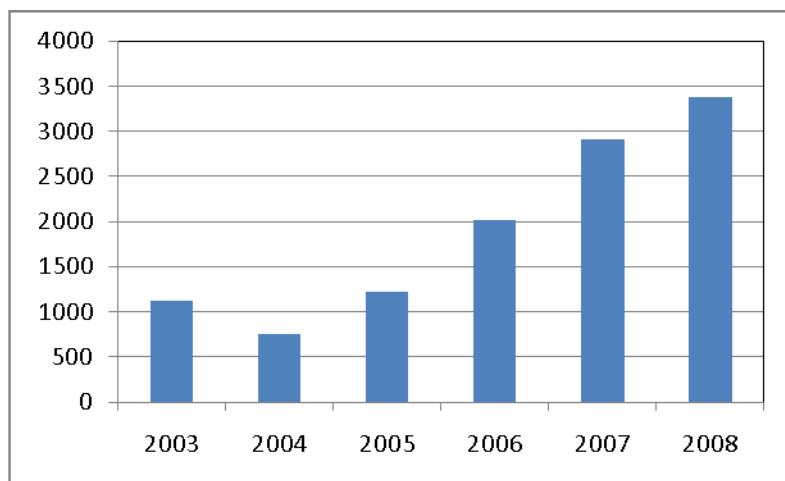
Source: UDI and the Ministry of Labour

After the EEA-enlargement in 2004, work permits for seasonal work dropped significantly as the seasonal workers from the new EEA-countries now could work on the basis of an EEA-permit. Since 2006, the number of permits granted to skilled workers has outnumbered the number of permits issued for seasonal work undertaken by third country nationals. In 2008, 2 300 permits were issued for seasonal work, 300 less than in 2007, but 400 more than in 2006.

The increase in the number of permits issued to skilled third country nationals over the past years continued in 2008. Still, the numbers are much lower than the ceiling of 5 000 permits that may be granted without any labour market needs test. In 2008, 3400 permits for skilled work were issued, up from 2900 in 2007, 2000 in 2006 and 1200 in 2005.

During the nine first months of 2009, 1950 permits for skilled work have been issued compared to 2500 such permits issued the first nine months of 2008. This reflects the reduced demand for labour since the autumn of 2008. The main country of origin for the skilled workers is India with 315 permits issued in the nine first months of 2009, down from more than 470 permits issued in the first nine months of 2008. For immigrants from each of the countries of Russia, USA, the Philippines and China, there were between 140 and 200 permits for skilled workers issued in the first nine months of 2009.

Chart 4.2 Permits issued for skilled workers - yearly figures. 2003 – 2008



Source: UDI

In the 4th quarter of 2008, more than 241 000 persons with an immigrant background were registered in employment in Norway, an increase of nearly 28 000 from the year before. There was an increase in the number of employed immigrants for all regions of origin. The largest increase was for immigrants coming from the EEA-countries in Central and Eastern Europe, by nearly 11 000 to more than 41 000. For immigrants from Asia, employment increased by 5 700 to nearly 71 000. Nordic citizens had a more modest increase of persons in employment in Norway by 2 300, but form the third largest group with nearly 38 000 persons in employment.

4.5 Labour migrants on short term stay

Persons staying in Norway for a period of less than six months, and persons commuting across the border for work on a regular (daily, weekly) basis, are registered as "non-resident" and are not included in the register-based statistics on employed persons, including immigrants. About 77 300 non-residents were registered as employees (self-employed persons are not included) in the 4th quarter of 2008, an increase of 20 per cent (13 000 persons) from the 4th quarter of 2007. A major part of the increase came in the sector of "hiring of employees". Many of the foreign employees working in the building and construction sector are hired through recruitment and placement agencies. Some of the increase can be accounted for by better registration of the employees hired out to the building and construction sector.

The largest group of employees not registered as residents came from the Nordic countries (more than 30 000 persons), while persons from the EEA-countries in Eastern and Central Europe formed the second largest group with 18 000 from Poland and 5 600 from Lithuania. Since 2004, the increase of employed immigrants on short-term stay has been 32 000 persons. Persons of Norwegian origin, for instance a Norwegian born person residing in Sweden and commuting to Norway, account for 4 600 of the non-resident employees.

5 Migration for education and training

5.1 Legislation and policy

A foreign national who has been admitted to an approved educational institution, generally a university or college, must have a residence permit to study in Norway. To obtain this, the applicant must be able to prove that s/he is in a position to finance her/ his studies and must have a place to live. Since 2007, international students are granted a general part-time (max. 20 hours per week) work permit together with their first residence permit for education. A concrete offer of employment is not required.

The general rule is that international students must leave Norway after completing their studies if they do not fulfil the criteria for another type of work or residence permit. The possibility to apply for a work permit as a skilled person after completion of studies was introduced in 2001.

Measures to facilitate the transition to work after completing an education in Norway are implemented as a follow up of the white paper on labour migration, cf. chapter 4.3. According to the new regulation, former students may apply for a six months' permit in a transition period while applying for jobs, which are relevant according to, achieved level of qualification. From the beginning of 2010, family members of students are allowed to work full time, even if the students themselves may only work reduced hours.

On specific conditions au pairs and trainees may be granted a work permit for maximum two years. In 2007, practices that are more restrictive were introduced to prevent abuse of the au pair arrangement. Among these was a former standard employment contract for au pairs updated and made compulsory, the minimum requirement for "pocket money" was raised and the host family was obliged to pay for Norwegian language courses for au pairs during their stay in Norway.

Due to a recent report on the evaluation of the Norwegian *au pair* scheme, changes in the present arrangement are under consideration, cf. chapter 15 for a reference to the report, which has a summary in English.

5.2 Permits

Table 5.1 below shows that in 2008 the number of first time permits granted for educational and training purposes increased to 8 100. In addition there were 3 800 renewals. 6 100 permits were granted for education, half of them to students from EEA countries. 1 600 permits concerned au pairs and 350 trainees.

The major source countries for international students in 2008 were Germany, France, China, Spain, USA and Russia. Almost 1 200 of the au pair permits were granted to au pairs from the Philippines. Other major countries were the Ukraine, Thailand and Russia. Most trainee permits were issued to nationals from Belarus and Ukraine.

Students etc. from the other Nordic countries are not covered by these statistics, as they do not need any form of residence or work permit to study or work in Norway.

Table 5.1 Permits for education and training - major categories. 2001-2008

Migration category	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Total, of which:	4289	4704	5468	5 440	6 108	6 767	7 663	8 090
Student (EEA)	936	1186	1328	1 713	2 286	2 634	2 739	3 059
Student (non-EEA)	1413	1578	2097	1 828	1 922	2 157	2 455	2 719
Post doctorate	32	23	43	48	50	68	52	91
Folk high school	310	403	345	185	200	198	216	212
Au pair	666	743	948	1 019	1 208	1 243	1 760	1 628
Trainee	726	601	543	496	322	361	377	347
Other	189	161	164	131	120	106	64	34

Source: UDI

During 2008, 672 international students changed their status. More than 80 per cent became labour migrants with permanent or temporary permits. This shows that the liberalisation in 2001 has had some effect. The rest were granted a permit based on new family ties. Both the absolute number of status changes and the percentage shifting to labour migrant status, have increased in recent years, cf. Table 5.2 below.

Table 5.2 Status change for international students. 2003-2008

New status	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Work	156	238	365	391	529	549
Family	78	98	108	142	116	114
Other	11	19	8	5	16	9
Total	245	355	481	538	661	672

Source: UDI

6 Asylum seekers and refugees

6.1 Legislation and policy

The Directorate of Immigration processes asylum applications in pursuance of the Immigration Act of 1988. A refugee has on application a right to asylum. A refugee within the definition of the act is a foreign national who falls under Article 1A of the 1951 UN Refugee Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. An asylum seeker, who is deemed not to meet the criteria for asylum, or is not protected against return on another basis, may be granted subsidiary protection in the form of a residence permit on humanitarian grounds.

One of the objectives of the present Government is to put more emphasis on UNHCRs recommendations in the asylum area. Several of the measures to achieve this objective are reflected in the new immigration act, cf. chapter 2.1. Twice a year, Norwegian authorities have bilateral meetings on protection issues with representatives of the UNHCR.

The new act stipulates that if an administrative decision may be inconsistent with UNHCRs guidelines or recommendations with regard to protection, as a main rule the case will be referred to the seven-member “Grand Board” of the Immigration Appeals Board. Even today, the Ministry may request a convening of the Grand Board to assess questions of principle.

In October 2008, the ministry circulated new guidelines to the Directorate of Immigration dealing with cases where asylum seekers have claimed gender-related persecution. The guidelines clarify in which cases gender-related persecution is involved, and how to deal with such cases. They are designed to ensure that the Norwegian authorities give international protection to an asylum seeker who is persecuted because of his or her gender, when all the conditions in the Geneva Convention are fulfilled.

All asylum seekers are offered temporary accommodation in reception centres. By the end of September 2009 there were more than 19 000 residents in such centres. Some of the centres are provided with extra resources in order to give asylum seekers with particular needs, such as psychological problems, more suitable living conditions. Unaccompanied minor asylum seekers, 15 to 18 years old, are given accommodation either in special sections of a regular reception centre or in a separate reception centre for minors. The child welfare authorities are responsible for unaccompanied minors younger than 15 years. These children are accommodated separately in centres under the supervision of the Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion.

Normally, the offer to live in a reception centre is available until the asylum seeker receives a final decision on their application. Persons with a final negative decision are offered to stay in a special centre until they leave Norway. Some persons are exempted from this general rule – e.g. unaccompanied minors, families with children and persons having applied for the voluntary return program administered by IOM (cf. chapter 7.2) and people with various medical problems. They are allowed accommodation in an ordinary reception centre until they leave Norway.

Due to the sharp increase in the number of asylum seekers, many with unfounded claims, from 2007 and up to present, the Government has several times the last years announced more measures designed to restrict the number of asylum applications. In June 2008, these measures included stricter subsistence requirements for some categories of family immigrants and a tighter application than before of some of the provisions of the Dublin II Regulation. In September 2008, several additional measures were announced. These include i) harmonizing the Norwegian asylum and immigration policy with comparable countries, ii) a fast track procedure for particular groups of asylum seekers, iii) stricter rules concerning family reunification for persons who have been granted residency on humanitarian grounds (and also concerning family formation for refugees), and iv) the possibility to grant temporary residency without the right to renewal to certain groups of unaccompanied minors.⁵

Most of the measures announced in 2008 have been implemented. Nevertheless, the total number of asylum seekers continued to increase in 2009. In July 2009 the Government introduced new measures to ensure that Norwegian practice in important areas differs as little as possible from other European countries. This is a continuation of the measures from 2008. The aim is to limit the number of asylum seekers who are not in need of protection, and furthermore to prevent that Norway receives a disproportionate number of the asylum seekers coming to Europe. The new measures are:

1. Instruction of the Directorate of Immigration to start applying the Dublin II Regulation to return families with children to Greece. It is no longer sufficient in itself to be a family with children to avoid return to Greece. A concrete and individual assessment should be carried out in each case.
2. Establishment of a separate procedure with more efficient interview and age assessment for unaccompanied minor asylum seekers.
3. Expanded age assessment procedures of the unaccompanied minor asylum seekers whose age information may be dubious; dental, wrist and physiological examination will be carried out.
4. Applications from unaccompanied minor asylum seekers, who are not in need of protection nor fulfil the conditions for residency on humanitarian grounds, will as a main rule be rejected.
5. Centres for the care and education for unaccompanied minor asylum seekers will be established/supported in their countries of origin.
6. An asylum seeker without documented identity will generally be denied a temporary work permit during the processing of his or her application.
7. Plans to create a national identity and documentation centre are implemented.
8. The reintegration program for returnees will be extended and include nationals from all non-OECD countries.⁶

The listed measures are at different stages of being implemented. Some of them were included in the Government's new political platform, presented in October 2009.

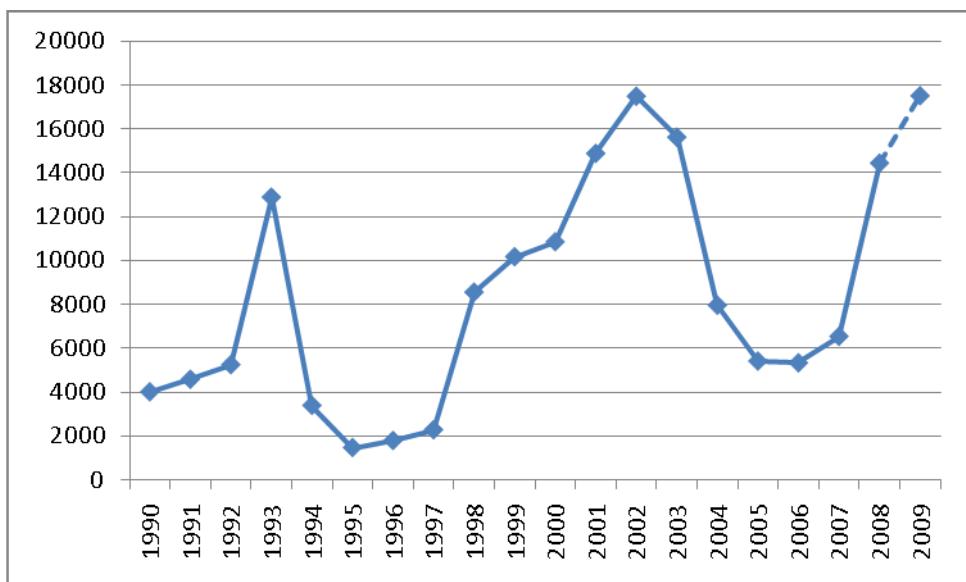
⁵ Cf. <http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/aid/Press-Centre/Press-Releases/2008/tightening-of-the-immigration-policy.html?id=525564>

⁶ Cf. <http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/aid/Press-Centre/Press-Releases/2009/new-measures-in-the-immigration-policy.html?id=570541>

6.2 Applications and permits

Asylum seekers granted residence and resettled refugees constitute an important category of immigrants. Except for the last five years, shifts in the number of asylum seekers have probably accounted for more of the fluctuations in net migration than shifts in job opportunities. During the five-year period 1998-2002 the number of asylum seekers to Norway increased considerably, with 2002 being the peak year with 17 500 arrivals from a variety of countries, cf. chart 6.1. This is still the highest number ever, cf. table A12 and chart 6.1.

Chart 6.1 Asylum seekers - 1990-2008 (prognosis 2009)



Source: UDI

In 2008 the number of applicants more than doubled, ending at close to 14 500. The largest groups came from Iraq, Eritrea, Afghanistan, Somalia and Russia, cf. table 6.1 below. There were applicants claiming to be from 106 countries.

The high level of asylum seekers during 2008 continued into 2009, although on a somewhat lower level during the first few months. It is predicted that the total number of applicants in 2009 may be close to 17 500, even when taking into consideration the effects of the new restrictive measures mentioned above. Approximately 16 100 persons applied during the first eleven months of 2009, 30 per cent more than during the same period in 2008. During these months 23 per cent of the applicants were from Afghanistan, representing three times as many applicants as in 2008. 15 per cent were from Eritrea. The number of asylum seekers from Iraq, however, has been reduced by 60 per cent, comparing the same periods in 2009 and 2008.

Table 6.1 Asylum applications, major countries of origin. 2000 – 2008

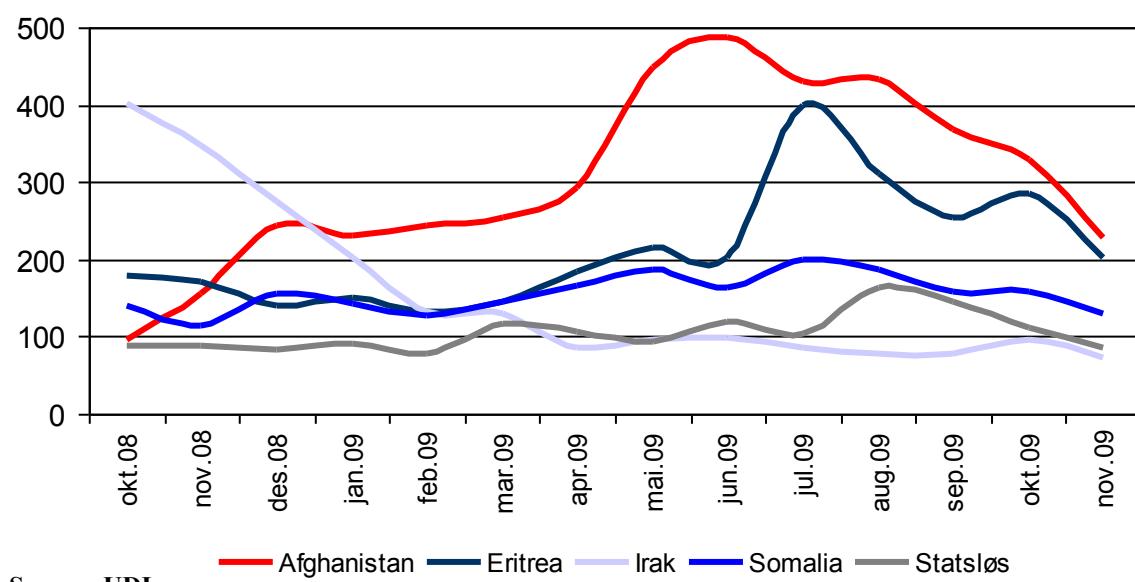
Country of origin	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Total, Of which:	10 842	14 872	17 480	15 613	7 950	5 402	5 320	6 528	14 431
Iraq	766	1 056	1 624	938	413	671	1 002	1 227	3 138
Eritrea	51	132	269	198	110	177	316	789	1 806
Afghanistan	326	603	786	2 032	1 059	466	224	234	1 371
Somalia	910	1 080	1 534	1 601	957	667	632	187	1 293
Russia	471	1 318	1 718	1 893	938	545	548	863	1 085
Stateless	120	194	391	366	298	209	237	515	940
Iran	327	412	450	608	393	279	218	222	720
Nigeria	14	27	139	235	205	94	54	108	438
Serbia *	4 188	928	2 460	2 180	860	468	369	585	363
Ethiopia	96	173	325	287	148	100	143	241	360
Other	3 315	8 069	7 123	4 853	2 655	1 768	1 525	1 427	2 917

* Until 2007 Montenegro is included. Until April 2008, Kosovo is also included.

Source: UDI

The shifts in the number of asylum seekers from the top five countries of origin over the period from August 2008 until November 2009 are illustrated by chart 6.2. The peak month for the total number of applicants was in August this year.

Chart 6.2 Asylum seekers, top five countries, monthly 2008-2009



Source: UDI

In 2008 there were almost 1 400 asylum seekers – 9,5 per cent of the total - who claimed to be unaccompanied minors. This was more than three times as many as in 2007. During the first eleven months of 2009, 2 300 such applications were filed, or 14 per cent of the total. The most important source countries in 2008 and during the first nine months of 2009 were Afghanistan, Eritrea, Somalia and Iraq. 70 per cent of these applicants claimed to be from Afghanistan

76 per cent of the decisions made by the immigration authorities in 2008, were considered on the merits of the case, as 16 per cent were transferred to another country for consideration in accordance with the Dublin procedure, and 7 per cent were not processed because the applicant vanished before all necessary information for decision was available. During the first nine months of 2009, the share of Dublin cases had increased to 24 per cent. Major countries of origin were Somalia, Afghanistan, Eritrea and Iraq.

Among the applications processed to a final decision in Norway, the number of applicants granted asylum increased only slightly in 2008 cf. table 6.2. The proportion granted asylum in the first instance by UDI was 14 per cent, a decrease from 20 per cent the previous year, cf. table 6.4. During the first nine months of 2009, the proportion granted asylum by UDI had increased to 17 per cent.

These changes must be seen in relation to the national composition of processed claims each year. The rate of rejection or approval is much higher for some nationalities than for others. There may also be changes in practice due to shifts in the situation in the country of origin, cf. chapter 6.1.

Table 6.2 Asylum seekers granted refugee status. 2000 – 2008

Instance	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
UDI	97	292	332	588	457	567	461	1 013	1070
Appeal Board	4	4	10	21	75	62	60	38	32
Total	101	296	342	609	532	629	521	1 051	1 102

Source: UDI

The relatively low acceptance rate for asylum does not give the full picture of the number of asylum seekers who are granted residence permits in Norway. In 2008 almost 2 000 asylum seekers were granted a resident permit on humanitarian grounds by the UDI in the first instance, the same number as in 2007, cf. table 6.3. The proportion granted a permit on humanitarian grounds was significantly lower than in 2007 (27 vs. 38 per cent), cf. table 6.4.

Table 6.3 Asylum seekers granted humanitarian status. 2000 - 2008

Instance	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
UDI	2 856	4 036	2 958	2 961	3 023	1 913	1 221	1 922	1 975
Appeal Board	343	265	326	219	613	513	464	1 523	630
Total	3 199	4 301	3 284	3 180	3 636	2 426	1 685	3 445	2 605

Source: UDI

Furthermore, since 2003, it has been possible to distinguish between two categories of humanitarian status, "subsidiary protection status" and humanitarian concerns (health problems etc.). As mentioned in chapter 2.1 those who are eligible for subsidiary pro-

tection status under the EU Qualification Directive, will be granted refugee status under the new immigration act entering into force in 2010.

The general picture of the changing outcome of the examination of asylum claims by UDI since 2003 is reflected in table 6.4 and chart 6.3 below.

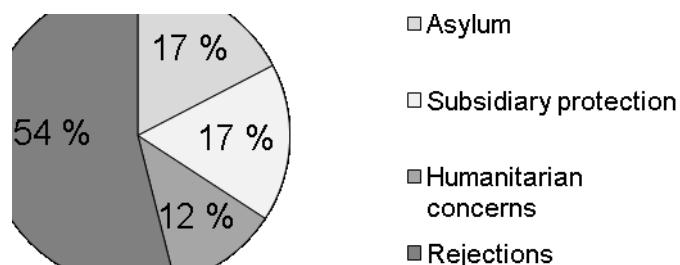
Table 6.4 Result of examined asylum claims by UDI – percentage. 2003-2008

Result – percentage	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Asylum	5	5	10	16	20	14
Subsidiary protection	18	15	16	20	17	16
Humanitarian concerns	6	20	19	21	21	11
Rejections	71	60	56	43	42	59

Source: UDI

In 2008, 59 per cent of the applications that had been examined on their merits were rejected in the first instance, clearly higher than in 2007. During the first nine months of 2009, the proportion of rejections has decreased somewhat to 54 per cent, cf. chart 6.3 below. This decrease mainly reflects that relatively fewer were granted asylum. This tendency may be a result of some of the new restrictive measures described in chapter 6.1.

Chart 6.3 Outcome of examined asylum claims by UDI, Jan.-Sept. 2009



Source: UDI

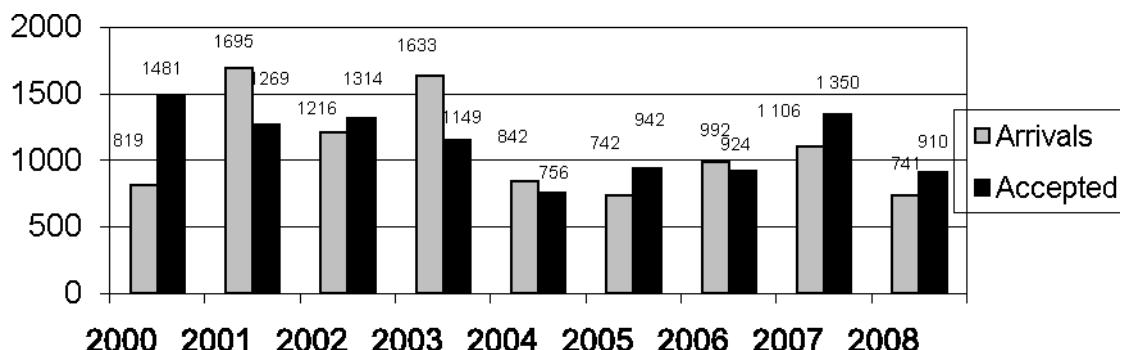
Both in 2008 and 2009 Norway experienced stronger growth in the number of asylum seekers than most other European states. The number of applicants per capita was only surpassed by Malta and Cyprus among industrialised countries in 2008, based on statistics available from IGC, UNHCR and Eurostat. The number of unaccompanied minors was higher only in the UK during the first nine months of 2009. There are several explanations to this growth, one being the sharp reduction in applicants to Sweden during 2008-2009.

6.3 Resettlement of refugees

In addition to asylum seekers, Norway admits a pre-determined number of refugees as part of an annual resettlement quota. A three-year perspective is applied for this quota, meaning that the actual number of refugees resettled in Norway in any year may differ from this quota within this period, as unused quota places may be carried over to following years and advance use may be made of following year's places. Stortinget has set the quota for 2009 to maximum 1 200 places, as in 2008. In the fiscal budget for 2010, the Government has proposed the same number.

In 2008, 900 refugees were accepted for resettlement, while only 740 arrived that year, cf. chart 6.3. Some of those arriving had been accepted during the previous year, and some of those accepted in 2008 have arrived during 2009.

Chart 6.4 Number of resettled refugees 2000 - 2008



Source: UDI

As Norway made advanced use of quota places for 2008 in 2007, fewer places were available in 2008.

In 2008 four groups were particularly targeted by the Norwegian resettlement program: Burmese refugees in Thailand, Bhutanese refugees in Nepal, Iraqi refugees in the Middle East and Eritrean refugees in Sudan.

Table 6.5 Resettlement of refugees - major countries of origin. 2008

Countries of origin	Resettled refugees
Myanmar/Burma	260
Iraq	158
Bhutan	149
Eritrea	76
Ethiopia	76
Sri Lanka	42
Other	149

Source: UDI

The 2009 resettlement quota has been pre-allocated to 200 refugees displaced from Iraq, 200 Afghan women-at-risk in Iran or Pakistan, 200 Eritreans in Sudan or Ethiopia, 150 Bhutanese in Nepal and 100 Burmese refugees with ties to Norway. The remaining places have not been pre-allocated to particular refugee groups. Women

and girls are given priority within the quota, and 55 per cent of total number of resettled refugees should be female and 15 per cent of the refugees should be "women-at-risk". Norway has a fast track procedure for refugees in urgent need of resettlement (80 places in 2008).

6.4 Settlement in municipalities

Foreign nationals who have been granted refugee or humanitarian status enjoy full freedom of movement. In principle, they may choose to settle wherever they want. However, most will depend on public assistance to find suitable housing. Those who depend on assistance, have to settle in a selected municipality. The Norwegian municipalities are sovereign when it comes to deciding on the number of refugees to accept. Through a state grant of a fixed sum per refugee over a five-year period they are compensated financially for expenses that they may incur. In 2009 the sum for the whole five year period is NOK 556 500 for adults settled that year and NOK 536 500 for children under 18. There are additional grants for settlement of unaccompanied minors, elderly and handicapped persons.

4 340 foreign nationals with asylum or humanitarian status were provided housing and integration measures by the municipalities in 2008. Due to the large increase in the numbers of asylum seekers to Norway in 2008 and 2009 the number of persons to be settled is expected to rise to 6 200 in 2009 and 9 600 in 2010. Of the 9 600 expected to be in need of assisted settlement in 2010, about 1 400 are expected to be unaccompanied minors.

6.5 Voluntary repatriation

Voluntary repatriation will often be the best and most sustainable solution to a refugee problem, when conditions in the country of origin allow a safe return. A public program for voluntary repatriation of refugees has been in place since 1992. The program consists of two main elements: individual benefits and grants for facilitating projects. The individual pre-departure assistance is set at NOK 15 000 plus travel expenses.

Projects facilitating voluntary repatriation include the following component:

- improving the information about conditions in the country of origin
- vocational training
- activities for reconciliation and fostering democracy
- activities for reception and reintegration in the country of origin
- establishment of income generating activity in the country of origin

Only a very limited number of refugees have chosen to repatriate from Norway through this program. In 2008, 48 persons repatriated, up from 27 in 2007. During the first seven months of 2009, 20 persons repatriated.

7 Irregular migration and return

7.1 Legislation and policy

A person, who helps a foreign national to illegal entry or stay, could be sentenced to up to three years of imprisonment. The maximum penalty is six years of imprisonment for a person who, for the purpose of profit, conducts organised activity to assist foreign nationals to enter the country illegally. Furthermore, it is considered a criminal act to provide to another person with a passport or travel document when the person concerned knows or ought to understand that a foreign national may use it to enter Norway or another state. The maximum penalty for this offence is two years imprisonment.

Persons, whose application has been rejected, sometimes may remain in Norway if the country of origin refuses to receive them. As long as they do not hinder the implementation of their return, such persons have the opportunity to apply for a temporary work permit. The permit expires as soon as it is possible to return the foreigner to his or her country of origin.

A person, whose application for asylum has been rejected, may be granted a residence permit if the return decision has not been implemented within three years following the application for asylum, and if the obstacles to return are deemed to be enduring. The identity of the applicant must have been sufficiently established, and the applicant must have assisted in the efforts to implement the return decision.

By September 2009, Norway has readmission agreements or similar agreements on return with 22 countries. Norwegian authorities have raised the issue of re-admission agreements with the governments of some additional 20 countries.

The “Plan of action against human trafficking (2006-2009)” presents measures against all kinds of trafficking, including sexual exploitation, organized begging, forced labour and illegal donation of organs. It includes the provision of access to health care and social assistance for the victims, and it places more focus on children as victims of trafficking. In the plan, the so-called reflection period for victims of trafficking has been extended to six months. Furthermore, there are measures in the plan to protect witnesses in cases concerning victims of all kinds of human trafficking, as well as stricter penalties for traffickers.

During 2008, 54 victims of trafficking have been granted a reflection period, while the number was 27 during the first half of 2009. 14 were granted a one-year permit in 2008, while only four during the first half of 2009. The victims are provided with accommodation in safe houses. Information campaigns have been conducted to limit the demand for and purchase of sexual services. The 1st of January 2009, a provision in the General Civil Penal Code, which criminalizes the purchase of sexual services, entered into force. In cooperation with NGOs, the outreach activities among foreign prostitutes, who may have been victims of trafficking, have been strengthened. Norway also supports a number of measures internationally, channelled through our foreign services.

As of 12 December 2006, the so-called reflection period was extended from 45 days to six months. When this permit expires, the person can be granted a one-year permit.

This one-year permit may be renewed, but it does not constitute grounds for permanent residence. In May 2008, the instruction was revised to encompass a wider range of persons, hereunder citizens of EU/EEC and foreigners with residence permits in other Schengen states.

In November 2008 the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion issued an instruction to the Directorate of Immigration which implies that a victim who testifies in a criminal case relating to human trafficking, will be given a residence permit that may form the basis for a settlement permit. The purpose is both to ensure that victims of human trafficking can testify without fear of retaliation in their country of origin, and to make sure that more ringleaders are apprehended.

7.2 Illegal entry and residence

Facts and estimates on the extent of irregular migration in Norway, both entry and presence, are limited. However, we know that the problem exists, particularly in the major cities with a relatively large population of immigrants and less social transparency than in smaller communities.

Two reports on the number and circumstances of irregular migrants were published in 2008, cf. chapter 7 in the Sopemi report for Norway, 2007-2008.⁷ One of the reports recommends a method implying that there could have been 18 000 irregular migrants (0.4 per cent of the population) in Norway at the beginning of 2006. However, this estimate is imprecise. It was estimated that in 2006 the actual figure could range from 10 500 to 32 000, with approximately two thirds of the total consisting of former asylum-seekers.

Approximately 90 per cent of the applicants are registered at a police station inside the country and not at the border. This is mostly a consequence of the procedures followed by the border police and customs officers.

Currently approximately five per cent of the asylum seekers in Norway present identity documents when initially registering their application. However, some documentation or substantiated indication of correct identity will be provided during the processing of the application for a significantly larger proportion of the applicants, depending on their country of origin. When the application is decided, less than ten per cent are considered to have failed in documenting or substantiating their identity.

Every year a significant number of asylum seekers, many of them having had their application rejected, leave the reception centre where they stay without providing a forwarding address. Some may have returned to their home country, some may have moved to a third country and some may have stayed in Norway illegally to make a living through work, criminal activities or through support by friends or relatives.

The police have apprehended a number of migrants working illegally during co-ordinated controls of various businesses, especially on construction sites and in shops and restaurants. Some of these illegal workers are former asylum seekers, while oth-

⁷ Cf. (http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/aid/doc/rapporter_planer/rapporter/2008/international-migration-2007-2008.html?id=541395)

ers have come explicitly to work, neither applying for asylum nor for a work permit. Those apprehended are expelled if there are no legal obstacles.

In total 563 persons were rejected at the border or after entry in 2008, somewhat fewer than the previous year. The sharp drop in rejections since 2003 is mainly due to the enlargement of the EU in 2004 that made such rejections less likely for nationals from the new member states. There were more than 1 600 expulsions, which is a significant increase compared to 2008, cf. table 7.1 below. Expulsions also include convicted criminals, but the majority of expulsions results from violations of the Immigration Act. After nine months in 2009, almost 2 000 persons have faced expulsion, indicating a strong increase for the year as a whole.

Table 7.1 Rejections and expulsions. 2001 - 2008

Sanction	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Rejections	1 838	2 009	1 849	1 149	707	689	628	563
Expulsions	(unav.)	(unav.)	1 141	1 260	1 274	1 379	1 398	1 634

Source: UDI

In 2008 the police returned altogether 2 300 foreigners involuntarily from Norway, slightly more than in 2007. 53 per cent of them were asylum seekers, who were handled according to the Dublin procedure or former asylum seekers whose applications had been rejected. In the remaining group, criminals and other categories of foreigners without legal residence are included. During the first nine months of 2009 the total number of rejections and expulsions was 1 800.

Table 7.2 Return – main categories. 2007-2009 (30.9)

Year	Asylum rejected	Dublin-procedure	Rejection/expulsion (other)	AVR (IOM)	Total
2007	552	561	1074	443	2630
2008	437	805	1084	570	2896
2009 (30.9)	423	913	869	700	2905

Source: UDI, the Police

7.3 Assisted return

Return measures are important elements in a comprehensive asylum and migration policy. The aim is to motivate foreign nationals without legal status in Norway, including finally declined asylum applicants, to return voluntary, and in dignity, to their country of origin.

Since 2002 the Government has commissioned the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to operate a program for “Assisted Voluntary Return”. The services offered by the program include information and counselling to potential returnees, assistance to obtain valid travel documents, travel arrangements, post-arrival reception, onward travel to the local destination and limited follow-up. In 2008, 570 persons returned with IOM, an increase of almost 30 per cent from 2007. During the first nine months of 2009 the number was 700, indicating a significant increase compared to 2008, cf. table 7.2.

As of September 2009, foreign nationals from countries recognized by OECD/DAC as developing countries and without a permit for legal residence may benefit from reintegration allowances, if they opt to return voluntary. More comprehensive reintegration packages are available for Afghan and Iraqi nationals. These packages include temporary shelter, counselling, vocational training and assistance to set up their own business upon arriving in their countries of origin. The programs are operated by IOM.

8 Foreign nationals, immigrants and their children

8.1 Population growth and fertility rates

The total population of Norway grew by 62 000 persons during 2008. This is a growth rate of 1.3 per cent, 0.1 points higher than in 2007. This rate is among the highest in Europe, due to a birth surplus of 18 800 as well as net immigration of 43 300. By January 2009, the total population was 4.8 million. Cf. table A1 and A3.

The fertility rate for the population in Norway was 1.91 in 2007-2008, the highest level since the 1970's. The rate differs between women with Norwegian background and immigrants. In 2007-2008, it was 1.89 for the former and 2.17 for the latter. As there was an increase in the fertility-rate for the former women and a reduction for the latter, the difference between the two declined compared to the previous year. The highest rate in 2007-2008 was 2.36, among women from Asia, Africa and Latin America, while the lowest rate was 1.80 for women from Western Europe. The highest rate(?) represented a significant decline from 2.45 the previous years and from 2.93 in 1994-95. Cf. table A20.

The largest groups of children born in Norway with two foreign-born parents in 2008 were those who had parents from Somalia, Iraq and Poland, with Pakistan on fourth place. Among those with only one parent born abroad Sweden, Denmark, UK, Thailand and the Philippines were the major countries of origin of the foreign parent, cf. table A21. This reflects clear differences in inter-marriage patterns. However, there were also an increasing number of children with one parent born in Pakistan. This reflects that among young Norwegians with Pakistani-born parents the majority have found their spouse in Pakistan. In 2008 only two out of 247 cases of immigration from Pakistan to form a new family, involved residents of Norway who were neither immigrants nor Norwegian born with two immigrant parents.

8.2 Foreign nationals

By January 2009 the total number of foreign nationals registered as residents of Norway was 303 000, an increase of 36 700 (13.8 per cent) from the previous year, cf. table A1. This is 6.3 per cent of the total population, cf. table A16.

European nationals still constitute the majority of foreign nationals: 139 000 or approximately 64 per cent of all foreigners, cf. table A16. This share has been gradually reduced over the years, down from 65 per cent in 2000, but there has been an increase during the last few years. Around 28 000 or 78 per cent of the increase of foreigners in 2008, came from European countries. This was mainly due to an increase of nationals from Poland (up 12 400), Germany and Sweden.

For several countries, there was a reduction in the number of resident nationals, mostly due to high rates of naturalization. Among these countries were Iran, Pakistan and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The number of resident nationals from *Asian* countries has increased gradually since 2000. By January 2009 they accounted for 20.6 per cent of the total foreign population, up from 19 per cent in January 2000, but lower than in January 2008. The largest group of foreign nationals from Asia were from Iraq, numbering 10 950 persons. In

2008 there was also a significant increase in the number of nationals from the Philippines and Thailand.

Resident nationals from *African* countries increased by 1 600 persons during 2008 and reached 27 000 or 9 per cent of all foreign nationals in Norway. In 2000 the share was 6.5 per cent. Somali nationals constitute the largest group of foreign nationals from countries in Africa, numbering 10 900 persons.

The total number of resident nationals from countries in *North, Central and South America* increased by 1 100 persons during 2008 and reached 17 200. Their share of all foreigners declined further to 5.7 per cent. Almost half of this group are U.S. citizens, and the second largest group is from Chile (2 000).

The patterns and changes described above only partly reflect shifts in migration flows (cf. chapter 2). More important are the significant differences in the inclination to apply for Norwegian citizenship (cf. chapter 9.2). Immigrants from countries in Western Europe and North America show little interest in changing citizenship, compared to most other groups of foreign nationals. For example, the number of nationals from Bosnia-Herzegovina is one third of what it was in 2001, cf. table 8.1. This change is mostly due to naturalizations, and not to return-migration. The number of Vietnamese nationals, 1 600, is strikingly low. There are 12 800 immigrants from Vietnam in Norway, eight times the number of Vietnamese citizens. Cf. Table A16 and A17.

Table 8.1 Foreign nationals - major countries. 1.1.2001 – 1.1.2009

Nationality	1.1.2001	1.1.2002	1.1.2003	1.1.2004	1.1.2005	1.1.2006	1.1.2007	1.1.2008	1.1.2009
Total, of which	184 337	185 863	197 668	204 731	213 303	222 277	238 305	266 260	302 977
Poland	2 023	2 205	2 619	2 741	3 936	6 773	13 630	26 801	39 168
Sweden	25 170	25 140	25 241	25 432	25 773	26 640	27 867	29 886	32 804
Denmark	19 405	19 653	20 008	20 006	20 060	20 192	20 252	20 461	20 587
Germany	7 055	7 538	8 233	8 839	9 587	10 623	12 214	15 313	18 892
UK	11 074	10 966	11 188	11 018	11 202	11 204	11 562	12 024	12 644
Iraq	9 891	10 778	13 038	13 373	13 677	13 136	12 139	10 682	10 951
Somalia	6 152	6 588	8 377	9 861	10 541	10 623	10 845	10 589	10 893
Russia	3 288	3 882	4 829	6 565	7 383	8 185	8 750	9 710	10 362
USA	8 037	7 915	7 976	7 703	7 614	7 597	7 732	7 916	8 268
Thailand	2 725	2 992	3 636	4 248	4 975	5 698	6 355	6 938	7 884
Afghanistan	953	1 816	2 950	4 346	5 085	5 933	6 470	6 502	6 572
Netherlands	3 587	3 718	3 837	3 950	4 165	4 604	5 104	5 811	6 404
Philippines	1 962	2 109	2 356	2 610	2 884	3 255	3 921	4 844	6 070
Pakistan	6 731	6 867	6 676	6 572	6 378	6 095	5 863	5 755	5 490
Bosnia - Herzegovina	11 611	8 826	7 850	5 952	5 203	4 584	4 192	4 304	4 137

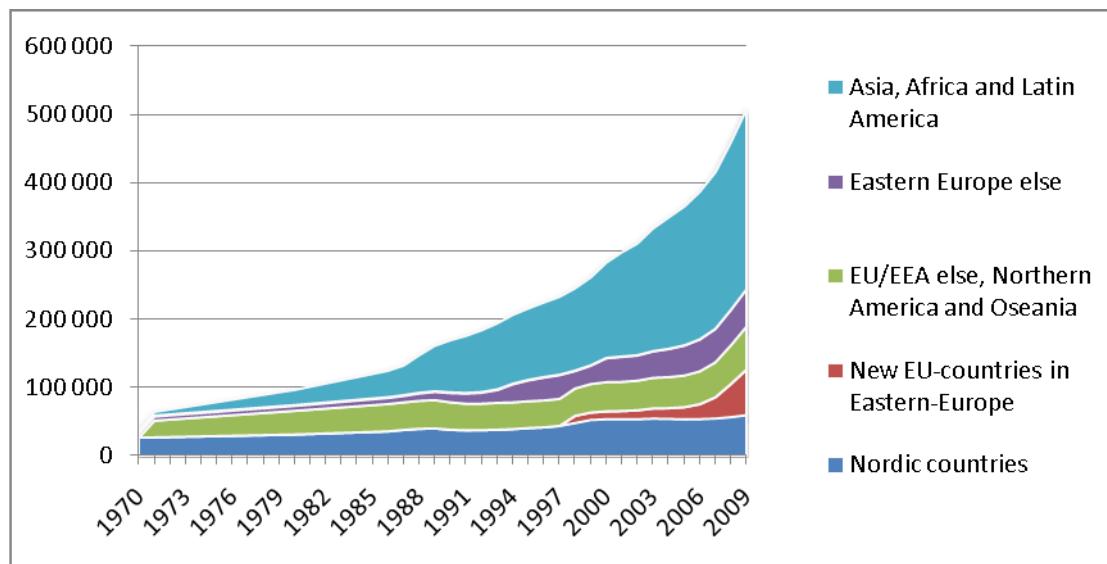
Source: Statistics Norway

8.3 Immigrants and Norwegian-born with immigrant parents

68 per cent of the population growth in 2008 (62 100) was due to the growth in the number of immigrants (42 300), cf. table A3. In addition, the children with two im-

migrant parents represented 6 300 of the birth surplus. Only 11.7 per cent of the population increase was due to growth in the number of persons with no form of immigrant background. The total number of registered resident immigrants reached 423 000 by January 2009. This was 8.8 per cent of the population, an increase from 8 per cent the previous year. The number of children with immigrant parents was 85 600. Their share of the total population was 1.8 per cent, an increase from 1.7 one year earlier. Cf. table A18-1 and A18-2.

Chart 8.1 Immigrants and Norwegian-born with two immigrant parents. Country background, 1970-2009



Source: Statistics Norway

The combined category of immigrants and their children in Norway has changed considerably over the years. In 1970, the share of the immigrant population originating from Asia, Africa and South America among all immigrants was 6 per cent. In 1980, they represented 23.5 per cent, increasing to 45.6 per cent in 1990, 49.7 per cent in 2000 and 51.5 per cent at the beginning of 2009. There has been a small decrease in this share for the last couple of years, due to a sharp increase in immigration from some of the new EU-member states. If we only look at resident immigrants, excluding their children, 46.5 per cent of those present at the start of 2009 tem had arrived from Asia, Africa and South America. Cf. chart 8.1 above, table 8.2 below and table A17.

Table 8.2 Immigrants - region of birth. 1.1.2001-1.1.2009

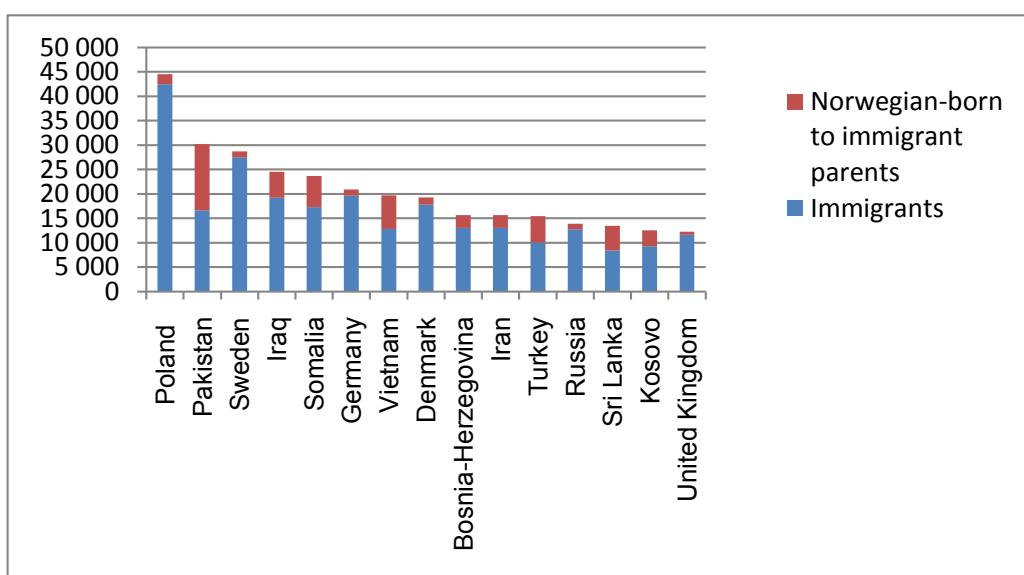
Region	1.1.2001	1.1.2002	1.1.2003	1.1.2004	1.1.2005	1.1.2006	1.1.2007	1.1.2008	1.1.2009
Total, of which:	249 904	259 221	277 262	289 104	301 045	318 514	341 830	380 644	422 595
Nordic countries	50 526	50 470	51 135	50 701	49 937	50 287	51 066	52 972	55 626
Rest of Europe	73 857	75 375	79 528	82 552	87 817	95 479	108 489	132 545	157 409
North and Central America, Oceania	9 715	9 682	10 076	9 116	8 862	8 907	11 732	12 382	13 141
Asia (incl. Turkey) Africa, South America	114 939	122 795	136 523	146 735	154 429	163 841	170 543	182 745	196 491

Source: Statistics Norway

Pakistan was for many years on the top of the list when both immigrants and their children are combined into one category. However, since 2007 Poland has been the main country. In 2008 the new record figure was 44 500. If Norwegian-born children are not included, there are also more resident immigrants now from Sweden, Germany, Iraq, Denmark, and Somalia than from Pakistan. As much as 45 per cent of the combined category with Pakistani background was born in Norway, while less than 5 per cent of those with Polish background were born here, cf. chart 8.2 and table A17 and A18.

26 per cent of the residents of Oslo are immigrants or Norwegian-born with immigrant parents, representing one third of all residents in Norway with this background.

Chart 8.2 Major groups of immigrants and their children. 1.1.2008



Source: Statistics Norway

8.4 Refugee population

The term "refugee population" refers to persons residing in Norway, who have been granted residence permit following an application for asylum, or who have been transferred from a refugee situation abroad as part of an annual quota. They have been granted a permit to stay because a need for protection or on humanitarian grounds, cf. the description of entry categories in chapter 2.3. Immigrant family members who have arrived later are also included. However, children born in Norway of parents belonging to this group are not included.

By January 2009, the refugee population in Norway was 143 400 persons, or three per cent of the total population. This represented an increase of 11 000 over last year's number, partly due to an actual increase and partly due to better data. 73 per cent of the refugee population were registered as principals while the rest had arrived in Norway as dependants. 60.5 per cent of the principals were initially registered as asylum seekers, 21 per cent as resettled refugees and 10 per cent as refugees originally granted collective protection. For the remaining 8.5 per cent the situation leading to

the residence permit has not been registered. Persons from Iraq, Somalia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Iran and Vietnam make up the largest groups of refugees.

Members of the refugee population from Iraq, Somalia, Afghanistan and Russia have the shortest period of stay in Norway. Among the largest groups arriving after 1970, refugees from Vietnam have resided here longest. Almost 50 per cent of the Vietnamese refugees have been residents in Norway for more than 20 years.

9 Nationality and naturalization

9.1 Legislation

The current Nationality Act came into force in September 2006. The act contains an exhaustive list of conditions for being granted a Norwegian nationality (citizenship). According to the act, an applicant has the right to acquire Norwegian nationality if all the conditions listed in the act are fulfilled.

Some important elements in the act are:

- The applicant has to give up his or her present former nationality to be able to acquire the Norwegian nationality. If a person does not give up his or her former nationality, the Norwegian nationality will be withdrawn.
- The applicant has to have lived in Norway for no less than seven years to be able to acquire Norwegian nationality, but it is acceptable that the periods of residence have taken place leading to these seven years have taken place within a period of no more than ten years.
- Documentation of language skills in Norwegian, or Sami, is a condition for obtaining Norwegian nationality.
- At birth, a child is automatically given the nationality of both parents (if the same).
- At the age of 12, a child can apply for and be granted a Norwegian nationality irrespective of the consent of the parents.
- When applying for Norwegian nationality children who cannot renounce their other nationality before a higher age, can nevertheless acquire Norwegian nationality.

The Government has proposed to introduce a requirement that all applicants between 18 and 55 years of age must pass a Norwegian citizenship test. The purpose of the test is to stress the importance of an adequate command of the Norwegian language in order to improve immigrants' opportunities to participate in the labour market, further education and society in general. The intention is not to reduce the number of persons who qualify for citizenship.

9.2 Naturalizations

The total number of naturalizations since 1977 has been 213 200, and more than 148 000 (70 per cent) of those naturalized have a non-European origin. During the first half of the 1990s the number of naturalizations reached an average of 7 300 per year, while it was considerably higher during the second half of the decade (10 200). Since 2000 the average has been 10 000 per year, cf. table A22. In 2007 close to 15 000 persons were naturalized, a record level so far, cf. table 9.1.

10 300 persons became naturalized in 2008. The number of naturalizations fell significantly from 2007. Iraq and Somalia have been at the top for the last four years, but 2008 was the first time that Somalis were the largest group of new Norwegian citizens (1 300). Iraqis were the second largest group with nearly 1 100 naturalizations.

Table 9.1 Naturalizations - major countries of origin. 2001-2008

Country of origin	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Total, of which:	10 838	9 041	7 867	8 154	12 655	11 955	14 877	10 312
Iraq	331	497	403	619	2141	2 142	2577	1072
Somalia	676	546	392	526	1 251	1 281	2196	1315
Iran	361	324	228	508	834	535	740	495
Pakistan	409	829	497	568	694	590	544	773
Russia	192	308	280	365	548	458	436	515
Bosnia-Herzegovina	2 999	1 229	1 965	827	707	519	355	219
Sweden	249	216	211	221	276	376	241	211
Turkey	356	412	398	393	385	355	445	209

Source: Statistics Norway

In 2008 23 per cent of the naturalized Norwegians originated in Europe, up from 22 per cent in 2007. 47 per cent originated in Asia (including Turkey), down from 48 per cent the previous year. 24 per cent originated in Africa, down from 23 per cent.

31 per cent of the citizenships granted in 2008 were given to minors. Almost half of the citizenships granted to Somalis concerned children. 60 per cent of the adults who were granted Norwegian citizenship were women. There were particularly high proportions of women among those from Thailand, Vietnam, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Russia.

The percentage of the eligible foreign nationals who prefer to change nationality, varies between different groups, cf. table A23. In 2008 very few of the nationals from countries in Western Europe and North America, who were eligible for Norwegian nationality, applied. This has been the pattern for many years.

For citizens of countries like Somalia, Ethiopia, Iran, Ukraine, and Vietnam the percentage was very high. For Somalia, Ethiopia and Ukraine there were more naturalized persons than the number of persons having stayed in the country for at least seven years. The reason for this can be that in these groups there were many children and persons marrying a Norwegian citizen. An exception from the required length of residence in Norway applies to those persons.

9.3 Ceremonies for new citizens

Since September 2006, all those who have been granted Norwegian citizenship are invited to take part in a ceremony involving an oath of loyalty. Through these ceremonies, the Government aims to ensure a solemn and dignified marking of the transition to Norwegian citizenship. The ceremony also marks the fact that the new citizen endorses the fundamental values on which society is based, including the principle of equal rights and obligations.

Participation at the ceremony is voluntary. Participants over the age of 18 take an oath of loyalty, and the new citizens are given the book "Welcome as a new citizen". Approximately 20 per cent of those eligible participated in the ceremonies both in 2007 and in 2008.

10 Integration and social inclusion

10.1 Policy goals and guidelines

The aim is that everyone living in Norway, regardless of their background, shall have equal opportunities, equal rights, and equal obligations to participate in society and make use of their resources. High labour market participation of both genders and high productivity are the basis for Norway's good economic situation. A divided society where immigrants and their children have poorer living conditions and lower social and political participation than the rest of the population, must be prevented. Participation in the labour market is the most important tool to fight poverty and exclusion. As quickly as possible after arrival in Norway, immigrants should be able to participate in the labour market and the society. Immigrants and their children should be able to achieve equal living conditions with the rest of the population.

Mainstreaming is an important principle for public policies. The needs of immigrants, refugees and their children are included in the broad, general programs and policies at the various administrative levels (state, regional, and local). Public administrations must recognise and respect the diversity of the population by ensuring that the different needs of different individuals are reflected in the design of public services and general social systems. Ensuring equal access to public services requires the practical recognition of the diversity in the Norwegian society. Dialogue and contact with the civil society are important elements of the policy-making and implementing processes.

Special measures for newly arrived immigrants are necessary to ensure equal opportunities, for example the Introduction Program, cf. 10.4. Strengthened language and job training are of utmost importance. It is also important to secure Norwegian-born children of immigrant parents the same opportunities as other children, first of all in their education and subsequent participation in the labour market.

During 2005-2009 a coherent policy was sought for by giving a new Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion responsibility for co-ordinating the policies on social inclusion and integration of immigrants, refugees and their children, as well as the policies concerning the indigenous population and national minorities. Due to a reorganisation following the parliamentary election in September 2009, from January 2010 the Ministry for Children, Equality and Inclusion will have the responsibility for co-ordinating integration and inclusion policies in relation to immigrants and their children.

10.2 Plan of action for integration and social inclusion

In order to achieve the goal that everyone living in Norway should have equal opportunities to contribute to and participate in the community, and be able to achieve the same standard of living as the rest of the population, comprehensive policy measures are needed over a period of several years. Based on available documentation⁸ and as a

⁸ *Living conditions among immigrants in Norway 2005/2006*, Blom and Henriksen (2009)

Living conditions of youth of immigrant origin. Young people who have grown up in Norway with parents from Pakistan, Turkey and Vietnam, Løwe (2008)

These reports were presented in detail in SOPEMI report for Norway 2007-2008.

response to the challenges in the area of labour, welfare and social inclusion linked to some immigrant groups, the Government – represented by the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion – has every year from 2007 in connection with the fiscal budgets, presented a plan of action for integration and social inclusion. A renewed and strengthened plan is proposed for the fiscal budget 2010.

The plan emphasises the importance of participation in working life, knowledge of the Norwegian language and culture, equality of opportunities for immigrants and their children, participation in society, as well as gender equality. The plan covers four areas: Employment, Childhood, Education and Language; Gender Equality and Participation. Efforts in these areas are crucial if work on social inclusion is to succeed. For 2010, the plan includes 41 measures within the areas of responsibility of seven different ministries.

To ascertain whether the authorities succeed in their efforts, the plan presents 17 goals for social inclusion with accompanying indicators, presented with the fiscal budget. Reporting on these goals for social and economic inclusion, show the results of the policies and the measures that are implemented.

The plan of action for integration and social inclusion of immigrants and their children should be seen in relation to other action plans - against poverty, against forced marriages, cf. chapter 10.3, to fight gender mutilation and the plan to promote equality and prevent ethnic discrimination cf. chapter 14.2. The overall common goal for all these plans is to achieve an inclusive society where everybody has equal opportunities to contribute to and participate in society.

10.3 Plan of action against forced marriages⁹

In June 2007, the Government presented its action plan against forced marriage for the period 2008 - 2011. The plan contains 40 measures involving eight ministries, emphasising in particular the role of schools, relevant Norwegian embassies, the need for safe accommodation and strengthened competence and collaboration within the public support services. The Ministry of Children and Equality coordinates the plan.

The principal aims are to prevent that young people become subject to forced marriage, and to provide better assistance and protection to young people who have been victims of such abuse. Combating forced marriages necessitates a broad-based approach, as good results are particularly contingent on the success of the policies for equality and social inclusion. 30 *minority* advisers in upper secondary schools (students aged 16 – 19) that have a high percentage of students with minority background, started to work and give advice to the young students and school personnel in June 2008. From the same time, six *integration* advisers started to assist relevant Norwegian embassies handling and building competence in cases dealing with forced marriage. In 2009, 21 non-governmental organisations working to prevent forced marriages received state funding. A first evaluation of the plan will be presented in 2010.

⁹ See full text: <http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/bld/Documents/Reports-and-plans/Plans/2007/Action-Plan-against-Forced-Marriage.html?id=474779>

10.4 The Introduction Program

The Introduction Program (established by the Introduction Act) for newly arrived immigrants applies to refugees and family members reunited with them, in addition to persons granted residence on humanitarian grounds and family members reunited with them. The individual's rights and obligations under the act only apply to immigrants between the ages 18 and 55 who need to acquire basic qualifications. Women participate on an equal footing with men. The scheme combines an introduction program with economic benefits paid to the participants.

The aim of the program is to provide basic skills in the Norwegian language, and a basic understanding of the Norwegian society, as well as to prepare the individual for participation in the labour market and/or further education. The duration and scope of the program is tailored to the individual's circumstances, needs and abilities. It may run for up to two years with additional periods to compensate for approved leaves of absence. The municipalities shall provide programs for newly arrived persons as soon as possible and no later than within three months after a person has settled in the municipality, cf. chapter 6.4. Participation in the program is both a right and an obligation for persons in the target groups.

An effective transition to working life is dependent on close cooperation between the relevant municipal services and the local Labour and Welfare Service (LWS), cf. chapter 12.1. A special circular describes the minimum elements that such cooperation should involve. Effects of the Introduction Program are monitored. So far, there are indications of positive effects. During 2008, 8 700 persons participated in the introduction program for new immigrants, an increase of 5 per cent from 2007. More than half of the participants were women. Nearly 60 per cent of the participants came from Somalia, Iraq, Burma, Afghanistan or Russia.

Statistics from Statistics Norway show that in November 2007 65 percent of the participants in the introduction program in 2006 were employed or participated in education, compared to 58 per cent of the participants in 2005 in November 2006. More men than women were employed or participated in education after leaving the introduction program. Young people were more likely to be employed or participate in education than older people. 70 per cent of the participants between 18-25 years were employed or participated in education after leaving the introduction program.

An evaluation of the Introduction Program carried out in 2007 documents that the main elements in the Introduction Act largely have been implemented in the municipalities. However, the formal implementation of key elements of the program does not necessarily mean that the quality of implementation is high, nor that there are no future challenges, cfr. the Sopemi-report for Norway in 2007-2008 ¹⁰.

As a follow-up to the evaluation, the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion in June 2009 circulated for wide consultation draft amendments to the Introduction Act and Regulations. One of the proposals is to reserve ten weeks of the official one year paternity quota to the father of a newborn child. The objective is to make sure that fathers spend more time with their child during its first year, and also to make sure that

¹⁰ See http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/aid/doc/rapporter_planer/rapporter/2008/international-migration-2007-2008.html?id=541395

women have the possibility for a more continuous participation in the introduction program. Another proposal is to include new groups in the introduction program, that is persons, mostly women, who have received a residence permit because of mistreatment in their marriage, or women who cannot return to their country of origin after a divorce, and persons who have their marriages annulled because they were subjected to forced marriage. Another proposal is to give the County Governor the authority to inspect the municipalities in order to ensure that they are providing the services they are supposed to according to the Introduction Act.

11 Language training and education

In Norway, ‘school for all’ is a central aim in education policy. The goal is to provide learning opportunities for all students with special consideration of the opportunities for specific groups of children. This includes for example children from language minorities¹¹ or children who need special educational support.

11.1 Pre-school children

All children should be able to speak the Norwegian language before they start school. A program at health clinics to establish the language skills of all four-year olds was started in 2006 and ended in 2009. NOK ten million were allocated for the program each year in 12 municipalities with a high proportion of immigrants among their residents. 40 000 children have benefitted from the program, of whom 10 000 were language minority children. The program was evaluated in 2008. The results showed that 28 per cent of the language minority children needed follow up, compared to 12 per cent of the children with Norwegian speaking parents.

The need for follow-up among the language minority pre-school children is primarily related to learning the Norwegian language, not to developing their language competence in general. Hence, measures such as open kindergartens and read- and play-groups have been implemented.

The challenges identified are: how to survey children’s mother tongue and the use of interpreters; multicultural competence in meeting the children and the parents of language minority children¹²; as well as how to establish good routines for collaboration between child health clinics, kindergartens and other relevant partners.

The Government has introduced a program for four free core hours per day in a kindergarten for all four- and five-year olds in some city districts of Oslo and in the municipality of Drammen, where there is a high proportion of language minority children. The aim is, by increased participation in kindergarten, to improve the language and social skills of children prior to starting school. The program includes increasing the parents’ awareness and comprehension regarding the importance of learning the Norwegian language as well as participating in social activities.

Goal for social inclusion:

To facilitate optimal language development for preschool children the number of language minority children in kindergartens should be increased.

Indicator:

- The proportion of language minority children in kindergartens compared to the proportion of children in kindergartens in total.

Status:

¹¹ Language minority children are in this regard children with parents who have a mother tongue other than Norwegian, Sami, Swedish, Danish and English.

¹² Language minority children are in this regard children with parents who have a mother tongue other than Norwegian, Sami, Swedish, Danish and English.

An increased share of all language minority children attends kindergarten. In 2008 about 22 163 such children attended, compared to 18 668 in 2007 and about 9000 in 2000. By the end of 2008 about 66 per cent of all 1-5 year old minority language children attended kindergarten, compared to 87 per cent for all children. In 2007 the numbers were 63 per cent vs. 84 per cent, and in 2000 44 per cent vs. 62 per cent.

Table 11.1 Kindergarten attendance - age and category. 2008

Age (year)	Children in general	Language minority children
1	65,8	30,3
2	83,6	48,5
3	93,6	75,9
4	96,4	90,8
5	96,8	92,8
1- 5	87,2	67,4

Source: Statistics Norway

11.2 Primary and secondary education

According to the Norwegian Education Act, every pupil has the right to receive teaching adapted to individual abilities and aptitudes. With regard to language minority children, including children seeking asylum and refugees, they have the right and the obligation to attend primary and lower secondary education "when it is probable that a child will reside in Norway for a period of more than three months". Children start school in the calendar year of their 6th birthday and finish their compulsory education normally in the calendar year of their 16th birthday.

The Education Act and the Private Schools Act give pupils from language minorities the right to special instruction in Norwegian until their skills are adequate to follow the regular teaching in school. Pupils arriving in Norway without Norwegian language skills, and other pupils whose language skills in Norwegian are too poor to attend the teaching when given in Norwegian, are also entitled to instruction in their native language, bilingual instruction in subjects, or both, during a transition period.

According to government policies, the schools with a high proportion of language minority pupils shall provide high-quality teaching and be attractive to all types of pupils. Government funds have been allocated to special development projects at schools with more than 25 per cent minority-language pupils. The aim is to stimulate such schools to find adequate ways of dealing with the special challenges they face and to improve the learning benefits and results of the pupils.

Young people above the age of 16 (the age for starting in upper secondary education), with a short residence period in Norway and without a (registered) completed lower secondary education, are strongly underrepresented in Norwegian upper secondary education. Such results indicate that there exist great challenges in order to integrate these young persons in upper secondary education. Thus, one of the measures in the Government's strategic plan: "Equal Education in Practice! Strategy for better learning and greater participation of language minorities in kindergartens, schools and education" reads: "*Measure to develop more goal-oriented teaching for students with insufficient education and with a brief residence period in Norway*" (Measure 20.)

Among other things, a pilot project has been implemented involving primary and lower secondary teaching within upper secondary education for language minority youth with limited education. The National Centre for Multicultural Education (NAFO) is evaluating the project. The final report from the project, including a synopsis of research and proposals for further measures, will be available by the end of 2009.

Goal for social inclusion:

Language minority children shall master the Norwegian language as early as possible in their school career to ensure that they benefit from education.

Indicators:

- The proportion of children and young people receiving special language instruction
- Results from national tests in reading and mathematics in fifth and eighth grade for language minority children compared to all pupils

Status:

- Of a total of 619 139 pupils in primary and lower secondary in the school year 2008-2009, 41 024 pupils received special instruction in Norwegian, that is 6.7 per cent of all pupils.

Goal for social inclusion:

The proportion of children with immigrant parents completing upper secondary education shall correspond to their share of the total population.

Indicators:

- The proportion of children with immigrant parents moving directly from lower to upper secondary education compared with the proportion among the total number of pupils that year as a whole.
- The proportion of pupils with immigrant parents attaining general or vocational competence within five years after completing lower secondary school compared to the proportion among the total number of pupils that year as a whole.

Status:

- In 2008, 96 per cent of pupils with immigrant parents made a direct transition from lower to upper secondary education. This is equivalent to the population as a whole.
- The portion of pupils who finished lower secondary education in 2001-2002 and who attained full general or vocational competence five years later shows that the difference between pupils with immigrant parents and those from the majority population has been substantially reduced the last four years.

Goal for social inclusion:

The proportion of immigrants, arriving in Norway while they are in the age group for lower or upper secondary education, the proportion completing upper secondary education shall be increased.

Indicator:

The proportion of immigrants aged 13 to 16 when arriving in Norway who have completed and passed upper secondary education before the age of 30.

Status:

- Among the immigrants aged 13 when they arrived in Norway and who, in 2008, were between 20 and 30 years of age, 50 per cent had completed and passed upper secondary education. Looking at the age cohorts, we see that only 27 per cent of those who were 20 years had completed and passed upper secondary education with normal progression. In contrast, 60 per cent of those who were 30 years had completed and passed upper secondary education normally. There is also a significant gender difference. In 2008, 64 per cent of all immigrant women between 20 and 30 years had completed and passed upper secondary education, but only 40 per cent of immigrant men in the same age group. In 2006, the corresponding numbers were 53 and 39 per cent.
- Among the immigrants aged 16 when they arrived in Norway and who currently are between 20 and 30 years of age, 30 per cent have completed and passed upper secondary education. Of those who in 2008 were 20 years, only 7 per cent had completed and passed upper secondary education. This is, however, an increase of two percentage points from the year before. Among all the immigrants in this group 38 per cent of the women and 23 per cent of the men had completed and passed upper secondary education, compared to 40 and 26 respectively in 2007.

11.3 Adult education

Knowledge of the Norwegian language is an important precondition for active participation in the society. From September 2005, it is compulsory for newly arrived adult refugees and immigrants to participate in 300 hours of lessons in Norwegian language training and social studies. Beyond the compulsory part, those who have a need for further training will have the opportunity to take more lessons (up to 3 000 hours, depending on the needs of the individual). The Introduction Act regulates the training.

The right and obligation to participate in training free of charge applies with some exceptions to those between 16 and 55 years who have been granted asylum, residence permit on humanitarian grounds, collective protection or a family immigration permit linked to a person in any of these groups. These rights and obligations only apply to persons who have received their residence permit after September 2005.

Completion of the 300 hours language training is from the same date a condition for receiving a settlement permit and Norwegian citizenship. The 300 lessons of training must be completed within the first three years in Norway and all lessons have to be completed within the first five years.

Immigrants between 55 and 67 years of age have a right, but no obligation, to participate in language training. Labour migrants from countries outside the EEA/EFTA area, have an obligation to undertake language training, but no right to free courses.

Persons from within the EEA/EFTA have neither the obligation nor the right to take part in language courses partly sponsored by the Norwegian government.

Those who have been granted a residence permit before September 2005 will still be offered non-mandatory classes free of charge in a transitional period of five years. The transitional period expires in September 2010. These persons will be offered a Norwegian language course up to 850 lessons if they have completed primary education and up to a total of 3 000 lessons if they are illiterate or have not completed primary education. The central government compensates the municipalities financially for arranging such classes.

The right and obligation to Norwegian language training and social studies for adult immigrants was evaluated in 2006/2007. Questions asked were how the municipalities managed this right and obligation, and how the new subsidy arrangement influenced the ability of the municipalities to run such training activities. The main findings are summarized in chapter 11.3 of Norway's Sopemi report, 2007-2008.¹³

As a follow-up of the evaluation, the subsidization arrangement was adjusted on a permanent basis in 2009. Municipalities with between 1-150 participants receive a yearly base-subsidy as part of government funding. The aim is to compensate for the economic difficulties smaller municipalities.

Approximately 35 000 persons were registered as participants in the language training in June 2009. Within the target group for the mandatory language courses the aim is to enroll 90 per cent within one year after they were qualified for by the Introduction Act. Figures from June 2009 show a significant improvement in participation rates from 65 per cent to 76 per cent. Measuring the results and effects of the language training is based on the number of passed/failed examinations. The number of persons entering the examinations has risen since the introduction of the right and obligation to language training. Around 89 per cent passed the oral test. This number has been relatively stable over the years. The proportion that has passed the written test has risen to 59 per cent. The aim is that 95 per cent should pass the oral test and 60 per cent the written test.

In June 2009, the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion circulated draft amendments to the Introduction Act and Regulations. One of the proposals is to expand the scope of the right and obligation to participate in Norwegian language training and social studies for adult immigrants from 300 to 600 hours for those currently subject to the right and obligation to participate free of charge. Another proposal is to introduce mandatory final tests in Norwegian.

From the autumn of 2007, the Government reintroduced training in Norwegian for asylum seekers staying in reception centres. Asylum seekers receive 250 lessons of language training free of charge from the municipalities, financed by government funding.

¹³ cf. (http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/aid/doc/rapporter_planer/rapporter/2008/international-migration-2007-2008.html?id=541395)

12 The labour market

12.1 Labour market policy

The responsibility for labour market policies rests with the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion, and the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV) is responsible for implementing these policies. NAV works closely with the municipal social assistance services, and there will be 'one stop shop' services in each municipality to provide for coordinated services to the public.

The ambition of NAV and its cooperation with the municipal social assistance service is to strengthen an active approach towards the users, focusing on job-oriented activities and a follow-up system tailored to the individual's needs. The NAV-offices are mainly being set up during the period 2006 - 2009 to cover every municipality. The municipalities will continue to have the responsibility for the social assistance services. NAV will have a regional office in each county as well as specialised service centres.

The labour market policy aims to achieve greater inclusion of immigrants in the labour market. Efforts to mobilise immigrant labour are important for the utilisation of resources in the Norwegian economy. Ensuring high employment is also the most important measure in order to reduce social differences and poverty. Moreover, diversity can raise competence levels and stimulate the development of enterprises. In principle, NAV applies methods and measures that are part of the service vis-à-vis ordinary jobseekers and the vocationally disabled. The special unit "Intro Service" provides extended assistance to jobseekers with an immigrant background in some larger towns. It also assists other local offices in spreading competence.

In White paper no. 9 on Work, Welfare and Inclusion (2006-2007), the Government presented initiatives that placed greater emphasis on user-orientation and measures suited to the individual job seeker. This is significant in order to meet the particular needs of immigrants.

In 2007, the Government presented a Plan of Action for integration and social inclusion of the immigrant population, cf. chapter 10.2. Amongst others, the following measures have been renewed and strengthened for the years 2008 – 2010.

- A pilot project with moderate affirmative action for persons with immigrant background to state administration positions, cf. chapter 14.3.
- Active recruitment of persons with immigrant background to public sector institutions and the public health services, cf. chapter 14.3.
- Continued focus on entrepreneurship among immigrants, cf. chapter 12.5.
- Increased focus on the use of labour market measures as part of the integration program in the municipalities, cf. chapter 10.1.
- High level of active labour market measures, including program for training at work-places.
- Measures directed at youth with immigrant background, cf chapter 10.3.
- Free core time in kindergartens in certain areas, cf. chapter 11.1.

The aim is to reduce social and economic differences, and in 2008 an action plan to combat poverty was presented. One of the main measures is the implementation of a

qualification program with support for capacity enhancing activities for people with significantly impaired work and earnings capacities who have no or only very limited entitlements to subsistence benefits from the National Insurance Scheme. The aim of the program is to boost the opportunities for participation in working life. Many immigrants can benefit from this program.

12.2 Labour market schemes

The emphasis of NAV is primarily on job seeking and self-activation in the early period of unemployment. In this phase, NAV offers information, advice and close follow-up for those who need it. If this is not sufficient to get job seekers into employment, consideration is given to offer participation in labour market schemes. In such schemes job practice and language tuition go hand in hand. These schemes and wage subsidies are often seen as particularly useful for immigrants.

Immigrants, along with other vulnerable groups such as vocationally disabled, youths and long-term unemployed persons, are given priority when it comes to participation in labour market measures. In May 2009, about 36 per cent of those participating in ordinary labour market measures were immigrants. At the same time immigrants constituted 26 per cent of those registered unemployed. Most of the immigrants participating in labour market measures originated from countries outside the EEA. About 70 per cent had a background from African or Asian countries.

The labour market schemes of NAV are divided into several categories: recruitment/job-placement measures, job training and labour market training measures. For those immigrants who are in need of special assistance to enter or re-enter the labour market, training aimed at raising the skills of the unemployed and job-training measures are most commonly used, separately or in combination. NAV has also developed courses and training activities that are designed for immigrants, consisting of qualification courses with practice positions. They involve labour market training and vocational training in combination with language training. The core principle for NAV is that all assistance given is to be tailored to the needs of the individual, considering the local labour market situation.

Table 12.1 Participation in labour market schemes - region of origin. Per cent of total number aged 16-74. Second quarter 2003 – 2009

Region of origin	May 2004	May 2005	May 2006	May 2007	May 2008	May 2009
Total population	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4
Immigrants, total	2.3	1.8	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6
Nordic countries	0.4	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.3
Rest of Western Europe	0.6	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.5
EEA-countries in Eastern Europe			0.4	0.3	0.4	0.7
Rest of Eastern Europe*	2.8	2.1	1.8	2.0	1.9	2.0
North America, Oceania	0.9	0.6	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.4
South and Central America	2.0	1.9	1.3	1.5	1.6	2.2

Asia	3.1	2.4	1.7	1.9	2.0	2.0
Africa	4.1	3.5	2.5	3.2	3.6	3.9

* Excluding EEA-countries in Central and Eastern Europe

Source: Statistics Norway

With the increase in unemployment rate, the number of immigrants on ordinary labour market schemes rose from 5 200 in May 2008 to 6 500 in May 2009. In total, 17 900 persons participated in labour market schemes, up from 13 000 in May 2008. Immigrants from Africa had the highest participation rate in labour market schemes at 3.9 per cent of the working age population (16-74) in the 2nd quarter of 2009. The introduction program, cf. chapter 10.4, covers certain groups of newly arrived immigrants.

The Government continues its efforts on labour market schemes and targeted assistance for immigrants through the action plan on integration and social inclusion of the immigrant population, cf. chapter 10.2.

12.3 Employment outcome for immigrants

General situation

The register based employment rate¹⁴ among immigrants (i.e. people born abroad by foreign-born parents registered as settled in Norway for at least six months) increased from 63.3 per cent in the 4th quarter of 2007 to 64.2 per cent in the 4th quarter of 2008. The employment rate of immigrants increased by 0.9 percentage points in this period whereas in the total population the employment rate stayed unchanged at 71.6 per cent.

Table 12.2 Employment rate - total population and immigrants. Per cent of total number aged 15-74. 4th quarter 2005 – 2008

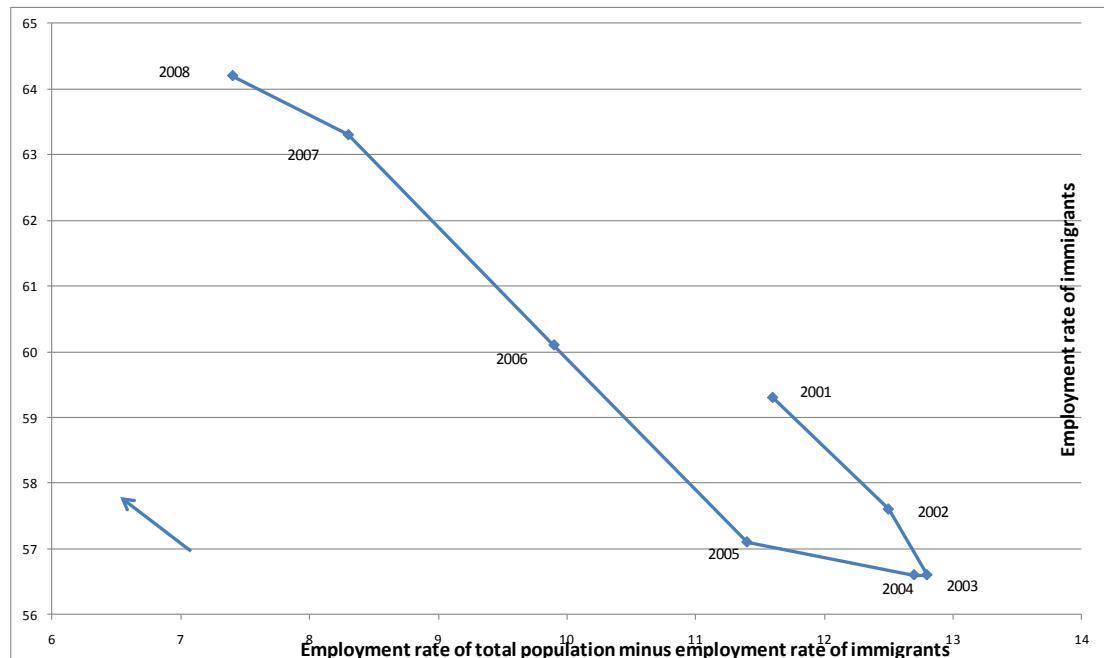
	2005	2006	2007	2008
Population	68.5	70.0	71.6	71.6
Immigrants	57.1	60.1	63.3	64.2

Source: Statistics Norway

Over the past three years (4th quarter 2005 – 4th quarter 2008), the employment rate of immigrants has increased by 7.1 percentage points. The corresponding increase for the total population is 3.1 percentage points. Male immigrants had an employment rate at 69.3 per cent in the 4th quarter of 2008, while the employment rate was 58.7 per cent for female immigrants. In the population as a whole, the rates were 74.5 and 68.5 per cent respectively for men and women. The increase in total employment from 2007 to 2008 was 0.1 percentage points for male immigrants and 1.4 percentage points for females.

¹⁴ From 2005, the registered employees also count those aged 15, so that the age group now used are 15-74 whereas before it was 16-74.

Chart 12.1 Employment of immigrants - employment rate (y-axis) and difference in employment rate of total population and employment rate of immigrants (x-axis). 2001-2008 (4th quarter)



Source: Statistics Norway

There are significant differences in the employment rates among immigrants from different regions of origin. Whereas immigrants from Nordic countries had an employment rate of 75.6 per cent in 2008, the rate among immigrants from African countries was 49.7 per cent, from Asia 56.8 per cent, from Eastern Europe (non-EEA-members) 63.2 per cent and from Latin America 66.1 per cent. The employment rate for immigrants from the new EU countries fell to 73.5 per cent in 2008 compared to 75.9 per cent in 2007. In 2008 it was just slightly higher than for immigrants from Western Europe (73.4 per cent). Apart from the decline in employment of immigrants from new EU countries with 2.4 percentage points, all other immigrant groups experienced an increased employment rate from 4th quarter 2007 to 4th quarter 2008. This was ranging from a 0.5 percentage point increase for immigrants from Asian countries to a 1.4 percentage points increase for immigrants from North America and Oceania, and from countries in Western Europe outside the Nordic countries.

The large differences in the employment rate and in the development of the employment rate, between countries or regions of origin can be explained from a number of factors. An important explanation is that work is the reason for immigration for many immigrants from the EEA, in particular from the new member countries. However, many of these are men working in the sectors most affected by the economic downturn, such as building and construction. Whereas the employment rate of men from the new EEA countries declined by 4.9 percentage points from 2007 to 2008, the employment rate of women from these countries increased by 0.9 percentage points. For immigrants from Africa, in particular, there are a relative high number of refugees, or persons who have been granted residence on humanitarian reasons, with only a short period of residence in Norway. These have a low employment rate. From some coun-

tries in Africa and Asia, the employment rate for women is low, lowering the overall employment rate for those coming from these countries. Differences in the age structure and educational background are other explanatory factors. When taking the differences in age structure between the total population and most immigrant groups into account, the degree of “underemployment” among immigrants is even more pronounced than without such adjustments, as there is a higher proportion of immigrants in working age than among the total population.

Employment rates increases with the length of residence, primarily among immigrants from outside the EEA-area. Among immigrants who had lived in Norway four years or less, the employment rate was 62.3 per cent in the 4th quarter of 2008. This is a significant increase of nearly 9 percentage points from the 4th quarter of 2006 (53.4 per cent). Those with four to six years of residence had in the 4th quarter of 2008 an employment rate over 3 percentage points higher than persons with fewer than four years of residence. In the 4th quarter of 2006, the difference between these two groups with different length of residence in Norway was nearly 7 percentage points.

The levelling of employment rates between groups of immigrants with different length of residence may be explained by a favourable labour market development over the period. This gave immigrants easier access to employment, even for those with only a short period of residence. Among immigrants with seven years of residence or more, the employment rate was in the 4th quarter 2008, just 0.5 percentage points lower than the group with a shorter length of residence. In the 4th quarter of 2007, the employment rate for the groups with the longest length of residence was just 0.3 percentage points higher than for those with shorter length of residence.

Among immigrants from EEA countries with seven years of residence or more, the employment rate decreased due to the relative higher share of elderly persons in this population. This may partly also explain the development for immigrants from other countries of origin with long length of residence in Norway.

Table 12.3 Employment rate - region of origin and number of years of residence. Per cent of persons aged 15-74. 4th quarter 2008

	- 4 years	4-6 years	7+ years
Immigrants, total	62.3	65.5	65.0
Nordic countries	80.2	81.0	73.4
Rest of Western Europe	73.8	79.4	72.0
EEA-countries in Eastern Europe	73.5	80.1	70.6
Rest of Eastern Europe	52.8	67.0	65.4
North America, Oceania	59.0	69.1	68.9
Latin America	55.5	70.3	69.4
Asia	42.5	60.0	60.9
Africa	41.4	52.5	52.9

Source: Statistics Norway

Immigrants from Somalia had the lowest employment rates with 35.7 per cent in the 4th quarter of 2008. This must be seen in relation to the relatively high shares of refugees from Somalia with short time of residence in Norway. Immigrants from another

country with a high share of recent refugees, Afghanistan, had an employment rate of 52.4 per cent. However, the employment rate of some immigrant groups with a longer tradition of residence in Norway, such as immigrants from Morocco and Pakistan, was also less than 50 per cent (49.2 and 48.2 per cent respectively). The low overall employment rate of immigrants from these two countries can partly be accounted for by the low female employment rates of 41.4 per cent for immigrants from Morocco and 32.3 per cent for immigrants from Pakistan. The corresponding male employment rate was 55.0 per cent for immigrants from Morocco and 63.1 per cent for immigrants from Pakistan. The female employment rate is also very low for immigrants from Iraq (35.9 per cent), Afghanistan (34.5 per cent) and Somalia (25.1 per cent). The difference in percentage points between the employment rate of men and women was the highest for immigrants from Pakistan (30.8) followed by Afghanistan (29.6), Turkey (20.9), Somalia (19.5) and Iraq (19.3). For immigrants from Thailand, the employment rate of women (63.6 per cent) was 7.2 percentage points higher than for men (56.4 per cent).

Immigrants from some other Asian countries also had relatively high employment rates. For instance, immigrants from India, Vietnam, Philippines, Sri Lanka, all had an employment rate between 60 and 70 per cent, which place them close to immigrants from many European countries. These groups have a relatively large proportion of persons with a long period of residence in Norway, or they have a relatively large share of recent labour immigrants. The female employment rate of immigrants from all these countries, but India, was also above 60 per cent.

Employment among Norwegian-born persons with immigrant parents

The Norwegian-born of immigrant parents (children of immigrants) represent a young section of the population, where nearly half of those within the age bracket 15-74 years were under 21 years of age. Many of these are therefore in education and do not take part in the labour market. The Norwegian-born of immigrant parents in the age group 20-24 years had an employment rate of 70.4 per cent in the 4th quarter of 2008. This is 9 percentage points higher than the employment rate of the same age group of immigrants and only 4.3 percentage points under the employment rate of the total population in this age group. The difference in employment rate between these groups of the population is similar for the age group 25-29 years. Norwegian-born of immigrant parents is not a large group in the labour market, accounting only for 0.5 per cent of the total employed population in the 4th quarter of 2008 (13 740 persons employed).

Immigrant women and employment

Between 1986 and 2006, female immigrants constituted 51 per cent of the total net migration of foreign citizens. Family immigration is the most common reason for female immigrants to come to Norway, cf. chapter 2.2. Many join an immigrant spouse residing in Norway. Since the 1990s, there has been an increasing trend that men without an immigrant background marry women from non-Nordic countries. During the period 1990 to 2006, four out of ten refugees were women. More women than men come to Norway to study, but few women immigrate primarily for work. Still many immigrant women enter the labour market in Norway.

From 2007 to 2008, employment of immigrant men increased with more than 16 000 whereas the employment of women increased with almost 12 000. From the countries

in South and Central America, Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe (outside the EU), there was a higher growth in the employment of immigrant women than for men. The immigration pattern is different for the Nordic countries, the countries in Western Europe, EEA countries in Eastern Europe and countries in North America and Oceania. For these areas the employment of men increased more than for women in absolute numbers. Mostly pronounced is the employment growth of 7 700 men from EEA countries of Eastern Europe compared to 3 200 women. This can be accounted to the increased labour immigration from these countries, mainly directed towards male dominated sectors such as manufacturing and building and construction.

12.4 Unemployment among immigrants

The difference in unemployment rates between many groups of immigrants residing in Norway and native Norwegians increased somewhat in 2008 after it had been shrinking over the past years. Many immigrants have been more affected by the economic downturn than native Norwegians. The register based unemployment rate among immigrants increased from 4.0 per cent in May 2008 to 6.8 per cent in May 2009. The unemployment for the rest of the population increased from 1.2 per cent to 2.2 per cent during the same period.

The unemployment rate of immigrants from the EEA countries in Eastern Europe increased by 6.3 percentage points from the 2nd quarter of 2008 to the 2nd quarter of 2009. Among the other immigrant groups, the increase was between 0.6 and 2.7 percentage points. The strong growth of unemployment rate among immigrants from the EEA-countries in Eastern Europe, most notably Poland, is mainly explained by their strong representation in the building and construction sector.

In the 2nd quarter of 2009, the unemployment rate for immigrants from EEA countries was 8.4 per cent. This was due to the strong increase in unemployment among immigrants from Central and Eastern Europe. Only immigrants from Africa have a higher unemployment rate, 12.1 per cent, cf. table 12.4.

However, the increase in unemployment rate among immigrants should also be seen in context with the development over the past years, where the unemployment rate for immigrants dropped significantly. In the 2nd quarter of 2009, the registered unemployment rate for immigrants stood at 6.8 per cent compared to 9.0 per cent in the 2nd quarter of 2005. For the population as a whole, the registered unemployment rate decreased from 3.3 per cent to 2.6 per cent in the same period.

Table 12.4 Unemployment rate - region of origin and per cent of the labour force. Second quarter 2004 – 2009

	May 2004	May 2005	May 2006	May 2007	May 2008	May 2009
Population, total	3.7	3.3	2.5	1.7	1.5	2.6
Immigrants, total	9.8	9.0	7.3	5.0	4.0	6.8
Nordic countries	4.1	3.6	2.8	1.9	1.6	3.0
Rest of Western Europe	4.4	3.9	2.5	1.8	1.6	3.5
EEA-countries in Eastern Europe		4.6	3.4	2.1	2.1	8.4
Rest of Eastern Europe*	10.3	10.6	8.9	5.8	4.8	7.2

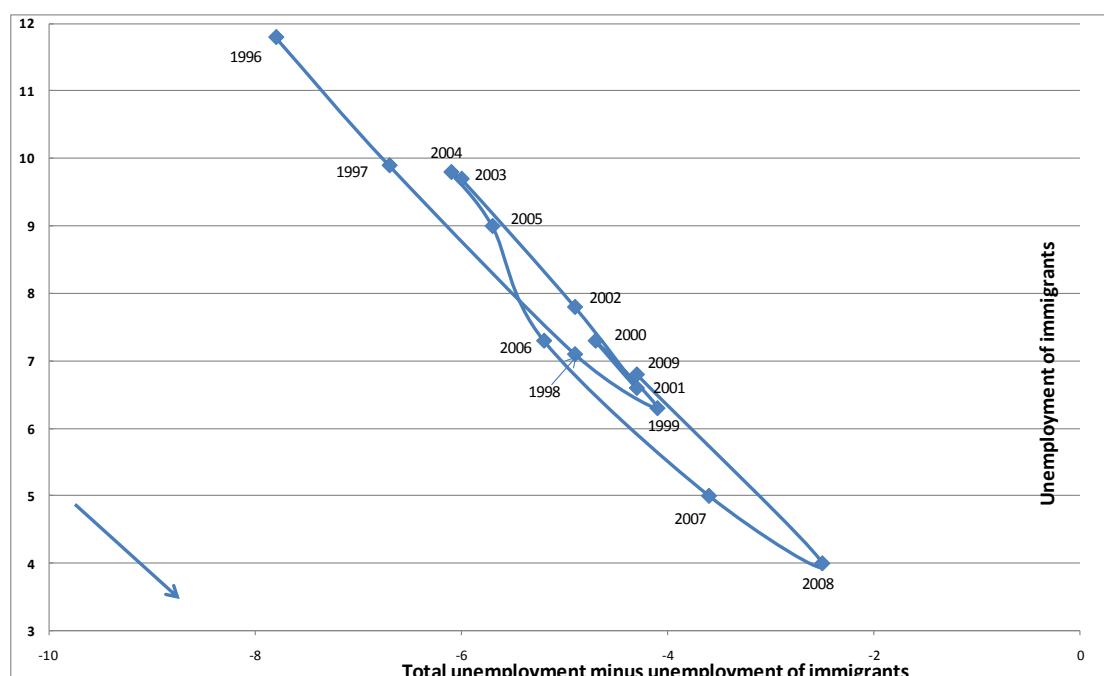
North America, Oceania	5.3	4.5	3.6	2.2	1.8	2.4
South and Central America	10.8	10.1	8.0	5.0	3.9	6.4
Asia	13.1	12.3	10.0	7.1	5.6	7.8
Africa	18.2	17.5	14.9	11.2	9.5	12.1

* EEA –countries in Central and Eastern Europe not included

Source: SSB

Although the unemployment rate for immigrants has had a very favourable development over the past years, the unemployment rate is still nearly three times higher than for the population as a whole, cf. chart 12.2. The inflow and composition of new migrants is one factor contributing to this difference. Inadequate command of the Norwegian language, insufficient or unrecognised educational qualifications, lack of work experience from - and knowledge about - Norwegian working life, and last, but not least, discrimination in the labour market, are all factors explaining this situation.

Chart 12.2 Unemployment of immigrants- percentage (y-axis) and difference in total unemployment and unemployment of immigrants (x-axis) 1996-2009 (2nd quarter)



Source: Statistics Norway

The increase in unemployment rate among immigrants has been much higher among men than among women. There was a growth of 3.9 percentage points for men compared to 1.3 percentage points for women from the 2nd quarter of 2008 to the 2nd quarter of 2009. This resulted in an unemployment rate in the 2nd quarter of 2009 of 7.7 per cent among immigrant men compared to 5.5 per cent among immigrant women. In the remaining part of the population, the unemployment rate was respectively 2.6 and 1.6 per cent. Here too, men accounted for most of the increase in unemployment. The relatively worse labour market situation of male immigrants has to be seen in connection with the economic downturn that has affected male-dominated sectors such as manufacturing and building and construction the most.

The register based unemployment rate only reflects the number of persons who are actively seeking employment through the employment services; that is, the number of persons who are registered as such with the labour and welfare service.

12.5 Entrepreneurship and employment creation by immigrants

In 2008, immigrants owned ten per cent of the personally owned enterprises. Immigrants from countries outside EEA, North America and Oceania owned 5.1 per cent, whereas immigrants from these regions owned the remaining 4.9 per cent.

Enterprises owned by Norwegians had in general a better survival rate than enterprises owned by immigrants. Of enterprises owned by immigrants, the survival rate is higher for those established by immigrants from Asia, Africa, Latin America and Europe outside EEA than for those owned by immigrants from the EEA countries, USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

Statistics Norway will in the first half of 2010 publish an article on entrepreneurship and business participation by immigrants.

Table: 12.5 Personally owned enterprises established in 2002 - national background and survival rate. 2005, 2006

Country background	survived 2005	survived 2006
Norway	35.0	29.2
EEA, USA , Canada, Australia, New Zealand	28.5	23.1
Asia, Africa, Latin-America, Oceania outside Australia and New Zealand, Europe, not EEA	31.8	26.1

Source: Statistics Norway

In 2006, the Government initiated entrepreneurship as part of the general curricula in primary and secondary education, as well as in adult education. In addition there has been initiated a strategy for entrepreneurship (2004-2008), supported by various ministries as well as local and regional authorities, which has seen training in entrepreneurship as a tool to facilitate creativity and innovation.

NAV has some general measures to promote entrepreneurship. They include support to job creation projects and the possibility for jobseekers to keep the unemployment benefits during the planning and establishment of their own enterprise. These measures are not specifically directed towards immigrants, but immigrants are included in the target group.

Job creation projects should contribute to the establishment of an enterprise and better job opportunities for unemployed and vocationally disabled persons. Support can be given to projects where unemployed or vocationally disabled participate. It is a criterion that at least half of the participants in a training project were unemployed or in a weak labour market situation.

Unemployment benefits during the establishment of an enterprise may be granted for a development phase of up to six months and a start-up phase of up to three months (a total of up to nine months).

Results from a project to facilitate entrepreneurship, which ended in December 2006, showed that many highly educated immigrants have the skills needed to establish

enterprises and create additional employment. Another group are those who want to create their own enterprise to support themselves and their family. Experiences also showed that immigrants from outside EEA, North America and Oceania have particular challenges in establishing their own enterprise with regard to financing and lack of knowledge of Norwegian administrative processes.

There are few guidance services for entrepreneurs, qualified to address the special challenges for these immigrants. In 2007, the Government therefore has initiated a new pilot project to gain more knowledge about the facilitation of entrepreneurship by immigrants. In 2008, two centres for ethnic entrepreneurship were given support to offer training, guidance and network building for potential entrepreneurs. The aim of the initiatives was to provide immigrants with the knowledge and the necessary support to develop their business ideas. The general and long-term aim of the two initiatives is to facilitate immigrant entrepreneurship primarily in two counties, and provide an alternative path to social integration and mobility.

The initiatives are organized as programs with different modules: book keeping, Norwegian rules and regulations for different types of businesses and companies, tax legislation, marketing etc. At the end of the program, the participants are expected to have developed a business proposal.

An evaluation of these two initiatives that facilitate ethnic entrepreneurship was presented in January 2009.¹⁵ The participant groups in both programs were heterogeneous. A number of participants had problems following the course due to their poor knowledge of Norwegian. Some did also have inadequate educational background to follow the relatively advanced level of the courses. A key finding was that many participants had a network with limited social and cultural capital to access information and capital to expand or to allow immigrant entrepreneurs to break out from their traditional entrepreneurship niches. These types of businesses have traditionally shown limited potential to expand and have had small profit margins. They may nevertheless represent a good alternative to unemployment and social welfare dependency.

On the basis of the experiences with the pilot projects, The Directorate of Integration and Diversity has in the autumn of 2009 given the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion its recommendations for further action in the field. The Ministry will in 2010 look into the need for further measures, including a possible permanent arrangement for facilitating a higher degree of entrepreneurship among immigrants.

12.6 Young immigrants and Norwegian-born with immigrant parents in employment and education

A report looking at how the participation of young people aged 16-34 years in employment and education varies according to their immigration background compared the three following groups:

- Immigrants from Eastern Europe (EU countries excluded), Asia, Africa, South and Central-America,
- Norwegian born with immigrant parents from the same countries
- Persons of non-immigrant background (i.e. the majority population).

¹⁵ Cf. Endehaug et.al (2009) listed in chapter 15

The analysis of the report is based on register statistics from the 4th quarter 2007.¹⁶

The 2007 figures confirm the main pattern that the Norwegian-born of immigrant parents under 25 years are much more similar to the majority population than are young immigrants when it comes to the activity rate in employment or in education. In the age group 16-19 years the difference in employment or education between the majority population and the Norwegian-born to immigrant parents was 3.2 percentage points, while for 20-24 year olds it was 4.5 percentage points. In the age group 25-29 years where employment becomes the dominant activity status, the gap between the two populations is higher: 9.6 percentage points in favour of the majority population. For the oldest age group, 30-34 years, this gap has increased to 13 percentage points. However, this is the smallest age group among Norwegian-born of immigrant parents.

For immigrants the gap to the majority population was much larger irrespective of age group. In the youngest age group (16-19 years) the difference was 18 percentage points and among those above 19 years old the difference was between 20 and 24 percentage points.

Because of the favourable development in the labour market from 2006 to 2007, the gap between the majority population and the two groups with immigrant background was slightly reduced. Both immigrants and Norwegian born had a larger growth in employment than the majority during that period.

The activity level among the Norwegian-born of immigrant parents is particularly sensitive to the degree of activity among the females. While the activity level is almost stable within all the age groups for males, the activity level was lower for the females above 24 years of age.

Among immigrants, the gender gap is considerable larger than for Norwegian born of immigrant parents, except for the youngest between 16 and 19 years old. More than the Norwegian born females, the immigrant females contribute to a decline in the average activity level in their group and deviate from the majority women. While the activity level between immigrant men and men of the majority population above 19 years of age was between 11 and 14 percentage points, the gap between the corresponding female groups was between 26 and 32 percentage points. Above all, African and Asian women are most different from the majority.

Looking at young immigrants, their age at the time of immigration is an important determinant for the share of active participants. If they have immigrated as small children and have undertaken all their schooling in Norway, the share participating in work or education is approximately the same as for Norwegian-born with immigrant parents. Thus, it is young immigrants with short periods of residence in Norway who contribute to the low share of active in employment or education, and first and foremost the females in this group.

In other words, among female immigrants we see the greatest gap to the majority population, and much of this difference seems to be related to civil status and family

¹⁶ Olsen, Bjørn (2008): Employment and education among young immigrants and Norwegian-born to immigrant parents. Report 2008/44, Statistics Norway.

http://www.ssb.no/english/subjects/06/01/rapp_200844_en/ and Olsen (2009 forthcoming)

situation. These females marry at a younger age, and it is less common that they work when they marry and have children than for females of the majority population. This is especially the case for females with a shorter period of residence, where many are family immigrants. Also among those who have lived in Norway for a longer period, we see a decline in the activity level among those over 25 years of age, as we also can observe among the Norwegian-born females to immigrant parents.

13 Participation in elections

13.1 Local elections

After residing continuously in Norway for more than three years, all foreign nationals have the right to vote in Municipal and County Council elections (local elections). Since 1999, nationals from the Nordic countries have had such voting rights if they moved to Norway before March 31st in the year of the election.

The number of potential voters with immigrant background has increased markedly over the last years, mostly because of past high immigration, but also because of a younger age distribution among immigrants. In total, 280 000 persons with immigrant background had the right to vote in the local election in 2007, constituting 7.7 per cent of the eligible population. Compared to the election in 2003, this is an increase of more than 50 000 persons.

This growth has been most significant among immigrants from Asia, Africa and Latin-America. The number of such immigrants entitled to vote increased by 45 per cent from 1999 to 2003, and by another 45 per cent from 2003 to 2007. Close to a 100 000 of the immigrants entitled to vote had their background from Asia, 60 000 from Western Europe, and 40 000 from Eastern Europe. Of single countries, we find the largest groups from Sweden and Denmark, followed by Pakistan, Vietnam and Bosnia-Herzegovina. A majority of the electorate with background from Pakistan, Vietnam and Bosnia-Herzegovina are Norwegian citizens, whereas most of the Swedish and Danish voters have maintained their citizenship.

The overall electoral participation in local elections in Norway has stabilized on a level around 60 per cent in the last elections. In 2007, 61 per cent of the total population voted in the local elections. The electoral turnout among the immigrant population has traditionally been significantly lower, particularly among foreigners. Since 1983, when the right to vote for foreigners with three years of residence was established, they have had an electoral turnout around 30 per cent. The electoral turnout has been somewhat higher amongst naturalized Norwegians. In 2007, 40 per cent in this group voted. Among foreigners, the differences in electoral turnout between the regions of origin are small. However, naturalized Norwegians originally from countries in Western Europe, North America and Oceania have had a substantially higher turnout (64 per cent in 2007) than for Norwegians originally from countries in Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe, Central and South America (37 per cent), cf. table 13.1.

There are vast differences in turnout among immigrants from different countries. Among Norwegian citizens with background from Sri Lanka, 51 per cent voted, whereas among immigrants with background from Serbia only 16 per cent participated. Rates of participation in the three latest local elections are presented in table 13.1 below. The low turnout makes their potential influence on the final election outcome less significant than it might have been. In Oslo for instance, immigrants from Asia, Africa etc. constituted 15 per cent of the electorate in 2007, but their share of those actual voting was only 9 per cent.

Table 13.1 Participation in local elections - country background, gender and citizenship. Per cent of the electorate, 1999, 2003 and 2007

Categories	1999	2003	2007
Total population	62	59	61
Foreign qualified voters	38	34	36
- A/B*	40/33	39/25	42/28
- women/men	41/34	35/33	39/34
Naturalized voters	50	43	40
- A/B*	66/43	64/36	64/37
- women/men	52/49	41/41	42/39

* A: Western Europe, North America and Oceania

B: Asia, Africa, Central- and South America and Eastern Europe.

Source: Statistics Norway

13.2 Representation in municipal councils

Out of the 62 500 candidates standing for election for the Norwegian municipal councils in 2007, close to 1 800 had an immigrant background, constituting 2.8 percent of the total. 1 026 of these candidates had their origin in Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe or Latin America. Nearly half of them were women, a higher share of women than among the candidates in general. Close to half of the candidates had Asian background, a quarter from Eastern Europe, a share closely resembling the composition of immigrants in Norway. Of single countries, most had background from Iran, followed by Bosnia-Herzegovina and Pakistan.

223 candidates with immigrant background were elected to the municipal councils. This included 140 with background from countries in Asia, Africa etc. This was an increase of 48 representatives compared to the 2003-election. The share of women was high (46 per cent), higher than the number of women elected among all candidates (37 per cent). The highest numbers of elected representatives were from Iran, Pakistan and India. 14 per cent of all listed candidates from these countries were elected. Among candidates of Indian and Pakistani origin, one out three were elected, while only six per cent of the candidates with background from Bosnia-Herzegovina were elected.

At first glance, immigrants from Asia, Africa etc. seem to be *underrepresented*, considering that they constituted five per cent of the eligible voting population, but only had 1.3 per cent of the elected representatives. However, such a comparison must also take into account the underlying regional distribution of the immigrant population. Norway consists of 430 municipalities and municipal councils. In 200 of these municipalities, the share of immigrants from these parts of the world is below 1 per cent. Only 21 municipalities had a share of such immigrants higher than the national average of five per cent. Hence, an analysis of representation must take into account where immigrants actually live. We will then find not only that immigrants are overrepresented in 50 of the municipalities, but also that as many as 60 per cent of the immigrants from Asia, Africa etc. live in a municipality where they are *overrepresented* in their local municipal council.

13.3 National elections

Norwegian nationality is a precondition for voting in national elections for representatives to the national assembly, Stortinget. The most recent election was in Septem-

ber 2009. At this election 160 000 naturalized Norwegian nationals were entitled to vote. This was an increase of 40 000 since the election in 2005. The largest groups entitled to vote originated in Pakistan (17 000), Vietnam (13 000), Iran (9 000) and Bosnia-Herzegovina (9 000). A survey of participation rates at this election will be published in 2010.

Only one permanent member with two immigrant parents was elected to the present Storting (2009-2013). Another representative, who himself is an immigrant, meets on a permanent basis substituting for a representative who serves as State secretary in the present government.

14 Discrimination

14.1 Legislation

The Act on prohibition against discrimination based on ethnicity, religion, etc. (the Anti Discrimination Act) from 2006 applies to all areas of society, except for family life and personal relationships. It prohibits discrimination based on ethnicity, national origin, descent, colour, language, religion or belief. The act protects against both direct and indirect discrimination. It covers harassment on the same grounds and instructions to discriminate or harass. The act has a ban on reprisals against a person who files or intends to file a complaint about violation of the act. This protection also covers witnesses. Furthermore, it is forbidden to participate in discrimination.

From January 2009, a new general duty to promote equality and prevent discrimination entered into force in the Anti Discrimination Act. The general duty applies to public authorities, private and public employers and social partners in working life. The duty is accompanied by a general reporting obligation.

From January 2006 an Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud has both proactive and supervisory functions in relation to the Anti-Discrimination Act and other civil legislation in the fields of anti-discrimination, such as the Gender Equality Act, the antidiscrimination regulations in the Working Environment Act and in housing legislation. The Ombud and an Equality and Anti-Discrimination Tribunal make decisions on individual complaints concerning discrimination. The Ombud also has the task of monitoring the Anti Discrimination Act.

The role of the Ombud is to investigate incidents where alleged breaches of the laws have taken place. Following investigations of complaints, the Ombud may then make a recommendation. In the field of employment, the Ombud encourages employers to avoid ethnic discrimination and promote ethnic equality in their enterprises. The Ombud has a consultancy and advisory service that is offered free of charge to individual employers in both private and public enterprises. An important function is to disseminate good examples and methods and help to improve knowledge in this field.

Out of 162 cases in 2008, the Ombud received 70 complaints on discrimination based on ethnicity, language and religion. Most of these cases were related to employment or public administration.

A commission submitted its final report on a more comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation in June 2009. A partial recommendation on exceptions for religious communities was submitted in January 2008. Different acts prohibit discrimination based on gender, ethnic origin, national origin, descent, colour, language, religion, ethical and cultural orientation, political views, membership of a trade union, sexual orientation, disability or age, as well as discrimination of employees who work part time or on a temporary basis. The protection against discrimination varies depending on the basis for discrimination. The Commission proposes one single anti-discrimination act. The Commission also proposes an anti-discrimination provision in the Constitution and consider the question of ratification and implementation of The Human Rights Convention Protocol no. 12 on discrimination.

The Commission's final report has been circulated to stakeholders for comments before the end of 2009.

14.2 Plan of action to promote equality and prevent ethnic discrimination (2009-2012)

The Government has intensified efforts to combat ethnic discrimination and presented a new Plan of action to promote equality and prevent ethnic discrimination in April 2009. The plan is intended to combat and prevent both direct and indirect discrimination. It covers a period of four years.

The Plan of action mainly concerns measures to combat discrimination of persons with some form of minority background, including immigrants and their children, national minorities and the indigenous Sami people. The plan incorporates a gender perspective on implementation of the measures. It includes measures to:

- ensure effective enforcement of legal protection against discrimination in various areas
- support the implementation of the duty of activity and reporting, which entered into force in the Anti-Discrimination Act on 1 January 2009
- improve documentation and knowledge of the nature and scope of discrimination
- increase the population's awareness of what discrimination is and how it can be combated
- improve competence in the public sector in order to ensure equal public services and prevent discrimination
- prevent exclusive recruitment practices in working life, governing bodies and elected positions
- view several reasons for discrimination in conjunction with each other.

In general, the measures outlined in the plan will target areas where people from minority backgrounds are particularly vulnerable to discrimination. This applies especially to working life, but public administration is also an important priority area. The plan also focuses on discrimination that affects children and youth, in schools/ education, on the housing market and in clubs/bars/restaurants. The plan includes 66 new measures. Nine ministries are responsible for measures in the plan.

The Ministry of Children and Equality is collaborating in implementing the plan with the social partners. A joint working group has during spring 2009 prepared new guidelines relating to the new duty of activity and reporting, which entered into force in January 2009.

14.3 Active recruitment

One measure in the Action plan for integration and social inclusion is active recruitment of immigrants to public administration and health authorities. Through their yearly allotment letters, all agencies within the public administration and the health authorities are instructed to draw up plans aimed at increasing the recruitment of immigrants.

As mentioned public agencies are from January 2009 obliged to report on recruitment matters. In the public administration, employers are obliged to call in at least one qualified immigrant applicant for interviews when hiring personnel. Managers of all

state-owned enterprises are urged to introduce the same scheme. The Government has also called on the privately owned companies to follow this practice.

Moderate affirmative action for immigrants applying for public administration positions will be tested in a two-year pilot project, starting in 2008. This means that if candidates have equal or approximately equal qualifications, a candidate with an immigrant background is to be preferred. The midway evaluation shows that the use of the measure has been limited, but managers of the enterprises taking part in the project say they have become more aware of the issue of diversity due to the training that is part of the project. The ex-post evaluation is yet to be finished.

The rate of immigrant employees is increasing. As of October 2008, the percentage of employees from Asia, Africa and South America in the state administration was 3.2. In 2006, the share was 2.4 per cent. As of October 2008, more than 9 per cent of the employees in fully state-owned enterprises were immigrants, increasing from 8.2 in 2006. The percentage of employees from Asia, Africa and South America has also increased slightly, to 5.9 per cent (5.3 per cent in 2007). Almost 50 per cent of the enterprises have immigrants employed in executive positions. The same share of enterprises has implemented a practice on calling in qualified immigrants for interview. Three out of four have made adaptations for diversity at the place of work.

Furthermore, there has been a broad public debate in Norway the last year about ethnic discrimination exercised by some public sector authorities. The public debate has in particular focused on the use of the term racism.

14.4 Public opinion

The annual opinion poll by Statistics Norway ¹⁷ shows that the proportion of respondents wanting to make it more difficult for refugees and asylum seekers to obtain a residence permit increased by 11 percentage points in 2009, compared to 2008. About half the respondents think that the access to residence permits should be further restricted. This significant shift in public opinion probably reflects reactions to the high number of asylum seekers for the last two years.

The present survey of attitudes towards immigrants and immigration also demonstrates that the proportion that strongly agrees or agrees “on the whole” that immigrants make an important contribution to Norwegian working life, fell by 4 percentage points from last year. This a small change in public opinion. Perhaps it reflects the relatively mild impact of the global economic crisis in Norway. This year Statistics Norway also posed a new question on labor migration. Two out of three agreed that labor immigration from non-Nordic countries contributes positively to the Norwegian economy.

Attitudes among the population vary according to the same general patterns as in earlier polls. Women appear to be somewhat more tolerant than men. The eldest, the least educated, welfare benefit recipients and people in rural areas are the most sceptical to immigrants and immigration. Three out of four report to be in contact with immigrants. Persons with much contact are more positive than persons with little or no contact.

¹⁷ See http://www.ssb.no/english/subjects/00/01/30/innvhold_en/

15 Information and recent reports

Updated statistics on immigration and immigrants from Statistics Norway available in English at:

http://www.ssb.no/innvandring_en/

Updated statistics and information on applications, permits, rules and regulations are available from the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI) at:

<http://www.udi.no/default.aspx?id=2112>

In addition, in March UDI publishes both “Annual Report” and “Facts and Figures”.

The most recent editions are available here:

<http://www.udi.no/templates/OversiktssideType1.aspx?id=4643>

New reports:

Blom, Svein and Henriksen, Kristin (2009):

Living Conditions Among Immigrants in Norway 2005/2006.

Report 2009/2, Statistics Norway

http://www.ssb.no/english/subjects/02/01/10/rapp_200902_en/

Bogen, Hanne and Reegård, Kaja (2009):

Free core hours for four and five years old in kindergartens

Mapping of a project in five city districts in Oslo

Fafo report 2009:31 (English summary)

<http://www.fafo.no/pub/rapp/20129/index.html>

Brekke, Jan-Paul and Five Aarset, Monica (forthcoming 2009):

Why Norway? Understanding asylum destinations

Institute for Social Research

<http://www.samfunnsforskning.no/nor/Publikasjoner/Rapporter/2009/2009-012>

Daugstad, Gunnlaug (ed.) (2009):

Immigration and Immigrants 2008

SA 104, Statistics Norway

http://www.ssb.no/english/subjects/02/sa_innvand_en/

Endehaug, Heidi, Gampriene, Migne and Osman, Ali (2009):

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