

Short version of Meld. St. 6 (2012–2013)

# A Comprehensive Integration Policy

Diversity and Community



NORWEGIAN MINISTRY OF CHILDREN,  
EQUALITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

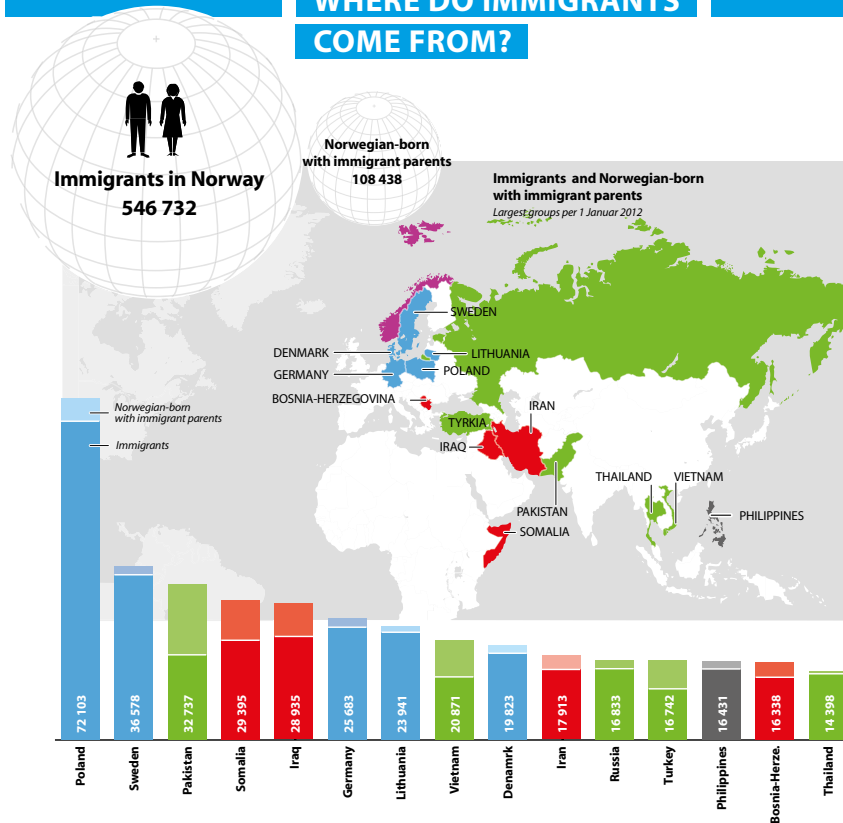


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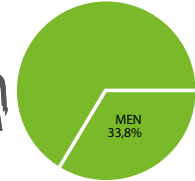
## WHERE DO IMMIGRANTS COME FROM?



### REASONS FOR IMMIGRATION 1990-2011

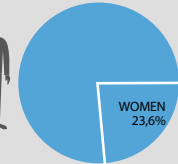
#### Family 37%

WOMAN  
66,2 %



#### Labour 30%

MEN  
76,4 %



#### Refugee 21%

MEN  
58,9 %



#### Education and exchange 11%

WOMEN  
60,7 %



## DIVERSITY AND COMMUNITY

The White Paper to the Norwegian Parliament *En helhetlig integreringspolitikk – mangfold og fellesskap* (A comprehensive integration policy – diversity and community), launched on 26 October 2012, deals with the opportunities and challenges of being a country and a society with immigration. The most important goal for the Government's integration policy is to ensure that all people who live in Norway are able to utilise their resources and participate in the community. All inhabitants in Norway have rights and obligations and should have the opportunity to participate in and contribute to working and social life. Everyone should contribute according to their abilities. No person should be discriminated against or excluded because they have an immigrant background. All public authorities have a responsibility to help meet the goals of the integration policy. Norway is part of an increasingly globalised world and people in Norway trade and interact with the rest of the world. One of the consequences is that people from other countries come to Norway. They bring their knowledge

and skills, their language, religion and traditions, their music and their stories. Norway needs labour and skills. Norway also meets its international obligations and takes responsibility for giving individuals who are fleeing from their country of origin a new home.

In Norway the standard of living is higher and socio-economic inequalities smaller than in most other countries. The majority of immigrants in Norway are in employment. They speak Norwegian and participate in a variety of social arenas. Children born in Norway of immigrant parents participate fully in the workforce and in education and enjoy living conditions on a par with the rest of the population. Norway is also a country where the inhabitants experience a high degree of safety and trust. This is how it should continue to be. Norway must not develop into a society where people with immigrant backgrounds have poorer living conditions and participate to a lesser degree in society than the rest of the population.



Immigration leads to a more diverse society. This leads to far more opportunities, but also potentially to more conflicts. Utilising these opportunities and dealing carefully with conflicts is a litmus test for society.

### **Employment for all – women and men**

Norway's greatest resource are its people. This is the point of departure for integration policy

– that all people should be able to use their resources. Employment is the key to participation, financial independence and equality. The Government therefore wants to ensure that more immigrants, both women and men, can find employment. Better Norwegian language tuition and more targeted labour-market qualification programmes are critical success factors. We need to make better use of



*To the top at Galdhøpiggen*

*Photo: IMDi*

immigrants' skills and competence. Discrimination prevents immigrants from participating in social life, and prevents society from utilising the resources and talents of the population.

Participation in working life is the key to achieving equality between women and men. Many more women with immigrant backgrounds need to enter the labour market. This will strengthen their sense of belonging and strengthen their financial independence. Moreover, society will have access to needed labour.

### **Equal opportunities for all children**

Children are the future. Therefore all children and young people need good early-development conditions and equal opportunities. Inhabitants in Norway with immigrant backgrounds have knowledge of diverse cultures and languages that are a resource for the society. Children and young people with immigrant backgrounds should not face more barriers than other children and young people, whether in society or in their own family. Today's school and kindergarten must be adapted to the diversity of the child population. Good education policy is good integration policy.

**No person can be described according to only one dimension, as all of us have many characteristics and identities.**

You may be a woman or a man, immigrant or born in Norway, young or old, employed or unemployed, religious or atheist, homosexual or heterosexual, or have a disability.

Categories and labels attached to individuals or groups may have a stigmatising effect and contribute to exclusion from the community. It may put individuals into a category which may create and reinforce differences which lead us to think in terms of "us" and "them". Language must be inclusive. There must be acceptance for the fact that there are many ways of being Norwegian. Differences within the group "immigrants" will usually be greater than differences between immigrants and the rest of the population.

Parents have an important responsibility to ensure that their children participate in school and recreational activities. In the coming years one challenge our diverse society will face

### The Government wants

- immigrants to qualify for participation in the Norwegian labour market
- better use of immigrants' skills and competence
- more women with immigrant backgrounds to enter the workforce
- immigrants and their children to have receive a quality education that is adapted to their needs
- all children to have quality early-development conditions and to fully use their abilities in their best interest
- young girls and boys to make independent choices about their own life and future
- faster settlement of refugees in municipalities
- to create a sense of belonging in Norway through citizenship policy
- to combat racism and discrimination
- activities in the voluntary sector to be open and inclusive
- welfare provision to be adapted to the needs of a diverse population

will be to ensure that young people are able to make their own independent choices while also respecting the different ways parents have of bringing up their children within the framework of Norwegian law.

### A safe and inclusive community

Norway is home to people who come from more than 200 countries, and immigrants live in all municipalities in Norway. Immigrants and their children constitute more than 13 per cent of the population. Diversity is the norm in today's Norway. Human rights and democratic principles form the foundation of the Norwegian state, which is based on the rule of the law.

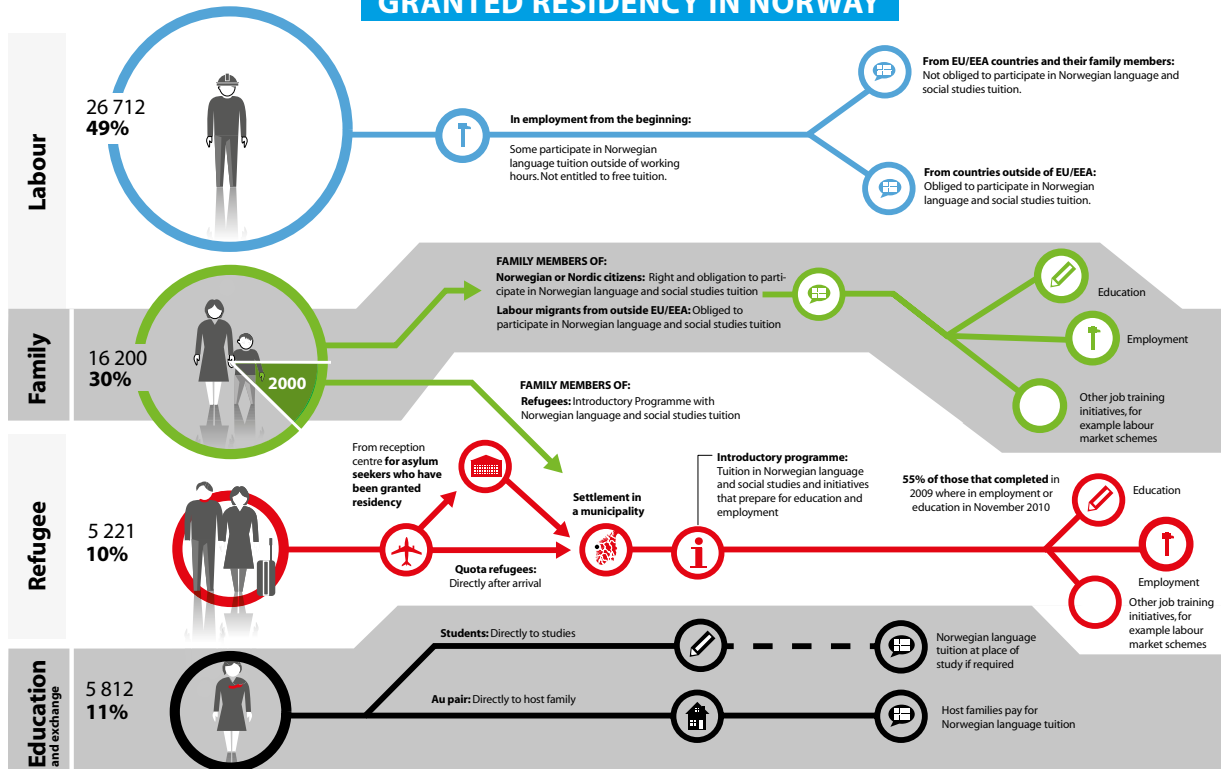
Society must fully realise the diversity in the population, and public authorities must ensure that all people receive equitable public services. Public service provision and societal institutions must in many cases be adapted to this aim.

All inhabitants in Norway have the same basic obligations and rights, and all must respect the same laws. Within this framework there are many ways of living. It is not which God you believe in, the food you eat or the clothes you wear that define whether you are Norwegian. The Norwegian community is made up of everyone who lives in Norway.



# WHAT HAPPENS TO THOSE THAT ARE GRANTED RESIDENCY IN NORWAY

REASONS FOR IMMIGRATION in 2011



## THE MAIN PRINCIPLES IN THE WHITE PAPER

The report *En helhetlig integreringspolitikk – mangfold og fellesskap* uses current migration trends as its point of departure and presents frameworks and principles for developing a society where all people feel they belong within the Norwegian community and trust the authorities and each other.

Norway is part of the global migration picture. Migration impacts the composition of the population in several ways and contributes to rapid population growth in Norway. Today approximately 13 per cent of the population in Norway has immigrated or has two parents who did. The EU expansions of 2004 and 2007 represent a clear dividing line when it comes to immigration into Norway. In recent years immigration has increased steeply, with the majority of immigrants coming from countries within the EU.

A targeted integration policy should be built on solid facts about the importance of immigration for Norway and about the situation for immigrants in Norway. The White Paper *En helhetlig integreringspolitikk – mangfold og fellesskap* builds on a sound and broad foundation of research and analysis from a number of reports and studies. Particularly important are the following Official Norwegian Reports NOU 2011:14 *Bedre integrering – Mål, strategier, tiltak* (Better Integration – Goals, Strategies, Initiatives), NOU 2011:7 *Velferd og migrasjon – Den norske modellens framtid* (Welfare and Migration – The Future of the Norwegian Model), and NOU 2010:7 *Mangfold og mestring – Flerspråklige barn, unge og voksne i opplæringssystemet* (Diversity and Mastery – Multilingual Children, Young People and Adults in the Education and Training System).

# LIVING CONDITIONS AND PARTICIPATION IN SOCIETY

## Employment

Work for all is a main goal for the Government. A high employment rate is necessary for ensuring a sustainable welfare state, reducing social differences, preventing poverty and achieving gender equality. Integration policy must contribute to increasing the rate of employment among immigrants, particularly from countries in Asia and Africa. Women are a prioritised group.

The Government intends to strengthen basic qualifications through better Norwegian language tuition and a more effective introductory programme.

The Government will improve conditions so that the skills and resources of immigrants will be better utilised. This will be achieved by increasing the recruitment of immigrants to the labour market, facilitating immigrant entrepreneurship, and improving the recognition of qualifications, education and training brought from abroad.

### The Government will, for example,

- introduce *Jobbsjansen* (Job opportunity) to give immigrants who are not participating in the labour market, particularly women, better opportunities to find employment
- present a comprehensive action plan to improve the use of immigrants' resources and skills in the labour market
- introduce a new grant scheme with development funds to strengthen the local municipalities' provision of the introductory programme and Norwegian language and social studies tuition
- consider amending the Introduction Act to improve the quality of Norwegian language tuition and the introductory programme, as well as ensuring improved coordination with compulsory and post-compulsory education and training, and NAV's (Norwegian Labour and Welfare Service) initiatives to increase employment.



The Government wants to increase participation in kindergarten for the youngest children. *Photo: Colourbox*

### Kindergartens and education/training

All children and adults with immigrant backgrounds should have good learning outcomes from their education and training, from kindergarten to primary school, lower secondary school and upper secondary school, to higher education and adult education. The Government's goal is that as many people as possible will complete the education and/or training they want. Education is one of the most impor-

tant measures for reducing socio-economic inequality in society.

The Government wants to increase participation in kindergarten for the youngest children, ensure inclusive teaching and good learning outcomes for all students in compulsory and post-compulsory education and training prevent students from dropping out of upper secondary education and ensure that adults have access to education appropriate to their needs.

### The Government will, for example,

- Improve multicultural competence for employees in kindergartens, primary, lower and upper secondary school and for those who teach adults
- strengthen the knowledge base relating to the learning environment of students with minority language backgrounds
- expand the benefit scheme for apprentices with special needs to include those who have poor Norwegian language skills and/or have only resided in Norway a short period of time
- recruit more persons with immigrant backgrounds to teacher training

## Health

Immigrants on average have poorer health than the rest of the population. Public authorities need to provide quality and equitable health and care services to the entire population, including those with immigrant backgrounds. Consideration must also be given to specific health problems men and women with immigrant backgrounds may have.

## Family and early childhood development

Children and young people with immigrant backgrounds should not encounter more barriers than other children and young people, whether in society or their own family. Family life is important for children and young people when they grow up, and good programmes for combining work and family are important for equality. Young people must have the freedom to make independent choices in their lives, therefore work to combat forced marriages and violence will be continued and developed.

### The Government will, for example,

- contribute to equitable health and care services, for example by providing improved and appropriate information
- present a national strategy for immigrants' health in the spring of 2013
- present a national health strategy which will assess the specific challenges immigrants have

### The Government will, for example,

- enable all children and young people to have the opportunity to participate in recreational and extracurricular activities
- help the child welfare services to provide quality and equitable services to all children, while also enjoying the trust of the population
- present a new action plan 2013 – 2016 to combat forced marriage, genital mutilation and serious limitations on the freedom of young people



Young people must have the freedom to make independent choices in their lives *Photo: Elisabeth Johansen BLD*

### Housing and settlement

Immigrants generally own their own housing in Norway, but are also overrepresented among those who experience difficulties in the housing market. Cities in Norway, particularly Oslo, have a diverse population. Challenges arise where areas with living-condition problems are also areas with a high proportion of immigrants. These challenges can be met with universal and equitable welfare services, community-engagement programmes and municipal urban development. The Government wants to highlight how district municipalities offer opportunities the cities do not have.

Settling refugees in Norwegian municipalities is an on-going task for the municipal sector. The Government proposes more binding cooperation with the municipal sector so that refugees can be settled more quickly in municipalities.

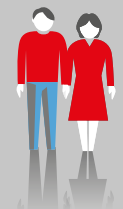
#### The Government will, for example,

- ensure faster settlement of refugees by establishing more binding cooperation with the municipal sector
- strengthen the Norwegian State Housing Bank's programmes that are important for newly arrived immigrants, including funding to buy one's own home and subsidies for rental housing
- examine the right to participate in the introductory programme for refugees who find housing themselves and/or are employed in a municipality (self-settlement)
- continue community-engagement programmes, and evaluate the effect of increased participation in after-school programmes through a pilot project offering free part-time after-school programmes at one school in Oslo



# EMPLOYMENT RATE FOR WOMEN AND MEN IN NORWAY

aged 15-74 years



71,7% 66,4%



POPULATION IN TOTAL

69,1%



IMMIGRANTS IN TOTAL

62,8%

67,6% 57,6%



EMPLOYMENT RATE AMONG IMMIGRANTS IN NORWAY



Nordic Countries  
**75,9%**



Other countries in  
Western Europe  
**70,4%**



EU-countries  
in Eastern Europe  
**73,6%**



Other countries in  
Eastern Europe  
**62,2%**



North America  
and Oceania  
**65,8%**



South and Central  
America  
**63,6%**



Asia  
including Turkey  
**53,9%**



Africa  
**44,2%**



77,6% 74,2%



74,2% 64,8%



77,4% 66,9%



64,1% 60,7%



71,7% 59,6%



68,6% 60%



59,2% 49,4%



48,4% 39,1%

# COMMUNITY AND BELONGING

Trust and a sense of belonging are requirements for a safe and inclusive community for all who live in Norway. Peaceful coexistence requires a common framework with established rules and procedures.

The Government's policy for Norway's diverse society is based on values which have wide-ranging support in Norwegian society: gender equality, equal rights, freedom of speech, freedom of religion and belief, solidarity, socio-economic equality, tolerance, participation in working life, democracy and civil society, protection of children's rights, diversity and multilingualism as a resource.

## The Government will, for example,

- extend the action plan for promoting equality and preventing ethnic discrimination 2009-2012 through 2013
- present a parliamentary bill in 2013 proposing amendments to the discrimination legislation

## Agree to disagree

In a vibrant society disagreement and conflict are natural and necessary. Differing interpretations, priorities and perceptions are not a fundamental problem as long as there is agreement that democratic principles and Norwegian law are the basis for conflict resolution.

## Discrimination

People with immigrant backgrounds may experience discrimination, for example for being a Muslim, homosexual or woman. More knowledge is needed about the occurrence of perceived discrimination. Legal protection against discrimination and ensuring its enforcement are requirements for combatting discrimination.

## Citizenship

Gaining citizenship marks that citizens subscribe to the fundamental values that Norwegian democracy and society are based on. Citizenship for each individual is a goal in integration policy. Citizenship may help create a

sense of belonging in Norway. Citizenship confers more rights and obligations than foreign nationals with residence permits have. The Government therefore wants people who live permanently in Norway to have Norwegian citizenship.

### **Participation in democracy and civil society**

The Government wants all inhabitants to have equal opportunities to influence society through democratic means, such as elections and participation in governing bodies. Non-government and voluntary organisations are important channels for exercising influence and are meeting places that help build trust. The voluntary sector should be open and inclusive. All people have an independent responsibility for using and participating in different arenas based on their own interests and needs.

#### **The Government will, for example,**

- facilitate non-government and voluntary organisations to create meeting places and to participate in integration initiatives
- introduce a national week for diversity and multiculturalism in 2013

### **Crime**

Immigrants were overrepresented among convicted persons in the period 2005-2008. Young men with immigrant backgrounds are overrepresented compared to the rest of the population. Measures such as reducing differences in living conditions, education for all and increased employment rates are crucial to the Government's long-term crime-prevention efforts.

### **A comprehensive integration policy**

Public services are important tools for eradicating social and financial differences. A population that changes over time requires changes in the provision of public services.

All public authorities and sectors have an independent responsibility for developing policies for the entire population and for adapting their service provision to the diverse needs of users. Thus all sectors have a responsibility for achieving the goals of integration policy. In addition to its own sector responsibilities, the Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion also has the overriding responsibility for coordinating integration policy.

### **The Government will, for example,**

- strengthen the coordination of integration policy, for example, by reviewing the scheme Mål for inkludering (Goals for social inclusion of the immigrant population)
- review the organisation of interpreting services

### **Good integration policy strengthens the welfare model**


Successful integration policy that increases the employment rate among immigrants is favourable for society as a whole as well as for individuals. This is not only a question about the balance between state expenditures and revenue, but also about maintaining public support for the Norwegian welfare model. It is also important for society that persons with immigrant backgrounds participate on equal footing with the rest of the population in various areas of society.

Society experiences a double loss when people of working age are not participating in employment. If the situation is such where many immigrants are either not participating in employment, not undertaking education and/or training, and are discriminated against, this will lead to increased

social benefit expenses and a loss of taxation revenue. If the resources and skills brought to Norway by immigrants, or acquired here through education and/or training, are utilised through participation in employment, this will add wealth creation that will benefit all of society.

The Norwegian welfare model has so far been able to weather the economic crisis and the developing social crisis that other countries in Europe are experiencing. Some of the important elements in this model are high employment rates and a relatively equal distribution of income, combined with a generous and universal welfare provision. Compared to many other countries the employment rate among immigrants in Norway is high. However, the proportion of the population of working age will drop in the decades to come. Therefore, sustaining the welfare state in the long term is completely dependent on continued high employment rates, including among immigrants. If integration policy fails, there may be an increase in the economic and social inequality in Norway. This in turn may undermine the sustainability of the current welfare model, caused, for example, by an erosion of support for universal welfare provision as well as less trust and solidarity in society.





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