

SOPEMI-report for Norway:

Migration Outlook 2004/2005

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1 Overview

- Since 1970 growth has been the long-term trend in immigration to Norway. There are yearly fluctuations, caused by variations in international migration dynamics and migration policies as well as by the need for labour and changing flows of asylum-seekers and refugees. In 1970 1.5 per cent of the population were immigrants or persons with two immigrant parents. At the beginning of 2005 this percentage had been multiplied several times, to almost 8 per cent.
- During the same period there were important changes in the composition of immigration flows and thereby in the stock of immigrants. In 1970 only 6 per cent of the immigrant population came from countries outside Europe, North America and Oceania. By 2005 56 per cent belonged to this category.
- In 2004 the net migration to Norway was approximately 13 200 persons, 2 000 more than in 2003. This was the result of a slight increase in the net immigration of foreigners (14 000) and a small decrease in net emigration of Norwegians(800). The net immigration to Norway was highest from Russia, Poland and Thailand – 1 400 and 1 300 and 900 persons respectively.
- The reduction in the number of asylum seekers continued in 2004 and 2005. According to the current prognosis there will be around 5 500, one third of the number of applicants in 2003. While it follows a general downward trend in many countries, some of the policy measures to reduce the number of applicants with unfounded claims have also had an effect. The fall in asylum applications since 2002-2003 has been sharper in Norway than in other industrialized countries surveyed by the UNHCR, down 67 per cent compared to the first quarter of 2003 to the same quarter of 2005.
- Labour migrants from the other Nordic countries and other wealthy countries tend to stay in Norway temporarily, depending on the labour market situation, if they do not find a spouse and settle. In 2004 and 2005 the increase in labour migration from some of new EU member states, mainly Poland and Lithuania, was substantial. So far the majority seem to working temporarily in Norway, without bringing their family.
- Family links have for several years been the most significant basis for long-term immigration to Norway. The new government has declared that income support requirement for many types of family-related immigration will be retained. However, there might be revisions of the provisions. The total number of family-related immigration permits increased from 10 500 in 2003 to 12 750 in 2004.
- While the growth of the total resident population was 0.6 per cent in 2004, the number of foreign nationals increased 4.2 per cent, to 213 300. The immigrant population (persons with two foreign-born parents) was up 4.3 per cent, to 365 000 persons. One out of five of these were born in Norway.

- Whereas nationals from countries in Europe, excluding Turkey, North America and Oceania make up 61 per cent of all foreign nationals residing in Norway, individuals originating in these countries make up only 43 per cent of the total immigrant population. This discrepancy reflects the fact that fewer qualified persons from these countries opt for Norwegian nationality when compared to other nationalities. All in all, close to 600 000 persons, or 13 per cent of the population in Norway have some kind of immigration-related background. The origin of grandparents is not taken into account in this figure.
- The new Nationality Act, which is in accordance with the European Convention on Nationality of 1997, will come into force in September 2006. By January 2005 there were more than 167 000 naturalised Norwegian nationals who were part of the immigrants population. During the last decade around 9 500 persons were on average naturalised annually.
- The number of pupils with immigrant background in Norwegian schools has increased significantly over the years. In 2004 7-8 per cent of the total number of children at the age of primary and secondary school belonged to this category.
- As of September 2005 the introductory law for immigrants includes regulations regarding compulsory training in Norwegian language and civics. The target group is every immigrant between 18 and 55 who have received their residence permit after September 2005. Completion of the 300 hours class instruction is from the same date a condition for receiving a settlement permit and Norwegian nationality.
- The rate of employment among many immigrant groups is lower than for the population as a whole. This has different and complex causes, for example mismatch of qualifications, lack of Norwegian language skills, discrimination and different attitudes to the participation of women in the labour market. For first generation immigrants between 16 and 74 years old 56.6 per cent were employed in 2004, compared to 69.3 per cent for the total population.
- In May 2005 the unemployment rate in Norway was 3.3 per cent, compared to 3.7 per cent a year earlier. The decrease was highest within the building and construction sector and in manufacturing. Among the economically active population with immigrant background the registered unemployment rate in May 2005 was 9.0 per cent, a decrease from 9.8 in one year. Whereas rates for immigrants from Western European countries and new EU member states were at about the same level as Norwegians, unemployment among immigrants from Asian and African countries was considerably higher, 12.3 and 17.5 per cent respectively.
- The general principle of mainstreaming implies that the needs of immigrants are provided for within broad general programmes or policies. Diversity must be recognised and respected by ensuring that different needs in the population are reflected in the design of public services and general social systems. To promote mainstreaming, concrete and measurable objectives concerning di-

versity and inclusion of immigrants have been developed. Indicators from relevant arenas will be included in the regular reporting in the annual fiscal budgets to evaluate to which degree the objectives are reached.

- A new bill prohibiting ethnic and religious discrimination was proposed at the end of 2004. Furthermore, the government has submitted a proposal for a bill establishing a single authority for combating gender and ethnic discrimination. The new Equality and Discrimination Ombud will be established from January 2006.

2 Migration regulation and flows – general characteristics

2.1 Legislation

The Immigration Act of 24 June 1988 regulates the entry of foreign nationals into Norway and their right to residence and work. In simplified terms, four categories are admitted:

- labour migrants, i.e. persons with a concrete job offer
- refugees and others in need of protection or residence on humanitarian grounds
- persons with close family links to persons residing in Norway
- students, trainees and au pairs.

As a general rule, students etc. are only granted temporary residence, but they may work part time and transform their status after receiving a job offer on completion of their studies. The other categories may, dependent on certain conditions, be granted either permanent or temporary residence.

Two kinds of permits may be issued: residence permits or work permits. Residence permits only confer the right of residence. The holder may not take up gainful employment. Work permits confer both the right to reside and to take up gainful employment. Thus, foreign nationals who have a work permit do not need and are not granted, a separate residence permit. A third kind of permit - the settlement permit - confers permanent rights. It is normally issued after three years of residence, providing all other conditions are met.

In addition to foreign nationals meeting the general immigration regulatory conditions for a work permit, residence and work permits are mainly granted to persons in need of international protection, on humanitarian grounds, to family members of Norwegians or legal immigrants and to students. The major legal migration categories are discussed in chapters 3 to 6.

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

In October 2004 a legal committee appointed by the government presented its report and proposal for a new immigration act. (NOU: 20, 2003-2004). The report was sent to stakeholders for comments during the first half of 2005. The Government will during 2006 submit its proposal for a new act to the Storting.

2.2 Important international agreements

EU rules regarding free movement of persons apply to nationals of a state party to the Agreement on the European Economic Area (EEA), with the exception outlined below. The same applies to members of the EFTA Convention, in practice Switzerland.

When the EEA was enlarged to include ten new member countries from May 2004, the Norwegian government decided to apply transitional rules in the initial two-year period when national rules may apply for workers from the new member states (with

the exception of Cyprus and Malta). Before May 2006 the government will decide whether these regulations will be extended. The transitional rules stipulate that migrant workers from the relevant states are required to obtain an EEA-permit before starting to work. Such permits are issued for full-time employment at normal rates of pay and under normal working conditions.

Norway implemented the Schengen agreement by 25 March 2001 and the rules of the Dublin II regulation by 1 September 2003. The agreement facilitates free movement of persons by abolishing checks at the common borders of the Schengen states. As a consequence, the control of persons arriving from non-Schengen countries has been strengthened. The abolishment of checks at internal borders has been compensated by a common visa practice, common standards for external border controls and common measures against trafficking in human beings. The Dublin II regulation determines which state should be responsible for examining applications for asylum lodged in one of the member states.

2.3 Migration flows

With the exception of 1989, Norway has had net immigration since the late 1960s, cf. table A10. The annual average has almost doubled from 6 300 yearly for the period 1986-1990 to 11800 for the period 1996-2000, cf. table A6. After a sharp increase (+ 9 000) in 2002 and decrease in 2003 (- 6 000), there was an increase of 2 000 to 13 300 in 2004. The level of immigration may vary quite a lot from one year to another due to international migration dynamics and migration policies, as well as changing needs for labour and shifting flows of refugees and asylum seekers. Furthermore, it might be influenced by the capacity of the immigration authorities. The emigration level has also increased, but at a slower pace than immigration. It is mostly determined by the economic cycles in Norway, or exceptional events as the return of Kosovars granted temporary protection in 1999.

In 2004 the *immigration* of foreign nationals to Norway continued at a high level, slightly higher than the preceding year, cf. table A7. Almost 27 900 *foreign nationals*, slightly more than half of them women, were registered as immigrants in the Central Population Register. This means that they arrived with the intention to stay for more than 6 months. Asylum seekers are normally registered only after having been settled in a Norwegian municipality after a positive outcome of their application. Normally, an asylum seeker whose application has been dismissed will not be registered as an 'immigrant', even if the application process has taken a long time.

Most of the modest increase from 2003 to 2004 came from other industrialized countries, while there was a slight decrease from Africa and Asia. The increase from 2003 to 2004 was most significant for Poland and Lithuania. After Sweden, with 2 400 immigrants in 2004, the highest inflow of foreigners came from Russia (1 700), Poland (1 600) Somalia (1 200) and Thailand (1 100). From Russia and Thailand a substantial proportion are women marrying Norwegian men.

The return-migration of Norwegians from other countries has been quite stable over the years, mostly between nine and ten thousand. In 2004 the figure had fallen to approximately 8 600, a slight decrease from 9 200 in 2003, cf. table A10.

The *gross inflow* to Norway in 2004 was approximately 36 500 persons; 27 900 foreigners and 8 600 Norwegians, cf. table A4 and A10. For most nationalities the immigrants were relatively evenly divided between the genders, but from countries in Eastern and Central Europe and from Thailand and the Philippines, a large majority were women, cf. table A4f and A4m.

2004 saw a *gross outflow* of almost 23 300 persons, 13 900 foreign nationals and 9 400 Norwegians; cf. table A5 and A10. This represents a slight decrease from 2003. Of the total number 11 300 were women and 12 000 were men, cf. A5f and A5m. Almost 60 per cent of all moving from Norway in 2004 went to EU-15, with Sweden as the major country of destination (4 900).

The *net immigration of foreign nationals* in 2004 was 14 000, 1 500 more than the year before. Net immigration is particularly noticeable in relation to Russia (1 400), Poland (1 300) and Thailand (900). Regarding Norwegian nationals, there was net emigration of 800 persons in 2004, slightly less than in 2003. Cf. table A9.

There are significant differences between various immigrant groups considering whether they come to stay in Norway permanently, or whether their visit is of a temporary nature, cf. table A11. On average 53 per cent of those immigrating between 1970 and 1999 were still in Norway after five years. Persons coming from countries like Vietnam (94 per cent), Iraq (92), Pakistan (87) and Iran (86) had the highest proportion staying. At the other end of the scale were persons born in Australia (24 per cent), USA (27), France (28) and Denmark (28).

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 five years.

Table 2.1 Migration flows 2000-2004

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Inflow:	36 500	34 300	40 100	35 900	36 500
- foreigners	27 800	25 400	30 800	26 800	27 900
- nationals	8 800	8 900	9 300	9 200	8 600
Outflow:	26 900	26 300	22 900	24 700	23 300
- foreigners	14 900	15 200	12 300	14 300	13 800
- nationals	11 900	11 100	10 700	10 300	9 400
Net migration:	9 700	8 000	17 200	11 300	13 200
- foreigners	12 900	10 200	18 500	12 400	14 000
- nationals	- 3 200	- 2 200	- 1 300	- 1 200	- 800

3 Refugees and Asylum Seekers

3.1 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, may be granted subsidiary protection in the form of a residence permit on humanitarian grounds.

In order to prevent the arrival of asylum seekers with no need for protection, and thereby to avoid undermining the asylum institute several have been implemented for the last couple of years. In 2005 these were some of the measures:

- An early distribution of asylum applications into different procedures: one for applications that may be rejected with no need for further inquiries, one for applications that may be approved with no need for further verifications and one for applications that warrant further investigations.
- Conclusion of readmission agreements with countries where returns currently are difficult.
- Focus on the need to harmonise the assessment of applications from the largest groups of asylum seekers with other receiving countries.

All asylum seekers are offered temporary accommodation in reception centres. These centres are run by NGO's, local municipalities or private companies on contract with The Directorate of Immigration. In 2005 four of the reception centres have been given extra resources in order to give asylum seekers with psychological problems better living conditions. Unaccompanied minor asylum seekers are given accommodation in special sections of eight reception centres. The accommodation given to these minors is differentiated according to whether they are younger or older than 15 years.

From the beginning of 2004 until November 2005, asylum seekers whose applications were rejected, were not offered accommodation in reception centres when a negative decision was final and the fixed exit date overdue. Exceptions were made for unaccompanied minors, families with children and persons having applied for the return programme by IOM, cf. chapter 7.2, and people with various medical problems. In reality only a handful of rejected asylum seekers have been evicted from reception centres by force.

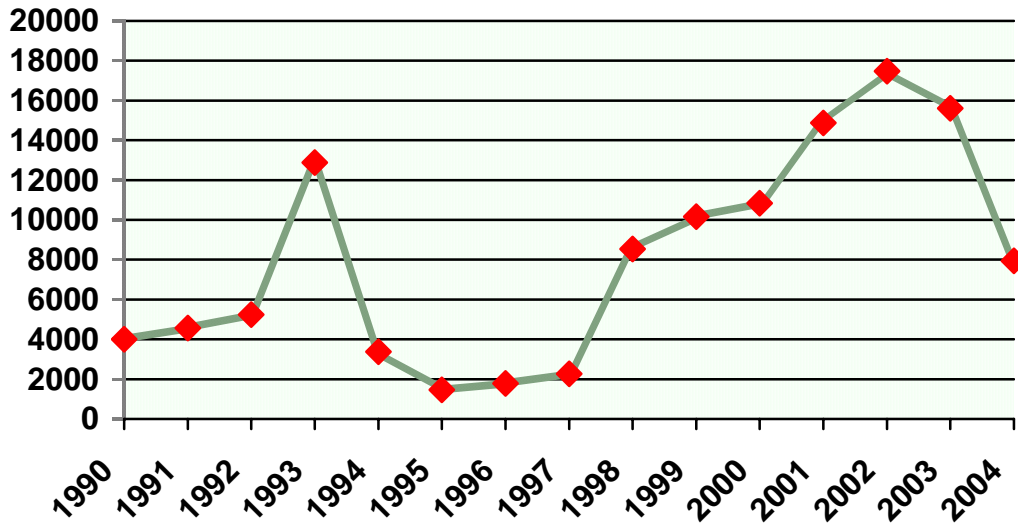
Since 2005 no one have been evicted from the reception centres, but when a planned special centre for this group is established, those who until now have lost their accommodation offer will be transferred there. Thereby the government will offer basic shelter and food. The above mentioned categories, excepted from the general rule, will continue to be accommodated in ordinary reception centres.

3.2 Flows and permits

Asylum seekers granted residence and refugees constitute an important category of immigrants. Over the years variations in the number of asylum seekers have probably accounted for more of the fluctuations in net migration than variations in job opportunities. During the five-year period 1998-2002 the number of asylum seekers to

Norway increased considerably, 2002 being a peak year with 17 500 arrivals from a variety of countries, cf. diagram 3.1. Historically, this is the highest number ever, cf. table A12.

Diagram 3.1 Asylum seekers - 1990-2004



In 2004 the number of applicants continued to fall, ending just below 8 000, almost half the number in 2003. The largest groups came from Afghanistan, Somalia and Russia with approximately 1000 applicants from each country, cf. table 3.1 below.

The downward trend has continued into 2005, with approximately 4 000 applicants during the first nine months, compared to 6 200 during the same period in 2004. During these nine months of 2005 half of the applicants have come from the same top five countries as in 2003 and 2004.

Table 3.1 Asylum seekers, total and by some major countries of origin. 2000 – 2004

Country of origin	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Total, of which:	10 842	14 872	17 480	15 613	7 950
Afghanistan	326	603	786	2 032	1 059
Somalia	910	1 080	1 534	1 601	957
Russia	471	1,318	1 718	1 893	938
Serbia and Montenegro*	4 188	928	2 460	2 180	860
Iraq	766	1 056	1 624	938	413
Iran	327	412	450	608	393
Ethiopia	96	173	325	287	148
Bosnia-Herzegovina	272	907	810	657	119

* Yugoslavia until 2003

The total number of applicants granted asylum increased for some years, but fell in 2004 cf. table 3.2. However, since fewer applications were processed this was 5 per cent of the applications, the same level as in 2003. During the first nine months of 2005 the level has increased to 10 per cent.

Table 3.2 Asylum seekers granted refugee status - first and second instance. 2000 - 2004

Level	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
1. instance	97	292	332	588	457
2. instance	4	4	10	21	51
Total	101	296	342	609	508

The low acceptance rate does not give the full picture of the number of asylum seekers who are given leave to remain in Norway. In 2004 3 600 asylum seekers were granted a resident permit on humanitarian grounds, slightly up from 3 200 in 2003, cf. table 3.3.

Table 3.3 Asylum seekers granted humanitarian status - first and second instance. 2000 - 2004

Level	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
1. instance	2 856	4 036	2 958	2 961	3 023
2. instance	343	265	326	219	600
Total	3 199	4 301	3 284	3 180	3 623

Furthermore, since 2003 it has been possible to distinguish between two categories of humanitarian status:

- a) Need for protection, without satisfying the criteria for convention refugee status
- b) Strong humanitarian concerns (health problems etc.)

In 2003 75 per cent belonged to category a) and 25 per cent to category b). During 2004, the figures changed to 43 per cent and 57 per cent. The ratio was almost the same during the first nine months of 2005.

In 2004 60 per cent of the applications assessed in substance were rejected in the first instance, down from 71 per cent in 2003. During the first nine months of 2005, this trend has continued, with 56 per cent rejections. This tendency is interpreted as a consequence of the successful implementation of measures to deter asylum seekers with unfounded claims to apply for asylum.

In 2004 26 per cent of the applications were rejected and transferred to another state in accordance with the Dublin procedure, cf. chapter 2.2, an increase from 20 per cent

in 2003. These claims are not assessed in substance. During the first nine months of 2005, the share of Dublin cases has fallen to 17 per cent of all the applications.

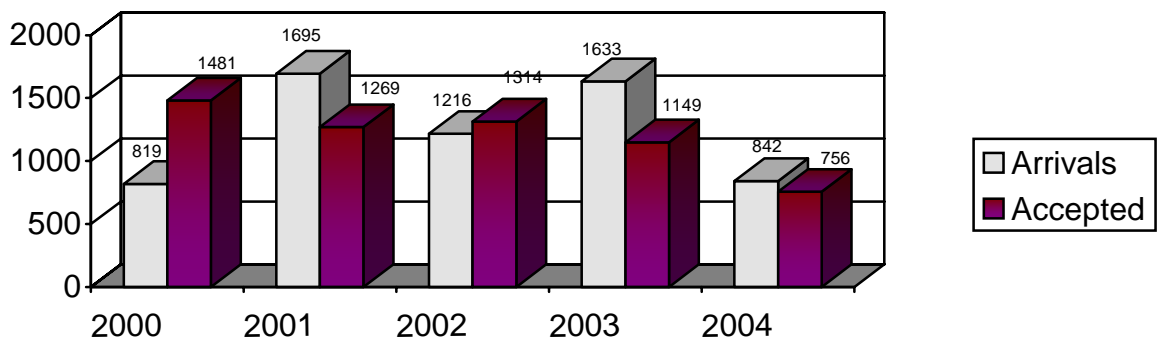
The number of asylum claims regarded as clearly unfounded has plummeted over the last couple of years. At the peak in 2002 up to 40 per cent of the asylum applications were categorised as such, and rejected on this basis. The decreasing number may partly be explained by the introduction of a simplified and accelerated procedure for applicants from countries in which persecution in the sense of the Refugee Convention is generally assumed not to take place. The goal of the Directorate of Immigration is to process cases falling into this category in less than 48 clock hours. For such rejected cases, appeals are normally not given suspending effect. Expulsion takes place shortly after a negative decision has been made in the first instance. In 2004 200 cases were processed in this way, while during the first nine months of 2005 the number was under 70.

3.3 Resettlement of refugees

In addition to asylum seekers, Norway admits a given number of refugees each year under an annual resettlement quota. A three-year perspective is applied, which means that the actual number of refugees resettled in Norway may vary from year to year within this period. Unused quota places may be carried over to following years. In addition, should UNHCR make an appeal for international burden sharing in a specific refugee situation, the quota may be expanded. The Storting set the quota for 2003 and 2004 at 750 places per year, while it was increased to 1 000 places in 2005. The new government has stated as its intention a further increase to 1 500, but not until 2007.

In 2004 slightly more than 750 refugees were accepted for resettlement, and almost 850 arrived this year, cf. diagram 3.2. Some of those arriving had been accepted the previous year.

Diagram 3.2 Number of resettled refugees 2000 - 2004



In 2004 Norway originally offered to resettle among others 300 refugees originating from Myanmar, 260 from Liberia and 55 from Iran. The actual arrival figures are different, but the same three countries were in focus.

Table 3.4 Resettlement of refugees, major countries of origin in 2004

Countries of origin	Resettled refugees
Liberia	377
Myanmar (Burma)	256
Iran	62
Sudan	28
Dem. Rep. of Congo	26

The 2005 resettlement quota has been pre-allocated to 300 refugees from Africa and 300 from South East Asia. Special missions have selected Congolese and Burundian refugees from Zaire and Malawi, and Myanmarese refugees from Thailand and Malaysia. The other places have not been pre-allocated to particular refugee groups, but priority is as earlier years given to "women-at-risk".

3.4 Placement in municipalities

Foreign nationals with refugee or humanitarian status enjoy full freedom of movement. They may in principle choose to settle wherever they want. In reality, most of them depend on public assistance to find suitable housing. Those who depend on assistance, have to settle in the municipality where they are placed. The Norwegian municipalities are sovereign when it comes to deciding on the number of refugees to accept. They are compensated financially by the central government for expenses they may have through the grant of a fixed sum per refugee over a five year period. For 2005 this sum was NOK 432 000 (appr. 55 000 Euro) for the whole period. In addition there were additional grants for placement of elderly and handicapped persons.

4 600 foreign nationals with refugee or humanitarian status were provided housing and integration measures by the municipalities in 2004. In addition 840 family members reunited with refugees or persons with humanitarian status in Norway were covered by this system.

3.5 Voluntary repatriation

Voluntary repatriation is seen as the best durable solution to a refugee problem, when conditions are safe. A government programme for voluntary repatriation for refugees has been in place since 1992. The programme consists of two main elements: individual benefits and support for return motivating projects. The individual pre-departure assistance is set at NOK 15 000 plus travel expenses. In addition, return-related projects are funded, including projects aiming at improving the information about conditions in the home country, at training refugees for the needs of reconstruction, or at reconciliation and tolerance.

Refugees have, with few exceptions, to a very limited extent chosen to repatriate from Norway. In 2004 only 77 persons repatriated, up from 55 in 2003. This is substantially lower than a few years ago. It is first and foremost refugees with temporary, collective protection who have chosen to benefit from the programme, i.e. refugees from Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo. Since 1999 more than 6 000 Kosovar refugees have received the individual assistance. Approximately 1 800 of them have later returned to Norway. The support must then be repaid.

4 Family-related immigration

4.1 Legislation and policy

In simplified terms, the Immigration Act stipulates that the closest 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 in the realm. 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 shall live together. The rules in the Immigration Regulations concerning spouses apply similarly to partners of the same sex when the partnership is registered.
- 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 18 when both parents have or have been granted residence in Norway. Certain other groups of children are also included.
- Specified groups of parents of an unmarried child under 18.

A wider range of family members may be granted residence permit on the ground of family links, but they may not invoke a right to such a permit.

In general, the family member(s) living in Norway must meet an income support requirement. This is met when a person can maintain himself and the applicant, on his own or together with the applicant. The principal must meet this requirement on his own when the applicant and/or the principal is under the age of 23. There are some possibilities for exemption from the main rule, among others when the principal is a Norwegian citizen. As a general rule, the income support requirement does not apply when the principal in Norway has refugee status, is a child or Nordic citizen, or has a permanent residence permit. For many of the categories of principals above, such a requirement was introduced in November 2003 when the spouse or cohabitant is under 23 years old. The main objective is to prevent that young persons of immigrant background are forced into marriage by their parents. The effects will be evaluated.

The new government has declared that the income support requirement for many types of family-related immigration will be upheld, but there might be some revisions of some aspects.

4.2 Flows and permits

Family links have for several years been the most significant background for long-term immigration to Norway. The total number of family-related immigration increased in 2004 to 12 750 of Immigration that more resources were put into handling a large backlog of such cases in 2004.

Major countries were Thailand, Iraq, Russia and Somalia, cf. Table 4.1 below. More than half of the cases involved husbands, wives or partners, while one third were children reunited with parents or entering with (one of) the parents. From countries like Russia and Thailand, a large majority of the permits concerned women married to Norwegians. Concerning persons over 18, 71 per cent of the permits were granted to women.

Out of close to 24 150 marriages contracted in 2004, 6 100 involved a Norwegian and a spouse who was a foreign national. Most existing and new trans-national marriages involved Norwegians and nationals from other European countries and from North America, but there is also a sizable number of Norwegian men who marry women from Asian countries, cf. table A13 and A14.

Table 4.1 Permits issued for family-immigration by major countries of origin. 2001 – 2004

Countries of origin	2001	2002	2003	2004
Total, of which:	12 142	14 607	10 469	12 750
Thailand	650	918	780	1 099
Iraq	1 696	1 737	940	909
Russia	637	905	797	742
Somalia	645	1 707	652	689
Germany	382	426	401	563
Pakistan	566	545	518	496
UK	394	420	330	453
Philippines	366	457	396	437
Turkey	490	465	445	418
Afghanistan	382	510	387	318
Other countries	5 934	6 517	4 823	1 367

5 Labour migration

5.1 Legislation and policy

The general rule is that all foreign nationals who intend to work or who want to run their own business in Norway must hold a work permit, cf. chapter 2.1. Nationals from Nordic countries are exempted from this rule, and EEA nationals only need a residence permit. Such an EEA-permit is needed when their stay in Norway exceeds three months.

General immigration regulatory conditions apply for the issue of job-related work permits. First, there must be a concrete offer of employment. Second, pay and working conditions must not be less favourable than those provided by relevant industrial agreements. Third, as a general rule the employment offered must be of full time.

Work permits for skilled persons may be the basis for permanent residence in Norway. Such permits are granted to persons with formal skills in a vocation or profession or others who have special qualifications. It is a condition that their competence is deemed necessary for the activity. Until a quota has been filled (5000 yearly since 2002) there is no labour market needs requirement, i.e. that the job for a certain period with no success has been offered labour in Norway and in the European Economic Area.

1 May 2004 transitional rules pertaining to the access of nationals of the new EEA member states in Central and Eastern Europe to the Norwegian labour market came into force (cf. chapter 2.2).

Several measures with the intention to avoid social dumping and thus protecting wage levels and work-life standards in Norway have been introduced in connection with the EEA enlargement.

The Labour Inspectorate and The Petroleum Safety Authority are according to regulations in force from 1 October 2004 authorised to carry out necessary inspections to ensure compliance with the terms of the work permits in the companies. Any indications of violations of these terms are to be reported to the immigrations authorities. The Labour Inspectorate and The Petroleum Safety Authority are also to oversee the enforcement of collective agreements declared universally applicable by The Norwegian Tariff Board. Any unconformity is to be investigated by the police. Some cases that might involve violations have been reported by the media and taken up by labour unions.

Employers of certain sectors may by a regulation be imposed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs to issue ID cards to their employees, if this is considered necessary for health, safety and environmental reasons. Building and constructions companies will be the first affected by the new regulation. Finally, there are amendments concerning tax registration by Norwegian firms buying services from abroad.

The new government has announced its intention to strengthen measures to prevent social dumping and will review relevant rules and regulations.

5.2 Demand for labour

In May 2005 the overall unemployment rate in Norway was 3.3 per cent, compared to 3.7 per cent in May 2004. The decrease was highest within the building and construction sector and in manufacturing. Among job seekers with immigrant background the registered unemployment rate in May 2005 was 9.0 per cent, a decrease from 9.8 in one year. About two thirds of them came from countries outside the OECD.

Although the demand for labour fluctuates significantly, the demographic trends in Norway indicate that in the years to come there will be a need for labour immigration. This is due to a reduced growth of the Norwegian labour force and a growth in the number of old age pensioners and elderly in need of care. There are also examples that even in times of increasing unemployment, employers and certain sectors have difficulties recruiting personnel.

The Nordic labour market is open, and labour migration to Norway from Sweden, Finland and Denmark is important. Sectors like construction and health care are dependent on Nordic labour. Likewise, there is an open labour market with the EU-15, Cyprus Malta, Switzerland and Liechtenstein.

5.3 Flows and permits

It is difficult to obtain an accurate picture of the total labour-migration to Norway. Since Nordic nationals do not need any permit, immigration authorities do not register them. The total number of new permits granted in relation to employment in 2004 was 33 000, up from 25 650 in 2003. 25 000 of these permits were granted to persons from the new EEA countries.

In 2004 as earlier years the majority of work permits granted to nationals from countries outside the EEA were for seasonal work, but the significant decrease in the total number of such permits, cf. diagram 5.1 below, is a reflection of the new opportunities for working legally in Norway that citizens of the new EEA member countries had from May 1. The same change contributed to the drop to approximately 750 specialist permits; down from 1 100 in 2003, cf. table 5.1. Figures for the first eleven months of 2005 indicate a significant increase. Still, the figure is much lower than the annually fixed level of maximum 5 000 permits that may be granted without any labour market needs test. All in all, approx. 8 800 new work permits for third country nationals were issued, a significant decrease from 22 400 in 2003. This is as mentioned a result of the EEA enlargement.

Table 5.1 Work permits issued for specialists/skilled. 2000 – 2005*

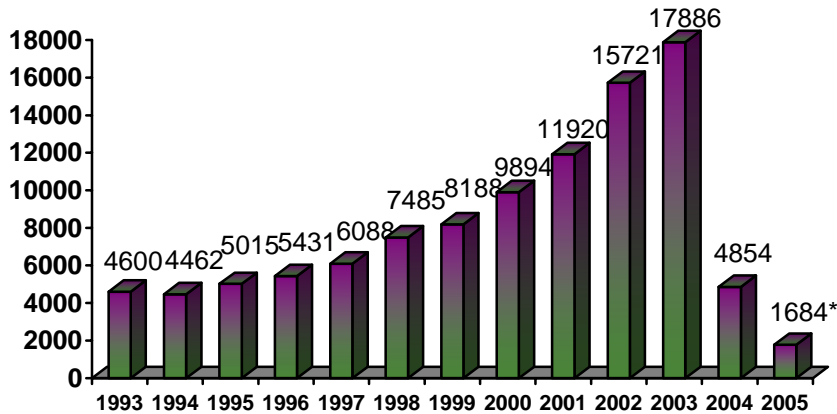
Permits	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005*
Total	305	777	1676	1127	747	1155
- from Poland	26	183	516	330	91	24

* Figures by October 31, 2005

In 2004 the number of seasonal permits fell to 4 850 from the all-time high of 17 900 in 2003. More than 98 per cent of the seasonal workers came from Central and Eastern Europe. Nationals of Poland and Lithuania were the two dominant groups, with

around 2 000 and 1 000 permits. During 2005 the number has continued to drop, and the largest groups have come from Rumania, Ukraine and Belarus.

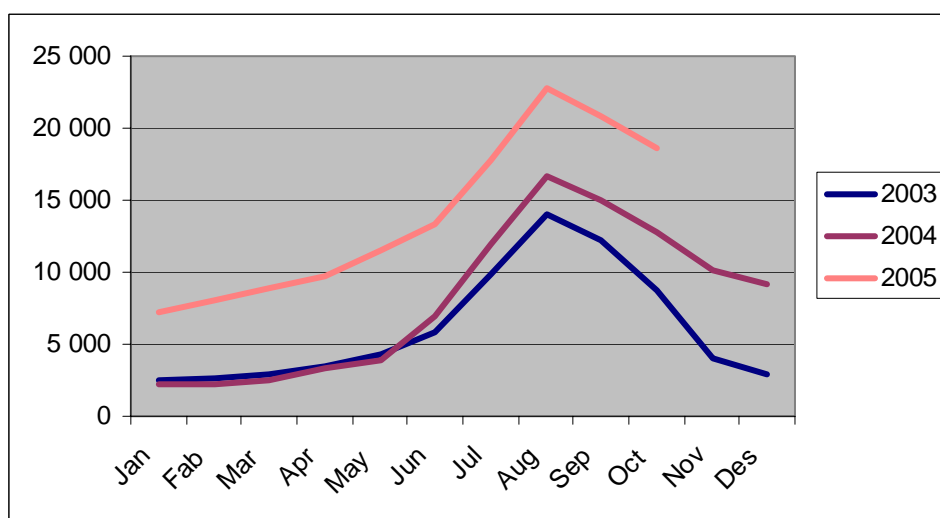
*Diagram 5.1 Number of seasonal work permits issued 1993-2005**



* Figures by September 30, 2005

The EEA-enlargement from 1 May 2004 has had a substantial impact on labour migration to Norway. Despite transitional restrictions on the free flow of labour from eight countries there has been a significant increase compared to 2003. In 2005 the increase has continued, but a much larger proportion of permits are now renewals, indicating that more migrants are staying for a longer period. A report to the Nordic Ministerial Council documents that during 2004 Norway received approximately half of the individual labour migration to the Nordic countries from the new EEA member states.

Diagram 5.2 Number of currently valid work-related permits held by nationals from the new EEA member states at the start of each month. 2003, 2004, 2005



The diagram illustrates this increase. It also shows that the pattern indicating a peak period in the summer, mainly due to seasonal work in agriculture, continues after the

enlargement. By mid-October 2005 32 300 EEA permits had been granted to persons from the eight new member countries, compared to 25 700 during the same period in 2004. This is an increase of 25 per cent. In 2005 almost all permits were EEA-permits, but half of them were renewals. In 2004 12.5 % were renewals and a similar proportion were work permits, not EEA-permits.

As in 2004 two thirds of the permits in 2005 have been granted to nationals of Poland. Many are seasonal workers in agriculture, but an increasing number come for more long-term work, mainly in housing and construction. 42 per cent of the permits had a duration for more than three months and 28 per cent more than six months, also indicating that other types of work than seasonal work in agriculture are involved.

6 Migration for education and training

6.1 Legislation and policy

A foreign national who has been admitted to an approved educational institution, generally a university or college, may be granted a residence permit to study in Norway. The applicant must be able to finance his/her studies and must have a place to live.

A study permit does not confer the right to take employment in Norway. However, students may apply for a part-time work permit or a permit to work during vacations when employment would not hamper their schooling. Full-time employment for a restricted period of time may also be applied for. Before foreign students may apply for a work permit, they must have received a concrete offer of employment.

A foreign student must leave Norway after completing the studies if they do not fulfil the criteria for another type of permit. The option to apply for a work permit as a specialist/skilled person after completion of studies in Norway was introduced in 2001. A research project on the effects of this change has been initiated, and results will be available early in 2006.

There were no significant changes in legislation or policy concerning foreign students during 2004-2005.

6.2 Flows and permits

Table 6.1 below shows that migration for educational and training purposes was almost exactly on the same level in 2004 as in 2003, and on a higher level than the three foregoing years. 62 per cent of the permits were granted to Europeans. Major source countries were Poland, Germany, China, Russia, the Philippines and USA. The number of permits to Chinese students declined significantly from 2003 to 2004, as considerable misuse of such permits were disclosed. Students from the other Nordic countries are not included as they do not need any form of residence permit.

Table 6.1 Permits issued for education and training by major categories. 2000-2004

Migration category	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Student (EEA)	963	936	1186	1328	1 713
Student (non-EEA)	1953	1413	1578	2097	1 828
Post doctorate	43	32	23	43	48
Folk high school	141	310	403	345	185
Au pair	277	666	743	948	1 019
Trainee	643	726	601	543	496
Others	198	189	161	164	131
Total	4500	4289	4704	5468	5 440

7 Irregular migration and return

7.1 Legislation and policy

The maximum penalty for a person who, for the purpose of profit, conducts organised activity to assist foreign nationals to enter the realm illegally is 6 years of imprisonment. Furthermore, it is considered a criminal act to abandon to another person 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 is two years imprisonment.

In 2004 stricter expulsion rules were introduced. It became easier to expel foreigners convicted for acts of violence or harassment. Procedures for expulsion due to severe violence and violence against partners or family-members have been accelerated

As part of the new plan of action to combat trafficking in women and children for the period 2005 – 2008, there are measures concerning increased penalties for traffickers and better protection for victims.

There are no special programmes for regularisation of status for illegal migrants. However, several countries refuse to take back their own nationals who do not return voluntarily. A person, whose application has been rejected, some times remains in Norway if his or her identity has not been established or the country of origin refuses to receive a national returned by force. As long as they have not personally obstructed 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 foreign national to his or her country of origin.

Persons whose application for asylum has been rejected, can also call the Immigration Appeals Board's attention to the fact that his or her country of origin refuses to receive them. The Board then has the opportunity to reconsider their decision, and grant legal residence due to this new information.

Furthermore, a person who has his or hers application for asylum rejected, will lose the right to accommodation in a reception centre, cf. chapter 3.3. At present, the Directorate of Immigration makes an exception for especially vulnerable groups, such as separated children, families with children, persons with health problems and persons who cooperate to make their return journey possible. These groups may stay in the reception centre until the time of their exit.

7.2 Illegal entry and residence

Facts and figures concerning the extent of irregular migration in Norway, both entry and residence, are lacking. However, we know that the problem exists, particularly in the major cities with a relatively high proportion of immigrants and less social transparency.

In 2004 only 6 per cent of asylum seekers in Norway had legal travel documents when they applied. In addition approximately 90% of the applicants apply at a police station inside the country, not at the border. Yearly a significant number of asylum seekers, many of them having their application turned down, leave the reception centres without giving any new address. In 2004 4 200 persons left reception centres

without giving any new address and had not returned to a centre by November 2005. Some may return to their home country, some go to other countries and some try to stay in Norway illegally to make a living through work or criminal acts.

The police has 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 others have come directly to work, neither applying for asylum nor for a work permit. Those apprehended are expelled if there are no legal obstacles.

During 2004 the police returned 5 000 foreigners, a reduction from 7 000 in 2003. 80 per cent of them were asylum seekers, who had their applications turned down, but also criminals and other categories. Halfway in 2004 the figure had reached 1 600. This tendency mainly reflects the significant decrease in the number of asylum seekers, cf. 3.2.

7.3 Return

Return measures are important elements in a comprehensive migration policy. The aim is to facilitate return and provide motivation, so that persons who have had their asylum claim rejected, may return in dignity to the country of origin.

Since 2002 the Norwegian government is cooperating with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) on a programme for “Assisted Voluntary Return”. It aims at facilitating the voluntary and dignified return of rejected asylum seekers and irregular migrants residing or stranded in Norway. The services offered in the framework of the Norwegian Voluntary Assisted Return Programme include: information and counselling to potential returnees, assistance in getting travel documents, travel arrangements, post-arrival reception, onward travel to the local destination and limited follow-up. In 2004 approximately 1 000 persons returned with IOM, compared to 1 500 in 2003. During the first half of 2005 the number was only 300. The falling number of asylum seekers is the main explanation.

During 2004-2005 Norway has concluded six new readmission agreements and intends to start negotiations with several new countries.

8 Foreigners and the immigrant population

8.1 Population growth and fertility rates

The total population of Norway grew by 28 900 persons in 2004, which gives a growth rate of 0.6 per cent, the same level as in 2003. This growth rate is among the highest in Europe, due to a birth surplus of 15 750 as well as net immigration of 13 200. By January 1, 2005 the total population was 4,6 million. Cf. table A1.

The total fertility rate for the whole population in Norway was 1.80 in 2003-2004, down from 1.87 ten years earlier. The rate varies between women with Norwegian background and first generation immigrants. In 2003-2004 it was 1.73 for the former and 2.30 for the latter. For both categories the trend was downward, from 1.83 and 2.57 respectively in 1994-95. The highest rate was among women from Asia, Africa and Latin America (2.62 in 2003-2004, down from 2.93 in 1994-95). Cf. table A20.

In 2004 the highest number of children born in Norway with two foreign-born parents come from Somalia, Iraq and Pakistan, cf. table A21.

8.2 Foreigners

By 2005 the total number of foreign nationals was 213 300, up 8 600 (4.2 per cent) from the previous year, cf. table A1. This is 4.6 per cent of the total population, cf. table A16.

The number of European nationals still constitutes the majority of foreign nationals: 120 500 or approx. 56.5 per cent of all foreign nationals, cf. table A16. This share has gradually been reduced over the years, down from 65 per cent in 2000. Around 4 000, or almost half of the increase of foreigners in 2004, came from European countries. This was mainly due to an increase of nationals from Russia, Poland, Germany and Lithuania. Other countries with a significant increase were Afghanistan, Somalia, Iraq and Thailand. There was a reduction in the number of nationals from several countries, mostly due to high rates of naturalisation. Among such countries were Bosnia-Herzegovina, India, Iran, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Chile.

The number of nationals from Asian countries has increased gradually since 2000. By January 2005 they accounted for 25.5 per cent of the total foreign population, while they made up 19 per cent by 1 January 2000. The largest group from Asia came from Iraq, numbering 13 700 persons.

Nationals from African countries increased by 1 900 during 2004. Around 10 per cent of foreign nationals in Norway are from Africa, while the percentage was 6.5 per cent four years earlier. Somali nationals constitute the largest group of foreigners, numbering 10 500 persons.

The total number of nationals from countries in North, Central or South America was unchanged from 2003 to 2004 (14 500), which means that the relative size decreased (down from 7.1 to 6.8 per cent). Almost half of this category of foreign nationals come from USA, while the second largest group is from Chile (2 100).

These patterns and changes only partly reflect shifts in migration flows (cf. chapter 2). More important is the significant differences in the inclination to apply for Norwegian nationality (cf. chapter 9.2). Immigrants from countries in Western Europe and North America show little interest in changing nationality, compared to most other groups of foreign nationals. For example, the number of nationals from Bosnia-Herzegovina is half of what it was in 2000; from over 12,000 to less than 6,000. This change is mostly due to naturalisations, not return-migration. In this respect the number of Vietnamese nationals, 1 600, is strikingly low. In the immigrant population there are 17 900 persons of Vietnamese origin, in other words, more than 10 times the number of nationals. Cf. Table A16 and A17.

Table 8.1 Main nationalities of foreigners. 2000-2005

Nationalities	1.1.2000	1.1.2001	1.1.2002	1.1.2003	1.1.2004	1.1.2005
Sweden	25 136	25 170	25 140	25 241	25 432	25 773
Denmark	19 205	19 405	19 653	20 008	20 006	20 060
Iraq	5 790	9 891	10 778	13 038	13 373	13 677
UK	11 367	11 074	10 966	11 188	11 018	11 202
Somalia	4 844	6 152	6 588	8 377	9 861	10 541
Germany	6 707	7 055	7 538	8 233	8 839	9 587
USA	8 325	8 037	7 915	7 976	7 703	7 614
Russia	2 749	3 288	3 882	4 829	6 565	7 383
Pakistan	7 363	6 731	6 867	6 676	6 572	6 378
Serbia and Montenegro*	10 249	8 849	6 497	6 004	5 565	5 802
Bosnia and Herzegovina	12 196	11 611	8 826	7 850	5 952	5 203

* Yugoslavia until 2003

8.3 Immigrant population

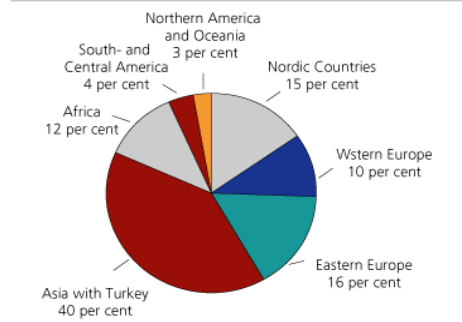
55 per cent of the population growth in 2004 was due to the growth of the immigrant population. Immigrant population is here defined as persons born in a foreign country of parents with no Norwegian family background and persons born in Norway of parents who are not born in Norway, cf. table A17. It increased with 16 000 persons or 4.6 per cent, reaching a level of 365 000 persons, 7.9 per cent of the total population, cf. table A18. The increase was mainly due to net immigration for this group, to a lesser degree to a birth surplus. The increase is on the same level as in 2003.

The number of immigrants with two foreign born parents reached 301 000 by the end of 2004. The number increased by almost 12 000 from 2003. The number of persons born in Norway of two foreign-born parents reached almost 64 000, an increase of 4 100.

The composition of the immigrant population has changed considerably over the years. A growing proportion originates from Asia, Africa and to some extent Latin America. There has also been an increase from South-Eastern and Central Europe. Altogether 70 per cent come from these different parts of the world by 2005, while the share was less than one third in 1980. When only including Asia, Africa, South- and Central America the share was 56 per cent.

Diagram 8.1 Immigrant population by world region. 1.1.2005

The immigrant population in Norway, by country background. 1 January, 2005. World regions. Per cent



If we only look at foreign born immigrants with two foreign-born parents, slightly less than 50 per cent come from Asia, Africa and Latin America and slightly more come from Europe, North America and Oceania, cf. table 8.2 below and table A17 in the annex.

Table 8.2 Foreign born residents with two foreign born parents by region of birth. 2000-2004

Regions	1.1.2000	1.1.2001	1.1.2002	1.1.2003	1.1.2004	1.1.2005
Nordic countries	50 570	50 526	50 470	51 135	50 701	49 937
Rest of Europe	72 283	73 857	75 375	79 528	82 552	87 817
North America, Oceania	9 873	9 715	9 682	10 076	9 116	8 862
Asia (incl. Turkey) Africa, Latin America	104 903	114 939	122 795	136 523	146 735	154 429
Total	238 462	249 904	259 221	277 262	289 104	301 045

The major countries of origin are listed below, cf. table 8.3. Since 2001 Pakistan has been on the top of the list if both immigrants and children of two immigrants are included. However, if those born in Norway are not included, there are more from Sweden and Denmark. As much as 43 per cent of the immigrant population of Pakistani origin is born in Norway, while only 4 per cent of the Swedes are born here.

Diagram 8.2 Top ten groups in the immigrant population, foreign born and born in Norway. 1.1.2005

The ten largest immigrant groups in Norway. 1. January 2005. Absolute figures

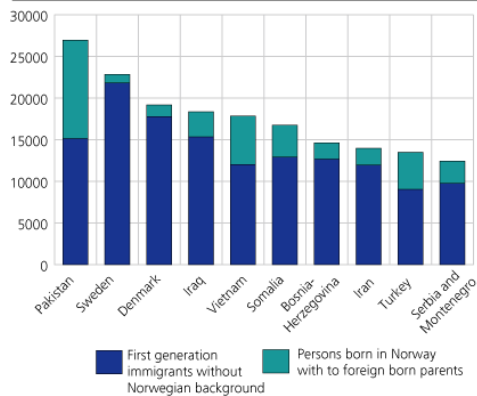


Table 8.3 Immigrant population by main countries of origin. 2000-2005

Countries of origin	1.1.2000	1.1.2001	1.1.2002	1.1.2003	1.1.2004	1.1.2005
	0					
Total, of which:	282 487	297 731	310 704	332 793	348 940	364 981
Pakistan	22 831	23 581	24 565	25 546	26 286	26 950
Sweden	23 240	23 010	22 772	22 870	22 871	22 859
Denmark	18 863	19 049	19 169	19 401	19 318	19 197
Iraq	7 664	12 357	13 630	16 437	17 295	18 369
Vietnam	15 390	15 880	16 386	16 944	17 414	17 864
Somalia	8 386	10 107	11 269	13 689	15 586	16 765
Bosnia and Herzegovina	12 614	12 944	13 159	15 498	15 216	14 641
Iran	10 354	11 016	11 908	12 733	13 506	13 983
Turkey	10 481	10 990	11 550	12 343	12 971	13 504
Serbia and Montenegro *	15 466	15 469	14 466	9 941 ¹	11 070	12 455
Sri Lanka	9 826	10 335	10 925	11 475	11 918	12 288
Germany	9 102	9 448	10 019	10 670	11 232	11 879
United Kingdom	11 161	10 925	10 820	11 087	10 945	11 069

* Yugoslavia until 2003

If the present trends continue there will be more immigrants in Norway from Iraq than from Denmark by the end of 2005. The number of Somalis has also grown rapidly, while there has been a reduction in the number of persons from Bosnia-Herzegovina since the beginning of 2003.

46 per cent of the immigrant population had Norwegian nationality. One fifth of the population in Oslo belong to the immigrant population, and one third of the immigrant population live in Oslo.

8.4 Refugee population

The term "refugee population" refers to persons resident in Norway, who have come to Norway because of flight, including reunited family members. Children born in Norway with refugee parents are not included.

By January 2005, the refugee population in Norway counted over 107 000 people, or 2.3 per cent of the total population. 76 per cent of the refugee population were registered as principals while 24 per cent came to Norway as dependants. 54 per cent of the principals were initially registered as asylum seekers and 24 per cent as transfer refugees. Persons from Iraq, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Somalia, Iran and Vietnam made up the largest groups.

¹ The marked decrease in immigrants originating from Yugoslavia is caused by a reassessment of both the national origin of people from Yugoslavia arriving prior to the division of the country and of the different national categories. Thus, this change also affects the data regarding the other countries originating in the former Yugoslavia (Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia and FYR Macedonia).

9 Naturalisations

9.1 New Nationality Act

The Storting approved the bill for a new Nationality Act in June 2005. The act will come into force in September 2006. The new act contains an exhaustive list of conditions for Norwegian nationality (citizenship). According to the new act an applicant has the right to acquire Norwegian nationality if all the conditions listed in the act are fulfilled.

Compared to the current legislation, the most important changes to be implemented by the new act are:

- Documentation of language skills in Norwegian, or Sami as a condition to obtain Norwegian nationality.
- A child is by birth automatically given the nationality of both parents.
- A child at the age of 12 years can apply for and be granted a Norwegian nationality irrespective of the consent of the parents.
- Children, who cannot renounce their other nationality before a certain age, when applying for Norwegian nationality, can nevertheless acquire Norwegian nationality.
- A voluntary ceremony which includes an oath and an official gift.
- If a person does not give up his or her former nationality, the Norwegian nationality will be withdrawn.

The new act is a continuance of the current legislation in the following sense:

- The applicant still has to give up his or her present nationality to be able to acquire Norwegian nationality.
- The applicant still has to have lived in Norway for seven years to be able to acquire Norwegian nationality, but with the new act it is acceptable that these seven years are within a period of ten years.

The new act is in accordance with the European Convention on Nationality of 1997. The convention will be ratified as soon as the new act comes into force.

The Government is planning to present a second bill proposing some amendments in the new act. The amendments concern: 1) the authority of the ministry to instruct the Directorate of Immigration and the Immigration Appeals Board on matters concerning the new act and 2) the introduction of a legal authority for the directorate and the board to collect additional information needed to handle the applications.

9.2 Naturalisations

During the first half of the 1990s the number of naturalisations reached an average of 7 300 per year, while it was considerable higher during the second half of the decade (10 200). During the first four years of the second millennium the average has been almost 9 000 per year, cf. table A22. In 2004 8 150 persons were naturalised, a small increase from the previous year. By January 2005 there were more than 167 000 naturalised Norwegians who were considered to be part of the immigrant population.

In 2004 almost 33 per cent of the naturalised citizens originated from Europe, down from 47 per cent. As the year before the largest group came from Bosnia-

Herzegovina, but the share from this country was only 10 per cent (827 persons), compared to 25 per cent in 2003. 44 per cent originated in Asia (including Turkey), up from 37 per cent. 16 per cent originated in Africa, an increase from 10.5 in 2003.

Some of the shifts from one year to another, for example among groups like Pakistanis, who have been residents in Norway for a long period, may be a reflection of priorities and capacity problems in the Directorate of Immigration, rather than of any dramatic changes in the inclination to naturalise. Other shifts may be attributable to the changing size of the number of persons who are eligible in a particular group. This reflects migration patterns some years ago.

Table 9.1 Naturalisations, main countries of origin. 2000-2004

Country of origin	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Total, of which:	9 517	10 838	9 041	7 867	8 154
Bosnia-Herzegovina	875	2 999	1 229	1 965	827
Pakistan	1 077	409	829	497	568
Somalia	332	676	546	392	526
Turkey	523	356	412	398	393
Serbia and Montenegro*	1 322	1 199	614	310	303

* Until 2003 Yugoslavia

The percentage of the eligible foreign nationals who prefer to change nationality, varies between different groups, cf. table A23. In 2004 only 1-2 per cent of nationals from countries in Western Europe and North America who were eligible for Norwegian nationality, applied. This has been the usual pattern for many years.

On the other side, for countries like Iraq, Somalia, Iran, Russia and the Philippines the percentage was very high. For Iraq, Somalia and Iran and Russia there were more naturalised persons than the number of persons having stayed in the country for more than 7 years. The reason is that in these groups there were many minor children and persons marrying Norwegians. An exception from the required length of residence in Norway applies to these categories.

10 Integration and inclusion

10.1 Introduction scheme

The introduction scheme for newly arrived immigrants includes refugees and family members reunited with them, in addition to persons granted residence on humanitarian grounds and family members reunited with them. The individual right and obligation only apply to immigrants who require basic qualifications. The scheme combines an introduction programme with an economic benefit which participants are eligible for. The aim of the programme, which will be adapted to individual needs and abilities, is to provide basic skills in the Norwegian language, insight into the Norwegian society and to prepare for participation in working life and/or further education. The programme, organised by the municipalities, will normally last up to two years and will be offered as soon as possible after placement in a municipality, cf. chapter 3.4. The programme is obligatory for persons between 18 and 55 years within the relevant groups.

As of September 2005 the introductory law also includes regulations regarding compulsory training in Norwegian language and social studies. The target group is every immigrant between 18 and 55 who have received their resident to stay after September 2005, and completion of the 300 hours class is from the same time a condition for receiving a settlement permit and Norwegian nationality. The training must be completed within the first three years in Norway. Immigrants between 55 and 67 have a right, but no obligation to participate. Labour migrants have an obligation, but no right, which means they have to pay for the course themselves.

Beyond the compulsory training, those who need more training will have the opportunity to take extra classes. The municipalities are given the responsibility for offering such training. All training must be completed within the first five years in Norway.

10.2 Diversity policy

The Storting has approved the main principles for a policy on diversity as outlined in the Government's Report no. 49 (2003-2004) on diversity through inclusion and participation, cf. Innst. S. nr. 185 (2004-2005). This policy aims to ensure that everyone enjoys the same freedom and opportunities – irrespective of religious, cultural and ethnic background. Acceptance for differences is a central goal. At the same time, the diversity policy aims to unify and secure support of some common values and goals for social development, which are basic features of a viable democracy. Everybody - irrespective of personal convictions, likes and dislikes - must respect these values. Furthermore measures are necessary to combat racism and discrimination, and to ensure that the public services and institutions are suited to meet the needs and requirements of a diverse population.

Special measures for newly arrived immigrants are necessary to ensure that immigrants have equal opportunities. Strengthened language and job training are of utmost importance in this respect. Through such efforts the intention is to counteract tendencies towards increased social and economic differences between persons with immigrant background and the rest of the population. Both with regard to objectives and means, a distinction is made between first-generation immigrants and their descen-

dants. An important objective is to secure that descendants of immigrants have the same opportunities as others when they reach adulthood, first of all in the labour market.

In Norway the general principle is mainstreaming. The principal rule is that the needs of immigrants are provided for within broad general programmes or policies. Diversity must be recognised and respected by ensuring that different needs in the population are reflected in the design of public services and general social systems. Offering equal services that take account of the fact that the inhabitants may have new and different needs, constitutes recognition in practice of the new diversity.

To promote mainstreaming, concrete and measurable objectives on diversity and inclusion of immigrants and their descendants have been developed. The annual fiscal budget includes concrete and measurable objectives for what the different ministries are expected to achieve within their own areas of responsibility vis-à-vis immigrants and their descendants. The objectives focus on outcome indicators, describing the situation of the immigrant population, usually compared to that of the population as a whole. The objectives will be subject to regular reporting through indicators in the fiscal budgets for the coming years, so that progress may be measured.

11 Education

11.1 Schooling of language minority pupils

The number of pupils with immigrant background has increased significantly since the beginning of the 1970s. In 2004 7.5 per cent of the total amount of children in the age of primary school (6-12), and 7 per cent of the children in the age of lower secondary education (13-15) belong to this category, while it is 8.1 per cent for youth in the age of upper secondary education (16-19).

Among children with immigrant background in the age of primary school, 56 per cent are born in Norway with parents born abroad. For children in lower secondary education it is 40 per cent, while it is 23 per cent in the age of upper secondary education. (Source: Statistics Norway)

The percentage of minority language pupils varies between different schools, parts of cities, municipalities and counties. The highest percentage is in Oslo where one third of the pupils have immigrant background. In several schools in Oslo the percentage is around 80 per cent. In other counties it varies between 1 and 7 per cent.

In Norway, every pupil has the right to receive teaching adapted to individual abilities and aptitudes (the Norwegian Education Act, section 1-2). With regard to minority language children, including children seeking asylum or children who have been given refugee status, the child has the right and the obligation to undergo primary and lower secondary education “when it is probable that a child will reside in Norway for a period of more than three months”.

Presently a more systematic approach to how to provide pre-school children with adequate language skills is developed as a follow-up of the strategic plan on equal education in practice.

Pupils in primary and lower secondary education, whose mother tongue is neither Norwegian nor Sami, are entitled to special education in Norwegian until they are proficient enough to attend mainstream classes in Norwegian at their school. When necessary, the same pupils are entitled to mother tongue tuition, content and language integrated teaching or both. This applies to pupils new to education in Norway, as well as others who have not reached an appropriate level in Norwegian.

Minority language pupils, who need language tuition to make satisfactory use of upper secondary education, have the right to such instruction pursuant to the rules concerning special education.

Throughout Norway more than 118 different languages are taught in schools. In the autumn of 2004 more than 35 800 pupils, or 5.8 per cent of all pupils in primary and lower secondary education, received special education in Norwegian. 3.2 per cent of all the pupils in primary and lower secondary education received mother tongue education, and about 20 000 pupils received either mother tongue education, content and language integrated learning or both.

Table 11.1 Minority language pupils in primary and lower-secondary school receiving adapted instruction - percentage of all pupils. 2000-2004

School-year	In Norwegian	In minority language
2000-2001	5.3	3.0
2001-2002	5.5	3.1
2002-2003	5.6	3.1
2003-2004	5.8	3.2
2004-2005	5.8	3.2

Both national and international surveys show significant differences in the extent to which minority and majority pupils benefit from instruction in primary and lower secondary school. They also show that fewer young people from language minorities begin and complete upper secondary education and higher education than majority pupils. Girls complete their upper secondary education to a higher degree than boys. On the other side, among male descendants with two foreign born parents a larger share take higher education than among other men in Norway. Among women there is no difference in such rates.

In addition many adult immigrants drop out of Norwegian language training programmes, and they often have greater problems than ethnic Norwegians in further education and on the labour market, cf. chapter 12.

11.2 Children with immigrant background who are sent abroad for education

Some children with immigrant background, particularly those with parents of Pakistani origin, are being sent to their parent's native country to go to school for a shorter or longer period. For some children, this practice may lead to difficulties in participating in the Norwegian society when they return to Norway. The official view is that all children have a right and a duty to go to school. Parents decide whether their children should get their education in Norway or in other countries, but the rights of the child must always be taken into consideration.

In 2004 a Norwegian NGO, Human Rights Service, wrote a report on this practice. As an answer to this report, the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development has considered measures that can be implemented to reduce the negative consequences for children with immigrant background who have been going to school abroad.

In 2005 the ministry made public a report on children with immigrant background going to school abroad. A research project on children who are sent to school in Pakistan has also initiated, both regarding the motives of the parents, the extent of this practice and what kind of consequences schooling abroad may have. The project will be finished in May 2006.

11.3 Adult education

Knowledge of language is an important precondition for active participation in society. From September 2005 it is compulsory for newly arrived adult immigrants to participate in 300 lessons of training in Norwegian language and social studies. Be-

yond the compulsory training, those who have further needs for training will have the opportunity to take more classes (up to 3,000 lessons, depending on the needs of the individual). To accommodate the new system, the curriculum and tests are modified. A new subsidy was also introduced from the 1. of September. The subsidy is now given per capita based on a fixed rate for western and non-western immigrants. It is also a subsidy per student who finish the language test.

The municipalities are given the responsibility for offering the training, which is free of charge for the individual. The participation in the compulsory part of language training is a requirement for the later granting of a settlement permit and for obtaining Norwegian nationality.

This new training system applies to those who are refugees, persons granted humanitarian status, persons who have collective protection and persons who are family members of these categories. It also includes persons who have family reunification with Norwegian nationality. Persons who come from outside the EEA-/EFTA area and have a work permit are entitled to take part in 300 lessons of training, but have no legal right to get the courses free of charge. People from the EEA-/EFTA area have no legal obligations to take part in language courses.

This new system applies to immigrants who have been given a permit of residence to Norway after 1 September 2005. Those who have been given a residence permit before this date will still be offered non-mandatory classes free of charge in a transitional period of five years. They 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 government compensates the municipalities financially for giving such classes.

Table 11.2 Norwegian language and social studies for adult immigrants – lessons and participants 2001-2004

	2001	2002	2003	2004
Lessons	1 134 254	1 525 433	1 453 474	1 631 503
Participants				
- total	26 013	30 433	29 320	25 733
- in reception centres	7 165	7 826	1 843	1 094

The decrease in the number of participants in 2004 is a result of language training not being offered to asylum seekers, labour migrants and persons from the EEA-/EFTA area. The increase in the number of lessons indicates that the training is more intensive. From 2003 language training in asylum reception centres were limited to persons with a residence permit, waiting for placement in a municipality. The new government has declared that some form of training in Norwegian will be reintroduced for asylum seekers who have not yet been granted a residence permit.

12 The labour market

12.1 Employment of immigrants

Of the total population aged between 16 and 74, 69.3 per cent were employed in 2004. 72.5 per cent of the men and 66.0 per cent of the women were employed. For first generation immigrants 56.6 per cent were employed in 2004. 61.1 per cent of the men were employed. The employment rate among first-generation immigrant women has increased over the last years from 38 per cent at the lowest in 1994 to 52.2 per cent in the last quarter of 2004.

Table 12.1 Employment rate for total population aged 16-74 and for first generation immigrants - per cent of total number of persons aged 16-74 in each group. 1999 - 2004

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Population	61.3	61.1	60.8	70.1	69.4	69.3
Immigrants	50.9	50.9	51.3	57.5	56.6	56.6

The employment rates until 2001 include only the number of employees. However, from 2002, also short term hired employment and self-employment is included. The rates from 2002 on are therefore much higher than those reported previously. Cf. table A24 and A25 for more details.

There are significant variations in employment among immigrants from different regions of origin. Whereas immigrants from Nordic countries had an employment rate of 71.5 per cent in the year 2004, the rate among immigrants from African countries was 41.2 per cent, from Asia 49.8, from Eastern Europe (non-EU-members) 55.6 and from Latin America 58.4 per cent.

There are both structural and cultural causes for such variations. For example, differences in age structure and educational background might explain some of it. Attitudes to the participation of women in the labour market might be another factor. When taking the differences in age structure between the total population and most immigrant groups into account, the “underemployment” of immigrants is even more significant. There is a higher proportion of immigrants in working age. However, employment rates increase with length of residence, first of all among immigrants from non-western countries.

Unemployment among immigrants is still considerably higher than in the population at large. In general immigrants residing in Norway have more problems in finding and keeping jobs than ethnic Norwegians have. Inadequate knowledge of the Norwegian language, insufficient or unrecognised education, lack of work experience from - and knowledge about- Norwegian working life, and last but not least discrimination in the labour market are supposed to be main causes for this situation.

Table 12.2 Unemployment rate by region of origin - per cent of the workforce. 1999 - 2005

	May 1999	May 2000	May 2001	May 2002	May 2003	May 2004	May 2005
Total population	2.2	2.6	2.3	2.9	3.7	3.7	3.3
Immigrants, total	6.3	7.3	6.6	7.8	9.6	9.8	9.0
- Nordic countries	2.3	2.6	2.4	3.1	4.4	4.1	3.6
- Western Europe	2.6	3.2	2.9	3.6	4.4	4.4	3.9
- Eastern Europe	9.1	9.9	8.2	9.2	10.5	10.3	8.9
- North America, Oceania	3.1	3.4	2.8	4.4	5.7	5.3	4.5
- Latin America	6.2	8.7	7.5	7.7	11.2	10.8	10.1
- Asia	9.0	10.4	9.2	10.6	13.0	13.1	12.3
- Africa	12.5	14.2	12.6	14.6	17.8	18.2	17.5

The unemployment rate among immigrants reached a low point in 1998 when it was 6.0 per cent. From 1999 until 2004 there was a steady increase. It reached almost 10 per cent. In May 2005 unemployment among immigrants had fallen to 9 per cent. The unemployment for the total labour force decreased from 3.7 per cent to 3.3 per cent.

There are significant variations in unemployment rates among immigrants from different regions of origin. Whereas immigrants from Western European countries are at about the same level as Norwegian nationals, unemployment among immigrants from Asian and African countries is considerably higher. Immigrants from Africa had the highest unemployment rate at 17.5 per cent in May 2005, compared with 12.3 per cent for immigrants from Asia. The high rate among Africans, with Somalia as a major country of origin, is to some extent possible to explain with reference to the composition of the group. Compared to other groups there are many refugees with short time of residence among Africans.

Unemployment among immigrants from South and Central America and Eastern Europe was 10.1 and 9.3 per cent respectively. Persons from other Nordic countries had the lowest unemployment rate at 3.6 per cent, followed by immigrants from other western European countries at 3.9 per cent. Unemployment among immigrants from North America and Oceania was 4.5 per cent. However, this is the smallest immigrant group, with only 186 registered unemployed. Immigrants from Eastern Europe had the highest decline, at 1.3 percentage points. The rate fell between 0.4 and 0.8 among the other groups.

Unemployment among immigrants from the new EU countries in Eastern and Central Europe was 4.7 per cent at the end of May 2005. This compares with 10.6 per cent among immigrants from other eastern European countries. In other words, unemployment among immigrants from the new EU countries is almost on the same level as that of immigrants from Western Europe and North America.

Looking at the population as a whole, unemployment among men was 3.4 per cent in the second quarter of 2005, compared with 3.1 per cent for women. The corresponding rates for immigrants were 9.7 and 8.3 per cent respectively. In both groups

women experienced a decrease in unemployment. For women it decreased by 0.2 percentage points in the entire population and 0.3 percentage points in the immigrant population. Unemployment fell by 1.1 percentage points among immigrant men and by 0.6 percentage points for men in the population as a whole.

The unemployment rate only reflects the number of persons who are actively seeking employment; that is, the number of persons who are registered as such with the public employment service. Therefore, it does not reflect the total number of persons without gainful employment.

12.2 Labour market measures for immigrants

One of the overall policy objectives is to ensure that newly arrived immigrants are self-reliant as soon as possible after arrival. It is a priority to reduce unemployment among immigrants. The lower employment rate among immigrant groups may have different causes, including discrimination. Reports on employers' attitudes towards hiring immigrants, both in the public and private sector, show that even under circumstances where the immigrants' international experience would be of value, there is scepticism to recruit them. In order to reduce discrimination in employment the Working Environment Act was amended some years ago. In addition the plan of action to combat racism and discrimination for the period 2002-2006 contains measures focused on the labour market and the state recruitment policy, cf. chapter 14.1.

Immigrants have access to vocational training courses arranged by the Public Employment Service (PES). Labour immigrants must have obtained a settlement permit. This rule only applies if the worker is unemployed, or is in danger of losing his/her employment. Immigrants participate to a much greater extent in labour market measures than ethnic Norwegians do. Immigrants, along with other groups who are particularly exposed to problems, for example vocationally disabled job seekers, young people and the long-term unemployed, are target groups within the labour market policy. They are given priority when it comes to labour market measures and receive special treatment and follow-up services.

The labour market measures of the PES can be separated in several categories - recruitment/ job-placement measures, job training and labour market training measures. For 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. The PES has also developed courses and training, which are specially designed for immigrants, consisting of qualification courses with practice positions. They involve labour market training and vocational training in combination with language training.

Table 12.3 Participation in labour market schemes by region of origin –per cent of the population. 2000 – 2005

Region of origin	May 2000	May 2001	May 2002	May 2003	May 2004	May 2005
Total population	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.5
Immigrants, total	1.7	2.0	1.7	2.0	2.3	1.8
-Nordic countries	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.4
-Western Europe	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.6	0.4
-Eastern Europe	3.4	2.9	2.2	2.4	2.8	2.1
-North America	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.5	0.9	0.6
-Latin America	2.0	2.2	1.7	1,9	2.0	1.9
-Asia	2.3	3.0	2.3	2,8	3.1	2.4
-Africa	2.7	3.7	3.3	3.9	4.1	3.5

The number of persons on ordinary labour market schemes (job programmes) decreased from 21 061 in May 2004 to 17 185 in May 2005. The figure decreased from approximately 6 000 to 5 000 for immigrants. Immigrants accounted in 2005 for 29 per cent of all participants on such schemes. Most came from non-western countries.

As a percentage of the entire population, participation in labour market schemes decreased from 0.6 per cent to 0.5 per cent. For the immigrant population this figure increased from 2.3 to 1.8 per cent. Immigrants from Africa and Asia had the highest participation rates in May 2005 at 3.5 and 2.4 per cent respectively. Certain groups of newly arrived immigrants are covered by the introductory scheme, cf. chapter 10.1. The municipalities have the main responsibility for this programme, in cooperation with among others the PES.

13 Participation in elections

13.1 Local elections

After residing continuously in Norway for more than 3 years, all foreign nationals have the right to vote in Municipal and County Council Elections. From 1999 onwards nationals from the Nordic countries have such voting rights if they have moved to Norway by 31 March in the year of the election. In order to be eligible to vote in parliamentary elections at the national level, for the Storting, Norwegian nationality is a precondition.

In the Municipal and County Council Election of 2003 117 200 foreign nationals had the right to vote. This was an increase of 15 500 since the elections of 1999. Iraqi nationals had the biggest increase (4 900), succeeded by Srilankans (1 700) and Germans (1 200). Nationals from Bosnia-Herzegovina decreased by 2 700, mainly due to naturalisation. 38 per cent of foreign nationals who were entitled to vote, came from another Nordic country. 111 200 Norwegians with immigrant background were entitled to vote, an increase of 27 400 since 1999. Norwegians with their origin in Pakistan and Vietnam constitute the biggest groups.

In the Municipal and County Council elections of 2003 only 34 per cent of foreign nationals entitled to vote did so. In 1999 the percentage was 38. 41 per cent of Norwegian nationals with immigrant background voted in 2003. The electoral turnout for Norwegians originally from other western countries was 64 per cent, for non-western 36 per cent, a decrease from 66 and 43 per cent respectively at the elections in 1999.

The electoral turnout of foreign nationals from western countries was 39 per cent, while for non-westerns it was only 25 per cent. In comparison with 1999 the turnout decreased by 8 percentage points for non-western immigrants. The turnout for other groups was unchanged from 1999. The electoral turnout increased for both groups with age and number of years in Norway. The population of non-western immigrants is younger than that of the western immigrants. In 2003 there was no difference in the electoral participation of men and women among Norwegians with immigrant background.

Table 13.1 Participation in local elections by region of origin - per cent of the electorate. 1999 and 2003

Categories	1999	2003
Total population	62	59
Foreign qualified voters	38	34
- western/non-western*	40/33	39/25
- women/men	41/34	35/33
Naturalised nationals	50	43
- western/non-western	66/43	64/36
- women/men	52/49	41/41

* From countries in Asia, Africa, Latin-America and Eastern Europe

13.2 National elections

In the parliamentary election in 2001 the participation of Norwegian nationals with immigrant background fell to 52 per cent, compared to 63 per cent in 1997. Compared to the population as a whole, their participation in 2001 was 23 percentage points lower than for the rest of the electors. A reduction of electors from western countries, a predominance of young electors and a shorter period of residence in Norway are some explanations of the reduction in election turnout among Norwegians with immigrant background.

54 per cent of the women and 49 per cent of the men with immigrant background used their right to vote in 2001. Danish women had the highest participation rate (81 per cent) whereas women with background from Lebanon had the lowest (31 per cent). Only 21 per cent of the men with background from Thailand used their right to vote.

At the parliamentary election in 2005, 123 700 Norwegian citizens with immigrant background were entitled to vote. This was an increase of 24 000 since the parliamentary election in 2001, cf. Table A26. In Oslo, approximately 12 per cent of the electors were Norwegian nationals with immigrant background compared to 3.6 for the country as a whole. There was a decrease in the number of immigrants from western countries entitled to vote. The largest groups entitled to vote were of Pakistani (12 700), Vietnamese (11 000) and Bosnian (7 900) origin. There were 6 600 more persons with a background from Bosnia-Herzegovina who were entitled to vote at the parliamentary election in 2005 compared to the election in 2001, due to a high rate of naturalisation, cf. chapter 9.2.

The participation rates of Norwegians with immigrant background in the 2005 election is not yet available.

14 Racism and discrimination

14.1 The Plan of Action to Combat Racism and Discrimination (2002-2006)

The time-span of the plan of action reflects the Government's view that combating racism and discrimination must be based on long-term, continuous, focused attention. The present plan focuses on initiatives and actions taken by Norwegian authorities. The plan applies to the indigenous people, national minorities and the immigrant population of Norway.

A follow-up mechanism for the plan of action has been established, consisting of representatives from relevant ministries, The Directorate of Immigration, The Centre for Combating Ethnic Discrimination, The Contact Committee for Immigrants and the Authorities and NGOs working in the field of racism and discrimination.

The measures set out in the plan cover the following areas: The labour market, public services, school/education, the police/public prosecutors/courts, documentation/surveillance, the Internet, local communities, strengthening of judicial protection against ethnic discrimination and racist expressions, and general measures.

A status report by 1 June 2005 showed that most of the measures under these target areas were either implemented or in process. The following achievements deserve particular attention:

- A new Anti-Discrimination Act has recently been adopted by the Storting. The act applies to all areas of society. The Government will also establish joint machinery against discrimination: Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud and Equality and Anti-Discrimination Tribunal, cf. ch. 14.2.
- A number of initiatives have been implemented to improve interpreting services. A national register of interpreters has been established, and educational programmes for interpreters have been developed.
- A research and development programme has been initiated to strengthen the minority perspective in public service provision in general. Specific measures have also been implemented to enhance expertise within certain sectors. Furthermore steps have been taken to encourage more educational institutions to focus on understanding diversity.
- In addition to other positive measures all public enterprises have been instructed to interview at least one applicant with immigrant background when making new appointments, provided that the applicant is qualified.

14.2 Legal protection against ethnic discrimination

The Government proposed by the end of 2004 a bill prohibiting ethnic and religious discrimination on the basis of a report on legal protection against ethnic discrimination (NOU 2002: 12). The proposal complies with the requirements of the EU Council Directive 2000/43/EC, implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin. Furthermore, the government has submitted a proposal for a bill establishing the new anti-discrimination authority mentioned below.

A working group report from May 2003 recommended that a single equality body should be responsible for enforcing both acts on discrimination (gender and ethnicity). After consulting with stakeholders the government has decided to establish a single authority for combating gender and ethnic discrimination - The Equality and Discrimination Ombud.

The Ombud's role will be to investigate incidents where alleged breaches of the laws have taken place. Following investigations of complaints, the Ombud may then make a recommendation. It is not mandatory for an organisation to comply with this recommendation. If an organisation does not comply with the Ombud's recommendation, this dispute may be referred to an appeals board for cases of discrimination. The appeals board will be given the authority of making formal and legally binding decisions in such cases (for example to decide specific sanctions). In addition to legal cases, the Ombud's tasks will be advocacy, development of competence, information campaigns, giving general support to public and private bodies and documentation and monitoring.

15 Information and reports in English

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

www.ssb.no/innvandring_en/

This web-publication, which was updated by the end of 2004, is particularly relevant:

Tronstad, Kristian Rose (ed.)

Immigration and immigrants 2004 (SA 67)

Statistics Norway 2004

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

Updated statistics on asylum applications, permits etc. are available from the Directorate of Immigration:

<http://www.udi.no/templates/OversiktssidePerAar.aspx?id=3589>

In addition a yearly publication on statistics is available:

Facts and Figures 2004

Directorate of Immigration 2005

http://www.udi.no/upload/Publikasjoner/Årsrapporter/engelsk/sept05_EngkArsrapp.pdf

Some recent studies in the field of migration have been published in English:

Blom, Svein 2004

Labour Market Integration of Refugees in Norway under changing Macroeconomic Conditions.

Reprints 284, Statistics Norway

Order at: <http://www.ssb.no/www-open/english/order/>

Dølvik, Jon Erik and Eldring, Line 2005

Mobility of labour and services across the Baltic Sea after EU enlargement: Nordic differences and commonalities

Paper presented at the ESA Conference, September 9-12, 2005, Torun, Poland

http://www.fafo.no/Oestforum/Kunnskapsbase/Publikasjoner/FoU/050817_esa_jed_1el.pdf

Godzimirski, Jakub M.

Tackling Welfare Gaps. The Eastern European Transition and New Patterns of Migration to Norway

Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, Centre for Russian Studies 2005

<http://www.nupi.no/Norsk/Publikasjoner/NUPI-rapporter/2005/>