

# International Migration 2006-2007

SOPEMI-report for Norway



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## 1 Overview

- A proposal for a new immigration act was submitted to the Norwegian parliament in June 2007. The main objective of the new act is to modernise the current legislation. In particular the intention is to clarify aspects of immigration legislation and the restrictions posed by international legal obligations.
- In 2006 labour immigration was the major reason for immigration from non-Nordic countries to Norway, as much as 40 per cent. This was the first time during the period 1990 – 2006 that labour immigration was the major entry category. Furthermore, the number of registered non-Nordic immigrants in 2006 reached the ground breaking figure of 29 500. One third of the immigrants came from new EU member states, mainly from Poland.
- In total 284 000 non-Nordic immigrants have entered Norway from 1990 until the end of 2006. During this period 43 per cent were admitted as family members, more than four out of ten of these to establish a *new* family. 29 per cent were granted residence after arriving as refugees and asylum-seekers. 16 per cent came as labour immigrants, while 11 per cent arrived for educational purposes. 7 out of 10 immigrants who have entered during this period still lived in Norway by the end of 2006.
- At the same time there were 342 000 immigrants and 73 500 persons born in Norway with two foreign-born parents living in the country, including Nordic nationals. In combination these two groups represent 8.9 per cent of the population.
- In 2006 the net immigration of foreign nationals was 25 000, an increase by more than 6 000 compared to 2005. This is the highest level ever recorded. The significant increase was first of all a result of the high level of labour immigration, especially from Poland. The net emigration of Norwegian nationals was 1 200 in 2006, which is an increase of 900 from the previous year.
- In 2006, 40 500 new permits were granted to labour migrants, an increase from 28 400 permits in 2005. Out of the total number of new permits 29 100 were granted to nationals of the new EEA-countries (including Bulgaria and Romania), 5 100 to nationals of other EEA-countries and 6 000 permits granted to third country nationals. Of the latter category 2 000 permits were issued for skilled work. When combining new permits and renewals, there was an increase from 2005 of more than 20 000 permits.
- In August 2007 the same transitional regulations as for eight of the countries joining the EU in 2004 were in place for workers from Bulgaria and Romania. A white paper on labour migration was presented to Stortinget, the Norwegian parliament, in the spring of 2008. The white paper will discuss the future need for labour migration, for possible amendments to the current legislation and for policy measures relevant for the entry and stay of labour migrants.

- The number of permits issued on the basis of family ties increased and reached about 14 000 in 2006. The most important countries were Poland, Thailand, Somalia and Germany. The major change was the doubling of family-based permits granted to Poles. For one third of the family immigration permits, the reference person in Norway was a Norwegian national with no immigrant background (or a person from another Nordic country). For countries like the Philippines, Russia and Thailand, most of the permits concerned women marrying Norwegians. To combat forced marriages the government plans to tighten the rules regarding income in relation to family immigration.
- The number of asylum seekers in 2006 was 5 300, about the same level as the previous year. The largest groups came from Iraq, Somalia and Russia. During this year about 16 per cent of the permits granted through the asylum procedure, resulted in asylum. An additional 41 per cent of the decisions resulted in a permit granted on humanitarian grounds. Almost half of this latter category of permits were granted due to a need for protection. The rejection rate in the first instance dropped from 55 to 43 per cent. In addition to these permits close to 1 000 refugees were accepted for resettlement in Norway in 2006.
- The objectives of *The Plan of action for integration and social inclusion of the immigrant population* are to prevent lower social participation and poorer living conditions among immigrants compared to the population in general; to ensure that immigrants as quickly as possible take part in the labour market and society; and to ensure equal opportunities for immigrants and their descendants. Labour market schemes, instruction in Norwegian for adult immigrants and targeted assistance are central elements in the plan. Measures to prevent forced marriages and to provide better assistance and protection to victims of such marriages, will receive particular attention in 2008. The funding in the fiscal budget is increased for 2008, totalling EURO 80 million.
- Reporting on the effects of the measures in the plan of action for integration and social inclusion of the immigrant population indicates the following:
  - More adult immigrants with 5 years of residence complete the final test in Norwegian language and social studies.
  - Employment among immigrants has increased. The rate is 60 per cent.
  - Unemployment among immigrants has been reduced. It was 5 per cent by May 2007, compared to 7.3 per cent one year earlier, but still three times higher than for the total population.
  - There are considerable variations in unemployment according to country of origin, from 1.8 among immigrants originating in Western Europe to 11.2 per cent among those from Africa.
  - The number of immigrant families with low income has not been reduced, and many children with immigrant background live in households with persistent low income.
  - An increasing proportion of children with immigrant background attend kindergarten.
  - The proportion of descendants of immigrants under 25 years of age in employment and education is similar to the level among young people without immigrant background and higher than among immigrant youth.

- In 2007 an evaluation of the Introduction Programme for refugees and immigrants documents that the main elements in the Introductory Act to a large extent had been implemented in the municipalities. Meanwhile, the formal implementation of key instruments does not necessarily imply that the quality of implementation is high, nor the absence of future challenges.
- A Commission to propose a comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation was appointed by the Government June 1, 2007 and shall submit a proposal for a more comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation.

## **2 Migration – general characteristics**

### **2.1 Legislation and policy**

The Immigration Act of 24 June 1988 regulates the entry of foreign nationals into Norway and their right to residence and work. In simplified terms, four categories of immigrants 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 change their status after receiving a job offer on the completion of their studies. The other categories may, depending on certain criteria, be granted either permanent or temporary residence.

Two kinds of permits may be issued: residence permits and 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 certain 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, to students and persons on various types of exchange programs. 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.

Norway implemented the Schengen agreement on March 25, 2001 and the rules of the Dublin II regulation on September 1, 2003. EU regulations 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, which in practice means Swiss nationals.

When the EEA was enlarged to include ten new EU member countries on May 1, 2004, the Norwegian government instituted transitional rules in the initial two-year period when national rules might apply for workers from the new member states (with the exception of Cyprus and Malta). The transitional rules stipulate that migrant workers from the relevant states are required to obtain an EEA-permit before they start working. Such permits are issued for full-time employment at normal rates of



pay and under normal working conditions. These regulations were extended on May 1, 2006, in principle until May 1, 2009. However, the need for maintaining them is reviewed regularly. The same regulations were instituted for employees from Bulgaria and Romania on August 1, 2007.

A proposal for a new immigration and asylum act was submitted to Norwegian parliament (Stortinget) in June 2007. The proposal will probably be adopted by Stortinget during the first half of 2008, and enter into force on January 1, 2010.

#### **Proposal for a new Immigration Act**

A proposal for a new Immigration Act was submitted to the Norwegian parliament in June 2007. The main objective of the new act is to modernise the current legislation. In particular it is intended to clarify aspects of immigration legislation and the restrictions posed by international legal obligations.

While the current act gives the government the power to determine many of the main principles to the government through regulations, the proposed act includes many of the more detailed regulations. Because of the strong political focus on immigration issues, it has been deemed reasonable that Stortinget should decide more of the detailed the content of the regulations.

In the asylum field the main change in the new proposal is a broader refugee concept. This will not only include persons who meet the criteria of article 1A of the 1951 Refugee Convention, but also all other applicants covered by the non-refoulement provisions of any international convention to which Norway is a party. The most important of these is the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. In other words:

Those who are eligible for Subsidiary Protection Status under the EU Qualification Directive, will be granted refugee status under the new Norwegian act.

A practical result of this change will be a strengthening of the right to family reunification for those who fall under the new refugee concept: While, today, those who are eligible for subsidiary protection, must be able support their family economically, this will no longer be the case when refugee status is granted.

The proposal stipulates that where practice may be inconsistent with UNHCR`s guidelines or recommendations with regard to protection, the case will, as a rule, be referred to the seven-member "Grand Board" of the Immigration Appeals Board. Even today, the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion may request a convening of the Grand Board to assess questions of principle.

In the proposal the government furthermore signals that it intends to tighten the rules regarding subsistence requirements in the new Immigration Regulations.

## **2.2 Migration flows**

With the exception of 1989, Norway has had net immigration<sup>1</sup> since the late 1960s, cf. table A10. The annual average almost doubled from 6 300 yearly for the period 1986-1990 to 11800 for the period 1996-2000, and increased further to 13 600 for the period 2001-2005, cf. table A6. From 2005 to 2006 there was an increase of almost

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

5 300 persons in net immigration. The net immigration of 23 700 persons in 2006 was by far the highest ever recorded.

The level of *emigration* has also increased over the years, but at a much slower pace than immigration. Emigration is mostly determined by the economic cycles in Norway, or exceptional events as the return of many Kosovars during 2000-2001, in addition to the size and composition of the immigration the previous years.

During 2006 the *immigration of foreign nationals* to Norway increased by 6 000, cf. table A7 and A10. Almost 37 500 foreign nationals, 45 % of them women, were registered as immigrants by the Central Population Register. This means that they arrived with the intention to stay for more than 6 months, and had the legal right for this. Asylum seekers are normally registered as immigrants only after having been settled in a Norwegian municipality following a positive outcome of their application. Normally, an asylum seeker whose application has been rejected will not be registered as an 'immigrant', even if the application process has taken a long time.

The large increase in inflow from 2005 to 2006, consisted of immigrants from other industrialized countries, particularly from new EU-countries. The largest group was from Poland with 7 400 immigrants, 4 200 more than the previous year. After Poland, the highest inflow of foreigners came from Sweden (3 400), Germany (2 300), Denmark (1 500), Lithuania (1 300) and Somalia (1 200). From Thailand (1 100), the Philippines (1 100) and some other countries a substantial proportion of immigrants 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 2006 the number dropped slightly to 8 400, compared to approximately 8 800 in 2005, cf. table A10.

The *gross inflow* to Norway in 2005 was approximately 45 800 persons; 37 400 foreigners and 8 400 Norwegians, cf. table A4 and A10. For most nationalities the immigrants were relatively evenly divided between the genders, but from important countries like Poland almost 80 per cent were men and from Lithuania 62 per cent. From countries like Thailand and the Philippines, a large majority were women (73 and 75 per cent), cf. table A4f and A4m.

2005 saw a *gross outflow* of 22 100 persons, 12 500 foreign nationals and 9 600 Norwegians; cf. table A5 and A10. This represents a minor increase from 2005. Of the total outflow 10 800 were women and 11 200 were men, cf. A5f and A5m. The largest outflow from Norway in 2006 were to Sweden (4 500) and Denmark (3 100).

The *net immigration of foreign nationals* in 2005 was 24 900, 6 200 more than the year before, cf. table A10. Net immigration was particularly noticeable in relation to Poland (6 800), Lithuania (1 100) and Somalia (1 000). There was net emigration of Norwegian nationals, 1 200 in 2006, 900 more than in 2005, cf. tab. A10.

There are significant differences between various immigrant groups considering whether they come to stay in Norway permanently, or whether their visit is temporary, cf. table A11. On average 54 per cent of those immigrating between 1970 and 2000 were still in Norway after five years. Countries in Asia had the highest propor-

tion staying (80 per cent on average), while persons from Oceania had the lowest proportion staying (26 per cent). With 92 per cent Vietnam was the single country with the highest proportion still residing in Norway.

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

**Table 2.1 Migration flows 2000-2006**

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
<b>Inflow:</b>	36 500	34 300	40 100	35 900	36 500	40 200	45 800
- foreigners	27 800	25 400	30 800	26 800	27 900	31 400	37 400
- nationals	8 800	8 900	9 300	9 200	8 600	8 800	8 400
<b>Outflow:</b>	26 900	26 300	22 900	24 700	23 300	21 700	22 100
- foreigners	14 900	15 200	12 300	14 300	13 800	12 600	12 500
- nationals	11 900	11 100	10 700	10 300	9 400	9 100	9 600
<b>Net migration:</b>	9 700	8 000	17 200	11 300	13 200	18 400	23 700
- foreigners	12 900	10 200	18 500	12 400	14 000	18 700	24 900
- nationals	- 3 200	- 2 200	- 1 300	- 1 200	- 800	- 300	- 1 200

Source: Statistics Norway

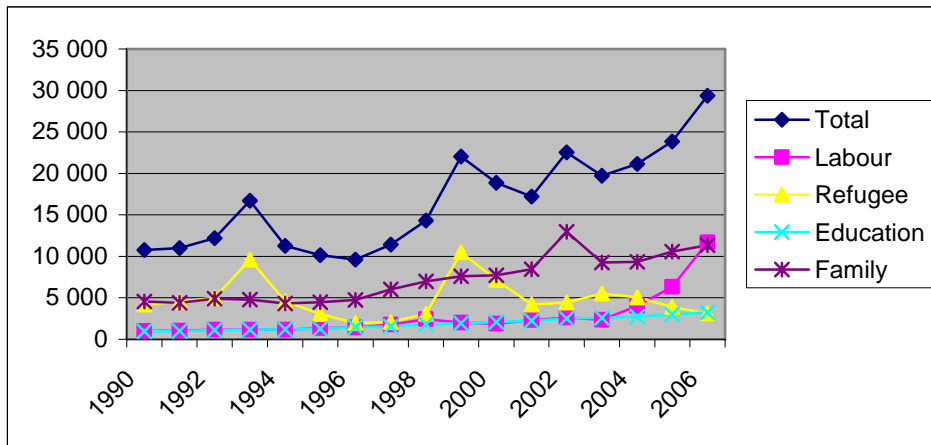
### 2.3 Immigration according to entry categories

In statistics on immigration according to entry category, published by Statistics Norway for the first time in 2006, four such main categories are distinguished – family, labour, protection/humanitarian and education/training/exchange. These are derived from a classification of different types of permits granted to non-Nordic nationals who are registered as immigrants in the Norwegian population register. The 83 000 immigrants who are Nordic nationals are not included in this figure as they do not require any type of work or residence permit.

During the period from 1990 until the end of 2006, 284 000 non-Nordic nationals immigrated to Norway. About 122 000, or 43 per cent of all registered immigrants, were admitted as family members of a resident. 29 per cent arrived as refugees and asylum-seekers. 16 per cent came as labour migrants, while 11 per cent arrived for education etc.

During 2006 29 500 new non-Nordic immigrants were registered. For the first time labour immigration was the largest category, only a little larger than family-based immigration. Each category was 40 per cent of the total, cf. diagram 2.1 below. 65 per cent of the labour migrants were from Poland. During the last two years labour migration has almost tripled. Approximately 10 per cent of the immigrants were granted a permit due to a need for protection or on humanitarian grounds. Immigration based on education, training and cultural exchange was on the same level. In 2006 58 per cent of the immigrants came from Europe, 24 per cent from Asia, 11 per cent from Africa and 6 per cent from North-and South America or from Oceania.

Diagram 2.1 Immigration according to entry categories, 1990 - 2006



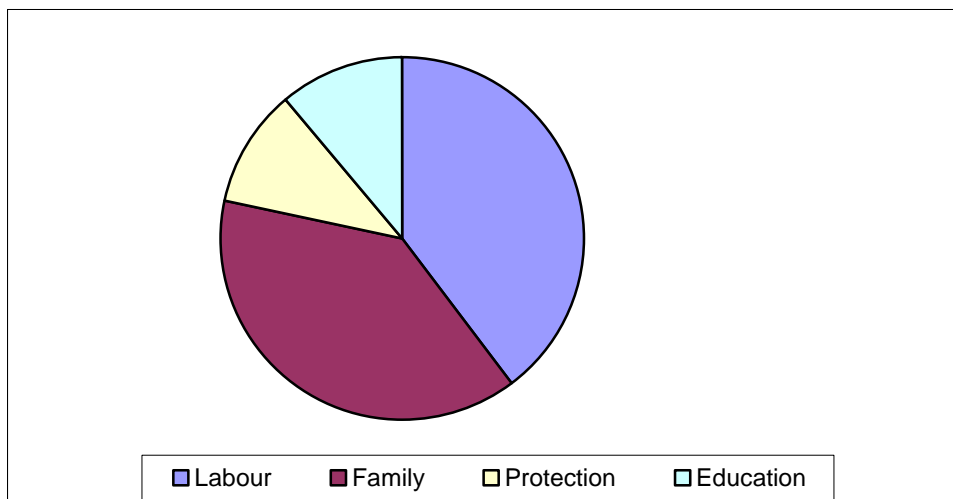
Source: Statistics Norway

The number of immigrants from eight new EU countries, mainly Poland and Lithuania, has doubled each year since 2004. This was almost one third of the total Non-Nordic immigration in 2006. For the period 1990 – 2006 the largest Non-Nordic group came from Iraq, 18 300 persons, followed by immigrants from Serbia (and Montenegro), Poland and Somalia with more than 15 000 each.

Of 11 400 persons who arrived in Norway as family immigrants in 2006, almost 6 900 came through family reunification. The largest groups were from Poland, Somalia, Germany and the Netherlands. 4 500 immigrants came to establish a new family through marriage or partnership. The major groups came from Thailand, Pakistan, the Philippines and Russia. 230 were from Pakistan, and 100 of this group came to live with a person born in Norway with both parents born in Pakistan. 2 600, or 57 per cent of the 4 500, came to live with a person in Norway without any form of immigrant background. Almost 600 in this group were from Thailand.

For the whole period 1990 – 2006 71 300 came for family reunification while 51 200 came to establish a new relationship, mostly through marriage. Of the latter 57 per cent involved a person in Norway without any form of immigrant background.

Diagram 2.2 Immigration according to entry category 2006



Source: Statistics Norway

7 out of 10 of those who have immigrated since 1990 still live in Norway. Among refugees and persons granted residence on humanitarian grounds the figure is 82 per cent, while it is 38 per cent among students, au pairs and trainees. This is also quite high, considering that students initially are granted only temporary permits. This means that quite a large number of students later qualify for permanent residence on another basis, mostly family or work. For labour migrants the residence rate is 63 per cent while it is 80 per cent for family-related migration.

### **3 Family-based immigration**

#### **3.1 Legislation and policy**

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

- Spouse - both parties must be over 18. It is a condition that the spouses will 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, for instance parents of adults, may be granted a residence permit on the basis of family links, but they do not have a right to such a permit, like the categories listed above.

In general, the family member(s) living in Norway must meet an income support requirement. This is met when a person can maintain himself/herself and the applicant alone or together with the applicant, or when the applicant is self-sufficient. The reference person must meet this requirement alone when the applicant and/or the reference person is under the age of 23. As a general rule, the subsistence requirement does not apply when the reference person in Norway is a Norwegian citizen (and both reference person and applicant are over 23), a child, a Nordic citizen, has refugee status or a permanent residence permit.

The Norwegian government intends to tighten the rules regarding support requirements in the new Immigration Regulations, which are due to come into force at the same time as the new Immigration Act, cf. chapter. 2.1. The main motivation for this proposal is mainly to combat forced marriages. Stricter requirements regarding the income of the reference person will encourage young people to establish their own basis in life through education and employment, thereby becoming less dependent on their family in financial and practical terms. Thereby they will also be better prepared to voice their own rights and wishes in connection with marriage and resist possible pressure from their family. Furthermore, the proposal is likely to strengthen the reference person's financial independence.

#### **3.2 Flows and permits**

Family links have for several years been the most significant basis for long-term immigration to Norway. The total number of family-related permits granted increased from 13 000 in 2005 to 14 000 in 2006. Numbers by the end of September indicate a significant increase in 2007, as more than 13 000 permits had already been granted.

Major countries of origin were Poland, Thailand, Somalia and Germany, cf. table 3.1 below. The biggest change was the doubling of family-based permits granted to Pol-

ish nationals. This tendency has been further reinforced in 2007. The number of permits might be doubled again. More than half of the permits involved husbands, wives or partners, while the rest mainly concerned children reunited with parents, entering with (one of) the parents or children born in Norway of non-Norwegian residents. For countries like the Philippines, Russia and Thailand, most of the permits concerned women marrying to Norwegians with no immigrant background. The largest group of children were from Somalia, Germany and Iraq. Concerning persons over 18, four fifths of the permits were granted to women. For one third of the family immigration permits, the reference person living in Norway was a Norwegian national (or from another Nordic country).

**Table 3.1 Permits for family-immigration, major countries of origin. 2001 – 2006**

Countries of origin	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
<b>Total,</b> of which:	<b>12 142</b>	<b>14 607</b>	<b>10 469</b>	<b>12 750</b>	<b>13 035</b>	<b>13 981</b>
Poland	232	289	247	390	748	1 702
Thailand	650	918	780	1 099	1 014	943
Somalia	645	1 707	652	689	929	913
Germany	382	426	401	563	558	768
Iraq	1 696	1 737	940	909	933	626
Russia	637	905	797	742	653	595
Afghanistan	382	510	387	318	507	471
UK	394	420	330	453	420	437
Philippines	366	457	396	437	433	412
Pakistan	566	545	518	496	461	392
Turkey	490	465	445	418	369	279
Other	5 934	6 517	4 823	6 236	6 010	6 443

Source: UDI

Out of more than 23 000 *marriages* contracted in 2006, 4 800 involved a Norwegian and a spouse who was a foreign national. Most existing and new trans-national marriages involved Norwegians and someone born in another European country or in North America, but there is also a sizable and growing number of Norwegian men who marry women from Asian countries, cf. table A13 and A14.

## **4. Labour migration**

### **4.1 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. Nationals from EEA-countries need a residence permit when their stay in Norway is to exceed three months.

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

Work permits for skilled persons may serve as the basis for permanent residence in Norway. Such permits are granted to skilled workers, professionals and others with special qualifications. It is a condition that their competence is deemed necessary for the job being offered. Since 2002, permits for skilled workers can be issued within an annual quota of 5000 without an individual labour market test being conducted.

With the enlargement of the EEA-area from 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. Norway decided to prolong the transitional rules without amendments from 1 May 2006, and the same provisions have also been made applicable to workers from Bulgaria and Romania after their accession to the European Union in 2007. The main argument to keep the transitional arrangement have been that the provisions contribute to maintain orderly conditions in the labour market, and that a set of strengthened measures in order to prevent social dumping must be in place before the arrangement is phased out.

The Government launched an action plan against social dumping in the context of the prolongation of the transitional arrangements. The action plan is comprised of a series of measures aimed at preventing social dumping and thus protecting wage levels and work-life standards in Norway.

Some of the most important measures in the action plan against social dumping are:

- Expanded authority of The Labour Inspection Authority and the Petroleum Safety Authority to impose sanctions in the event of non-compliance with generally applied collective agreements or the transitional arrangements.
- Increased resources to The Labour Inspection Authority and the Petroleum Safety Authority to carry out inspections.
- Introduction of a need for public authorisation of all enterprises which hires out workers, and tightening of the rules of hiring of labour between production companies.
- A clear responsibility is based on the principal contractors to ensure that legal pay and working conditions are followed also among sub-contactors.
- Introduction of identification cards among workers in the building and construction sector.



- Increased co-operation and co-ordination between public authorities and between the public authorities and the social partners.
- Increased public information to both employers and labour immigrants on among other things health and safety, workers rights and taxation.

In view of the current labour market situation with high demand for labour, as well as the long term view of demographic change, the Norwegian Minister for Labour and Social Inclusion has announced that a white paper on labour migration will be presented to Stortinget in the spring of 2008. In this white paper the future need for labour migration will be discussed together with possible amendments to the current legislation and policy measures relevant for the entry and stay of labour migrants.

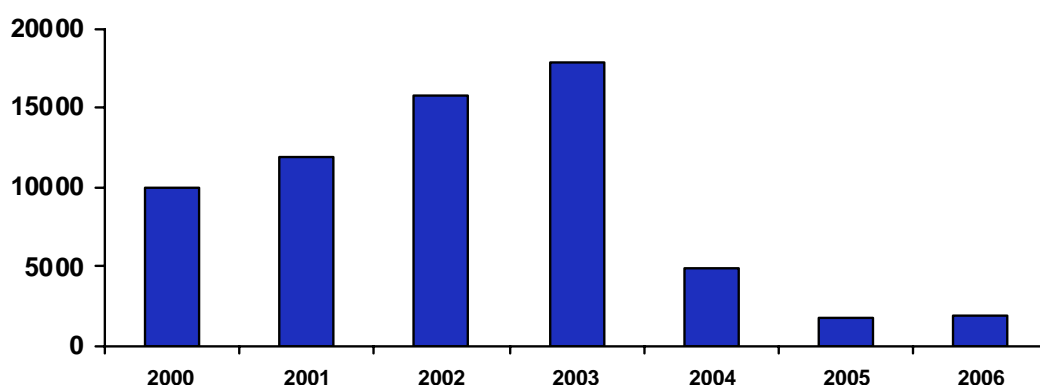
#### 4.2 Flows and permits

It is difficult to obtain an accurate picture of the total labour migration to Norway. Since Nordic nationals do not need any permit, they are not registered by the immigration authorities. However, registrations by other authorities indicate that more than 50 000 persons from Nordic countries, both residents and non-residents, are employed in Norway.

In 2006, 40 500 new work-related permits were granted in relation to employment, an increase from 28 400 in 2005. 29 100 of these permits were granted to persons from the new EEA-countries (including Bulgaria and Romania), and 5 100 to persons from the other EEA-countries. The number of renewals increased significantly in 2006, reaching 30 300, up from 22 000 in 2005 and 7 000 in 2004. 25 800 of the renewals were granted to nationals from the new EEA-countries. Combining new permits and renewals, there was an increase of more than 20 000 permits from 2005 to 2006.

Before 2006, the major category of work permits granted to nationals from countries outside the EEA used to be for seasonal work. However, the numerical difference between this category and skilled work permits has gradually been reduced after the EEA-enlargement. In 2006 there were more permits granted to skilled workers than for seasonal work. In 2006 there were 1 900 permits for seasonal work, a modest increase of less than 100 from the year before. The largest groups came from Rumania, Ukraine and Belarus.

*Diagram 4.1 Permits for seasonal work. 2000 -2006*



Source: UDI

In 2006 there was a significant increase in the number of permits issued to skilled labour, cf. table 4.1. The figures for the first nine months of 2007 (2 200) indicate a further increase. Still, the number will be much lower than the annual level of maximum 5 000 permits that may be granted without any labour market needs test. All in all, approx. 5 700 new work permits for third country nationals were issued in 2005, a decrease from 8 800 in 2004. This is as mentioned a result of the EEA enlargement.

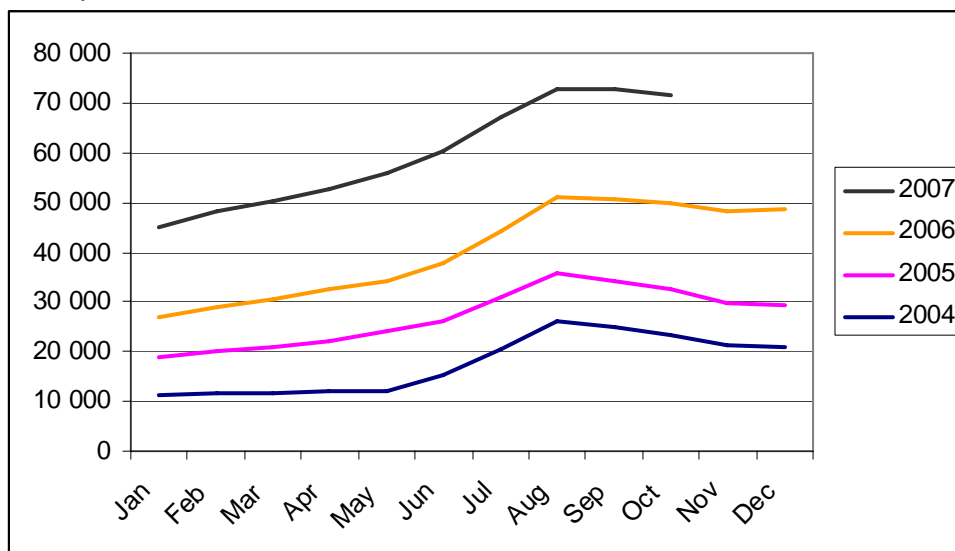
**Table 4.1 Permits granted for skilled work. 2001 – 2006**

Permits	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
<b>Total,</b> of which:	777	1676	1127	747	1 223	2011
India	52	53	47	36	100	322
USA	64	129	100	97	160	184
Russia	43	81	58	68	145	200
China	21	39	29	22	99	112
Poland	183	516	330	91	25	17
Other	414	858	563	433	744	1176

Source: UDI

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 of the new EEA-countries the increase has been significant. The accession of Romania and Bulgaria in 2007, has further contributed to this increase, although they count for a relatively small share of the total. In 2006, a total of 56 300 permits were granted to the 12 new members to the EEA-area since 2004. Almost half of them, 25 700, were renewals, indicating that more migrants are staying for a longer period.

*Diagram 4.2 Valid work-related permits. Nationals from the new EEA member states. Start of each month 2004 - 2007 (October)*



Source: UDI

Diagram 4.2 shows that the pattern of valid work-related permits, reaching a peak in the summer due to seasonal work in agriculture, continues after the enlargement. However, an increasing number come for more long-term work.

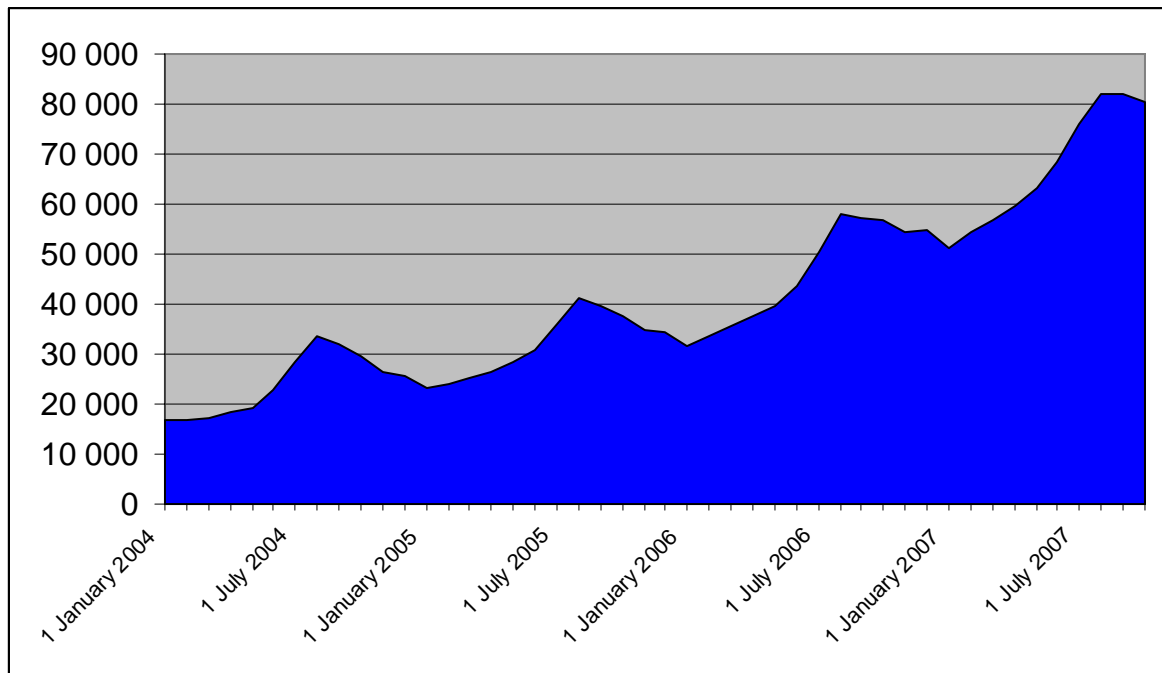
By the end of September 2007, 61 300 EEA-permits, including 28 500 renewals, had been granted to persons from the eight new member countries, compared to 45 100 during the same period in 2006.

As in previous years, the majority of the EEA-permits are granted to nationals of Poland. By the end of September, nearly 70 per cent of the permits and renewals concerned Poles. Another 17 per cent came from Lithuania.

During the first nine months of 2007, 20 per cent of the work-related permits to nationals from the new EU-member states were women. The proportion of women being granted EEA-permits is down from 27 per cent in the same period of 2005 and 22 per cent in the same period in 2006. This might be an indication of a larger proportion working in building and construction, sectors which recruit a male-dominated work force.

By the end of September 2007 there were 80 400 valid work permits issued by Norwegian authorities. 66 per cent of these permits were held by persons from the new member countries, up from 60 per cent at the same time in 2006 and 51 per cent in 2005. The increase in the total number of work-related permits and the seasonal fluctuations (peak in August every year) are illustrated by diagram 4.3 below.

*Diagram 4.3 Valid work-related permits, all categories. Non-Nordic countries. Monthly from 1.1.2004 to 1.10.2007*



Source: UDI

## **5 Migration for education and training**

### **5.1 Legislation and policy**

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

International students must leave Norway after completing their studies if they do not fulfil the criteria for another type of permit. The possibility to apply for a work permit as a skilled person after completion of studies was introduced in 2001. There were one significant change in legislation concerning international students during 2006-2007. Students are now granted a general part-time (max. 20 hours per week) work permit together with their first residence permit for education. An offer of employment is no longer required. Further measures facilitating the transition to work after completion of an education are being considered.

Au pairs and trainees may on specific conditions be granted a work permit for one year. The permit may be renewed for another year. Some of the conditions for granting work permits to au pairs were tightened in 2007, mainly to prevent abuse.

### **5.2 Flows and permits**

Table 5.1 below shows that the number of first time permits granted for educational and training purposes in 2006 increased to 6 800. In addition there were 3 400 renewals. Almost 5 200 were permits granted for education, 1 250 for au-pairs and 350 for trainees.

Major source countries for international students in 2006 were Germany, China, Russia, France, Spain, USA, Italy, Poland, Ethiopia and the Netherlands. For au-pair permits the major countries were the Philippines, Ukraine and Russia. For trainee permits they were Poland, Belarus and Ukraine.

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

**Table 5.1 Permits for education and training. Major categories. 2001-2006**

<b>Migration category</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>
<b>Total, of which:</b>	<b>4289</b>	<b>4704</b>	<b>5468</b>	<b>5 440</b>	<b>6 108</b>	<b>6 767</b>
Student (EEA)	936	1186	1328	1 713	2 286	2 634
Student (non-EEA)	1413	1578	2097	1 828	1 922	2 157
Post doctorate	32	23	43	48	50	68
Folk high school	310	403	345	185	200	198
Au pair	666	743	948	1 019	1 208	1 243
Trainee	726	601	543	496	322	361
Other	189	161	164	131	120	106

Source: UDI

## **6 Asylum seekers and refugees**

### **6.1 Legislation and policy**

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

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

Due to an amendment to the Immigration Regulations as of June 1st 2007, the authorities have to consider whether a child has been in the country for a long time or not, when they consider granting a residence permit on humanitarian grounds. A lengthy stay in Norway will not in itself entitle the child to a residence permit. However, one also has to consider the child's age, whether the child has attended school or kindergarten, whether the child speaks Norwegian and so on. If the parents have not cooperated, for instance regarding establishing the identity of the family members, this too will be of importance.

All asylum seekers are offered temporary accommodation in reception centres. By September 2007 there were 7 000 inhabitants in such centres. Four of the centres are provided with extra resources in order to give asylum seekers with particular needs, such as psychological problems, better living conditions. Unaccompanied minor asylum seekers, below 18 years, are given accommodation either in special sections of reception centres mentioned above, or in a separate reception centre for minors. Minors younger than 15 years are accommodated separately.

Normally, the offer to live in a reception centre is provided until the asylum seeker receives a final negative decision, or - in case of a positive decision - until they are settled in a local municipality. Persons with a final negative decision are offered to stay in a special centre until they leave Norway. Some persons within this categories are excepted from this general rule - 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. They are allowed accommodation in ordinary reception centres until they leave Norway.

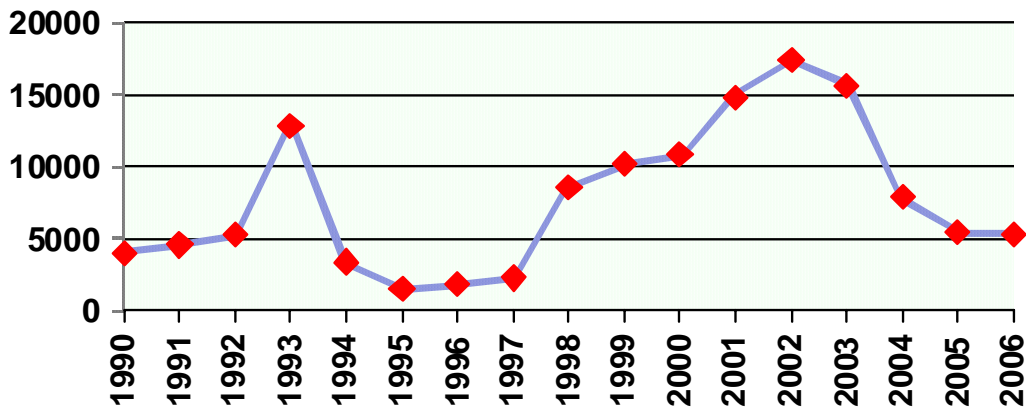
### **6.2 Flows and permits**

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

highest number ever, cf. table A12. In 2006 the number of applicants stabilised, ending at 5 300. The largest groups came from Iraq, Somalia and Russia, cf. table 6.1 below. There were applications from 104 countries.

Following a stable pattern of applications during the first half of 2007, the number of asylum seekers have been on the increase in the second half of the year. It is predicted that the total number of applicants in 2007 will be somewhat higher than the previous two years, possible above 6 000 applicants. Approximately 4 300 persons applied during the first nine months of 2007, 400 more than during the same period in 2006. During these nine months more than 60 per cent of the applicants were from Iraq, Russia, Eritrea and Serbia. On the other side, there is a sharp reduction in the number of asylum seekers from Somalia.

Diagram 6.1 Asylum seekers - 1990-2006



Source: UDI

Table 6.1 Asylum applications, major countries of origin. 2000 – 2006

Country of origin	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
<b>Total,</b>	<b>10 842</b>	<b>14 872</b>	<b>17 480</b>	<b>15 613</b>	<b>7 950</b>	<b>5 402</b>	<b>5 320</b>
Of which:							
Iraq	766	1 056	1 624	938	413	671	1 002
Somalia	910	1 080	1 534	1 601	957	667	632
Russia	471	1 318	1 718	1 893	938	545	548
Serbia and Montenegro*	4 188	928	2 460	2 180	860	468	369
Eritrea	51	132	269	198	110	177	316
Stateless	120	194	391	366	298	209	237
Afghanistan	326	603	786	2 032	1 059	466	224
Iran	327	412	450	608	393	279	218
Ethiopia	96	173	325	287	148	100	143
Sri Lanka	165	164	87	64	58	58	106
Other	3 315	8 069	7 123	4 853	2 655	1 768	1 525

\* Ex-Yugoslavia until 2003

Source: UDI

The total number of applicants granted asylum decreased in 2006 cf. table 6.2. However, since fewer applications were processed this was 16 per cent of the applications

in the first instance, an increase from 10 per cent the previous year. During the first nine months of 2007 the proportion granted asylum in the first instance has increased significantly to 19 per cent.

**Table 6.2 Asylum seekers granted refugee status. 2000 – 2006**

Level	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
1. instance	97	292	332	588	457	567	461
2. instance	4	4	10	21	75	62	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>342</b>	<b>609</b>	<b>532</b>	<b>629</b>	<b>521</b>

Source: UDI

The relatively low acceptance rate does not give the full picture of the number of asylum seekers who are given leave to remain in Norway. In 2006 1 700 asylum seekers were granted a resident permit on humanitarian grounds in the first instance, down from 2 400 in 2005, cf. table 6.3. The reduction is due to a drop in the number of decisions. However, the proportion granted a permit on humanitarian grounds was higher than in 2005 (41 vs. 35 per cent).

**Table 6.3 Asylum seekers granted humanitarian status. 2000 - 2006**

Level	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
1. instance	2 856	4 036	2 958	2 961	3 023	1 913	1 221
2. instance	343	265	326	219	613	513	464
<b>Total</b>	<b>3 199</b>	<b>4 301</b>	<b>3 284</b>	<b>3 180</b>	<b>3 636</b>	<b>2 426</b>	<b>1 685</b>

Source: UDI

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 2005 45 per cent belonged to category a) and 55 per cent to category b). During 2006, the figures changed slightly to 49 and 51 per cent. During the first nine months of 2007 the ratio was significantly changed to 33 and 67 per cent. However, since a higher proportion was granted asylum the number given a permit due to a need for protection was stable.

In 2006 43 per cent of the applications that had been examined on their merits were rejected in the first instance, down from 55 per cent in 2005. During the first nine months of 2007, this downward trend has continued, down to 40 per cent rejections. This tendency is interpreted mainly as a consequence of the successful implementation of measures to deter asylum seekers with unfounded claims.

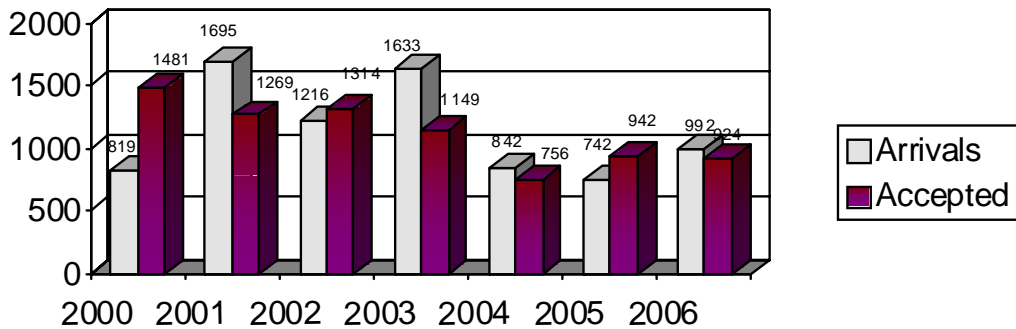
In 2006 17 per cent of the applications were transferred to another country for consideration, in accordance with the Dublin procedure. This was a decrease from 21 per cent in 2005. During the first nine months of 2007, the share of Dublin cases has been the same as in 2006.

### 6.3 Resettlement of refugees

In addition to asylum seekers, Norway admits a given number of refugees as part of 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. Stortinget has set the quota for 2007 to 1 200 places, 200 more than in 2006. The government has in the fiscal budget for 2008 proposed the same number as in 2007.

In 2006 more than 920 refugees were accepted for resettlement, and almost 1 000 arrived this year, cf. diagram 6.2. Some of those arriving had been accepted the previous year.

Diagram 6.2 Number of resettled refugees 2000 - 2006



Source: UDI

In 2006 approximately 80 per cent of those offered resettlement and of those actually arriving came from three countries, Burma, the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Philippines (Vietnamese and their relatives).

Table 6.4 Resettlement of refugees, major countries of origin, 2006

Countries of origin	Resettled refugees
Burma	484
Dem. Rep. of Congo	203
The Philippines	107
Burundi	50
Vietnam	47
Other	101

Source: UDI



The 2007 resettlement quota has been pre-allocated to 450 Burmese refugees and 300 from DR Congo. Special missions have selected Congolese refugees from Zambia and Burmese refugees from Thailand, Malaysia and India. The other places have not been pre-allocated to particular refugee groups, but priority is as earlier years given to "women-at-risk". Norway has a fast track procedure for refugees in urgent need of resettlement (90 places).

#### **6.4 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 depend on public assistance to find suitable housing. Those who depend on assistance, have to settle in an assigned municipality. 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 incur through the grant of a fixed sum per refugee over a five year period. For 2007 this sum is NOK 476 000 (EURO 61 000) for adults and NOK 456 000 (EURO 58 500) for children under 18 for the whole period. In addition there are additional grants for placement of unaccompanied minors, elderly and handicapped persons.

3 800 foreign nationals with asylum or humanitarian status were provided housing and integration measures by the municipalities in 2006. In addition 1 200 family members reunited with such nationals were covered by this system.

#### **6.5 Voluntary repatriation**

Voluntary repatriation is seen as the best durable solution to a refugee problem, when conditions in the country of origin are safe. A government programme for voluntary repatriation of refugees has been in place since 1992. The programme consists of two main elements: individual benefits and grants 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
- training
- reconciliation and building democracy
- reception and reintegration in the country of origin
- establishment of income generating activity in the country of origin

With few exceptions refugees only to a very limited extent have chosen to repatriate from Norway through this programme. In 2006 only 48 persons repatriated, down from 58 in 2005. This is substantially lower than five years ago, when many Kosovars with temporary, collective protection took part in the programme. Every year some persons who have received the individual grant re-enter Norway. The support must then be repaid. In 2006 there were 29 such re-entrants.

## **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 country illegally is 6 years of imprisonment. Furthermore, it is considered a criminal act to provide 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.

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

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

By the end of 2007 Norway has readmission agreements or similar agreements on return with 18 countries. There are negotiations going on with six other countries.

The “Plan of action against human trafficking (2006-2009)” includes measures against all kinds of trafficking, including prostitution, organized begging, forced labour and illegal donation of organs. In the new plan the so called reflection period (a temporary residence permit) for victims of trafficking is extended to six months. It includes access to health care and social assistance for the victims, and it puts more focus on children as victims of trafficking. The first six months of 2007 five victims of trafficking have been given a temporary permit and reflection period. They are accommodated in safe houses. There have also been information campaigns to limit the demand and purchase of sexual services. In cooperation with NGOs the outreach activities among foreign prostitutes who might be victims of trafficking have been strengthened. There are also measures in the plan concerning witness protection for victims of all kinds of human trafficking and increased penalties for traffickers.

### **7.2 Illegal entry and residence**

Facts and figures concerning the extent of irregular migration in Norway, both entry and residence, are limited. However, we know that the problem exists, particularly in the major cities with a relatively large proportion of immigrants and less social transparency. A research project on the number and circumstances of irregular migrants is expected to publish a report early in 2008.

In 2006 only 5 per cent of the asylum seekers in Norway presented legal travel documents. In addition approximately 90% of the applicants apply at a police station inside the country, not at the border.

Each year a significant number of asylum seekers, many of them having their application rejected, leave the reception centres without providing a forwarding address. Of those who left in 2006, 1 520 had not returned to a centre by November 2007, 25 per cent fewer than in 2005. Some may have returned to their home country, some may have moved to a third country and some may have stayed in Norway illegally to make a living through work, criminal acts or supported by friends or relatives.

The police have apprehended a number of migrants working illegally during co-ordinated controls of various businesses, especially on construction sites and in shops and restaurants. Some of these illegal workers are former asylum seekers, while 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, and 830 persons were apprehended for staying illegally in Norway during 2006.

690 persons were rejected at the border or after entry in 2006, only slightly fewer than the previous year. There were almost 1 400 expulsions, a small increase from 2005, cf. table 7.1 below. Expulsions also include convicted criminals.

**Table 7.1 Rejections and expulsions. 2001 - 2006**

Sanction	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Rejections – at entry	1 619	1 907	1 712	1 041	637	651
Rejections – later	219	102	137	108	70	38
Expulsions	(unav.)	(unav.)	1 141	1 260	1 274	1 379

Source: UDI

2 300 foreigners were returned involuntarily from Norway by the police during 2006, a further reduction from 3 000 in 2005. 56 per cent of them were asylum seekers, who were handled according to the Dublin procedure or former asylum seekers whose applications had been rejected. In the remaining group criminals and other categories are included. During the first nine months of 2007 the number returned involuntarily reached 1 600.

### 7.3 Assisted return

Return measures are important elements in a comprehensive asylum and 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 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 2006 approximately 430 persons returned with IOM, compared to 560 in 2005. During the first nine months of 2007 the number was 340, which indicates the same level as in 2006.

For refugees and rejected asylum seekers from countries in a reconstruction phase the Norwegian government may consider adding reintegration components to the general

voluntary repatriation and assisted voluntary return programmes. Such reintegration components are at present offered to refugees and unsuccessful asylum seekers from Afghanistan. They are offered temporary shelter, counselling, vocational training and assistance to set up their own business upon arriving in Afghanistan. The programme is operated by IOM. A similar reintegration programme may be considered for refugees and unsuccessful asylum-seekers from Northern Iraq.

## **8 Foreign nationals, immigrants and descendants**

### **8.1 Population growth and fertility rates**

The total population of Norway grew by 41 000 persons in 2006, which gives a growth rate of 0.9 per cent, 0.2 points higher than in 2005. This growth rate is among the highest in Europe, due to a birth surplus of 17 300 as well as net immigration of 23 700. By January 1st 2007 the total population was 4.68 million. Cf. table A1 and A3.

The total fertility rate for the population in Norway was 1.85 in 2005-2006, close to the level of 1.87 in 1994-95. The rate varies between women with Norwegian background and immigrants. In 2005-2006 it was 1.78 for the former and 2.26 for the latter. As there was a small increase in the fertility-rate for women without immigrant background, the difference between the two categories decreased compared to the previous year. For both groups the trend was downward compared to the situation in 1994-95, when it was 1.83 and 2.57 respectively. The highest rate in 2005-2006 was 2.47, among women from Asia, Africa and Latin America. This was down from 2.53 the previous year and from 2.93 in 1994-95. Cf. table A20.

As the previous year the highest number of children born in Norway with two foreign-born parents in 2006 had parents born in Somalia, Iraq, Pakistan, Serbia (- Montenegro) or Vietnam. Among those with only one parent born abroad Sweden, Denmark, Thailand, UK, USA and the Philippines were the major countries of origin, cf. table A21. This reflects obvious differences in inter-marriage patterns. However, there is also an increasing number of children with one parent born in Pakistan. This reflects that so far among young Norwegians with Pakistani-born parents the majority have found their spouse in Pakistan. The number, however, was only 100 marriages in 2006, despite the growing number of descendants of Pakistani origin in the relevant age group.

### **8.2 Foreign nationals**

By 2006 the total number of foreign nationals was 238 300, an increase of 16 000 (7.2 per cent) from the previous year, cf. table A1. This is 5.1 per cent of the total population, cf. table A16.

The number of European nationals still constitutes the majority of foreign nationals: 139 000 or approximately 58 per cent of all foreigners, cf. table A16. This share has gradually been reduced over the years, down from 65 per cent in 2000, but for the last couple of years there has been a small increase. Around 12 500, or 78 per cent of the increase of foreigners in 2006, came from European countries. This was mainly due to an increase of nationals from Poland (up 7 000), Germany, Sweden, and the Netherlands. Other countries with a significant increase were the Philippines, Thailand and Afghanistan. There was a reduction in the number of resident nationals from several countries, mostly due to high rates of naturalization. Among such countries were Bosnia-Herzegovina, Iran, Serbia and Montenegro and Pakistan.

The number of resident nationals from Asian countries has increased gradually since 2000. By January 2007 they accounted for 24 per cent of the total foreign population, up from 19 per cent by January 2000, but slightly less than by the beginning of 2006.

The largest group of foreign nationals from Asia were Iraqis, numbering 12 100 persons.

Resident nationals from African countries increased by 1 200 during 2006. 10.5 per cent of foreign nationals in Norway are from Africa, while the percentage was 6.5 per cent five years earlier. Somali nationals constitute the largest group of foreigners from Africa, numbering 10 800 persons.

The total number of resident nationals from countries in North, Central or South America increased slightly from 2005 to 2006 (from 14 900 to 15 400). The relative size decreased a bit (from 6.7 to 6.5 per cent). Half of this category of foreign nationals come from USA, while the second largest group is from Chile (2 000).

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 citizenship (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 less than half of what it was in 2000; a decrease from over 12 000 to 4 200. This change is mostly due to naturalizations, not return-migration. In this respect the number of Vietnamese nationals, 1 600, is strikingly low. There are 18 800 persons of Vietnamese origin residing in Norway, more than 11 times the number of nationals. Cf. Table A16 and A17.

**Table 8.1 Foreign nationals, major countries. 1.1.2001 – 1.1.2007**

Nationalities	1.1.2001	1.1.2002	1.1.2003	1.1.2004	1.1.2005	1.1.2006	1.1.2007
<b>Total,</b> of which	<b>184 337</b>	<b>185 863</b>	<b>197 668</b>	<b>204 731</b>	<b>213 303</b>	<b>222 277</b>	<b>238 305</b>
Sweden	25 170	25 140	25 241	25 432	25 773	26 640	27 867
Denmark	19 405	19 653	20 008	20 006	20 060	20 192	20 252
Poland	2 023	2 205	2 619	2 741	3 936	6 773	13 630
Germany	7 055	7 538	8 233	8 839	9 587	10 623	12 214
Iraq	9 891	10 778	13 038	13 373	13 677	13 136	12 139
UK	11 074	10 966	11 188	11 018	11 202	11 204	11 562
Somalia	6 152	6 588	8 377	9 861	10 541	10 623	10 845
Russia	3 288	3 882	4 829	6 565	7 383	8 185	8 750
USA	8 037	7 915	7 976	7 703	7 614	7 597	7 732
Afghanistan	953	1 816	2 950	4 346	5 085	5 933	6 470
Thailand	2 725	2 992	3 636	4 248	4 975	5 698	6 355
Pakistan	6 731	6 867	6 676	6 572	6 378	6 095	5 863
Netherlands	3 587	3 718	3 837	3 950	4 165	4 604	5 104
Serbia and Montenegro*	8 849	6 497	6 004	5 565	5 802	5 436	4 735
Bosnia and Herzegovina	11 611	8 826	7 850	5 952	5 203	4 584	4 192

\* Ex-Yugoslavia until 2003

Source: Statistics Norway

### 8.3 Immigrants and descendants

Almost 70 per cent of the population growth in 2006 was due to the growth of the immigrant population, cf. table A3<sup>2</sup>. 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, also called descendants, cf. table A17. This group increased with 28 400 persons, reaching a level of 415 000 persons, 8.9 per cent of the total population, cf. table A18. The increase was partly due to net immigration of 24 000 for this group and partly a birth surplus of 4 400. The immigrant population was responsible for one quarter of the total birth surplus and all net immigration.

The number of immigrants with two foreign born parents reached 341 800 by the end of 2006. The number increased by 23 500 from 2005. The number of descendants reached 73 500, an increase of 4 900.

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. In 1970 the share for this group was 6 per cent, in 1980 23.5 per cent, in 1990 45.6 per cent and then 55 per cent at the beginning of 2007. This was a small decrease from last year due to a sharp increase from some new EU-member states. If we only look at foreign born immigrants with two foreign-born parents, 50 per cent come from Asia, Africa and Latin America, cf. table 8.2 below and table A17.

**Table 8.2 Immigrants. Region of birth. 2001-2007**

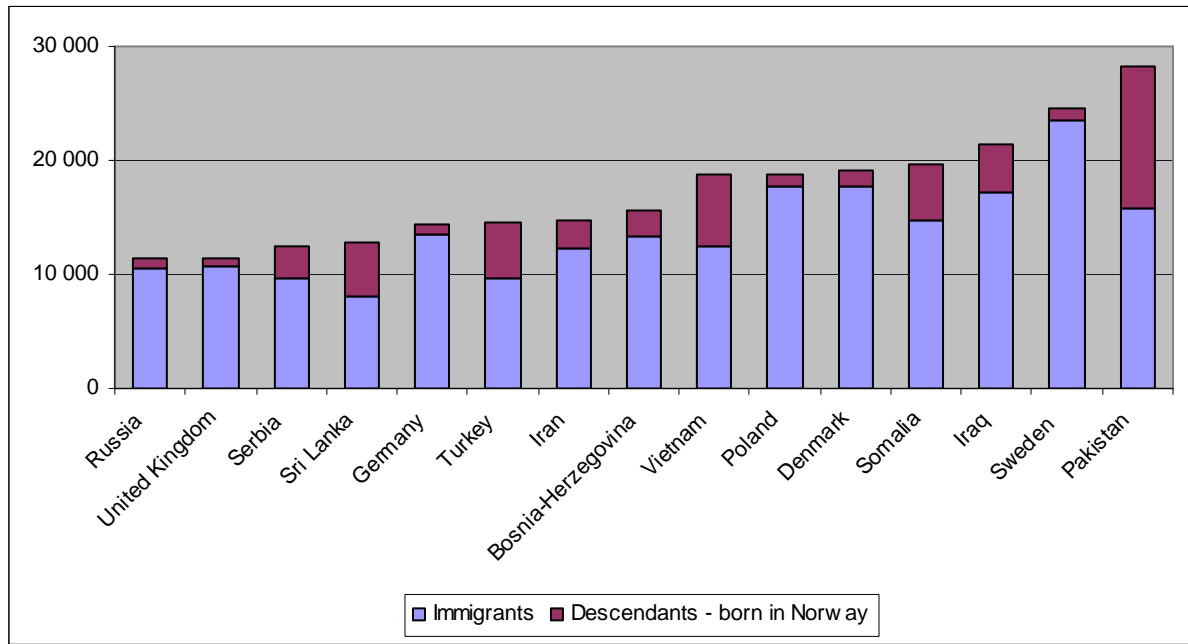
Regions	1.1.2001	1.1.2002	1.1.2003	1.1.2004	1.1.2005	1.1.2006	1.1.2007
<b>Total,</b> of which:	<b>249 904</b>	<b>259 221</b>	<b>277 262</b>	<b>289 104</b>	<b>301 045</b>	<b>318 514</b>	<b>341 830</b>
Nordic countries	50 526	50 470	51 135	50 701	49 937	50 287	51 066
Rest of Europe	73 857	75 375	79 528	82 552	87 817	95 479	108 489
North and Cen- tral America, Oceania	9 715	9 682	10 076	9 116	8 862	8 907	7 988
Asia (incl. Tur- key) Africa, South America	114 939	122 795	136 523	146 735	154 429	163 841	173 065

Source: Statistics Norway

The major countries of origin are listed in 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 Norwegian-born children are not included, there are more immigrants of Swedish and Danish origin. As much as 45 per cent of those with Pakistani background were born in Norway, while only 4 per cent of those with Swedish background were born here, cf. diagram 8.2.

<sup>2</sup> This statistical category, covering both immigrants and descendants, will probably be removed.

Diagram 8.2 Major groups of immigrants and descendants. 1.1.2007



Source: SSB

Table 8.3 Immigrant population by major countries of origin. 1.1.2001 - 1.1.2007

Countries of origin	1.1.2001	1.1.2002	1.1.2003	1.1.2004	1.1.2005	1.1.2006	1.1.2007
<b>Total, of which:</b>	<b>297 731</b>	<b>310 704</b>	<b>332 793</b>	<b>348 940</b>	<b>364 981</b>	<b>386 669</b>	<b>415 318</b>
Pakistan	23 581	24 565	25 546	26 286	26 950	27 675	28 278
Sweden	23 010	22 772	22 870	22 871	22 859	23 489	24 527
Iraq	12 357	13 630	16 437	17 295	18 369	20 076	21 418
Somalia	10 107	11 269	13 689	15 586	16 765	18 015	19 656
Denmark	19 049	19 169	19 401	19 318	19 197	19 179	19 090
Poland	6 432	6 760	7 303	7 590	8 933	11 864	18 834
Vietnam	15 880	16 386	16 944	17 414	17 864	18 333	18 783
Bosnia and Herzegovina	12 944	13 159	15 498	15 216	14 641	14 822	15 667
Iran	11 016	11 908	12 733	13 506	13 983	14 362	14 662
Turkey	10 990	11 550	12 343	12 971	13 504	14 084	14 546
Germany	9 448	10 019	10 670	11 232	11 879	12 900	14 467
Sri Lanka	10 335	10 925	11 475	11 918	12 288	12 560	12 757
Serbia and Montenegro*	15 469	14 466	9 941 <sup>3</sup>	11 070	12 455	12 905	12 703
United Kingdom	10 925	10 820	11 087	10 945	11 069	11 031	11 349
Russia	3 749	4 551	5 888	7 457	8 993	10 351	11 338

\* Ex-Yugoslavia until 2003

Source: Statistics Norway

<sup>3</sup> The marked decrease in immigrants originating from former Yugoslavia is caused by a reallocation of both the national origin of people from Yugoslavia arriving prior to the division of the country. Thus, this change also affects the other countries originating in former Yugoslavia (Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Slovenia and FYR Macedonia).



The growth has been strongest for Poland, Germany, Russia and Somalia. During 2006 Poland moved to the sixth place and is likely to move up to second or third place during 2007.

47 per cent of the immigrant population have Norwegian nationality. 24 per cent of the residents of Oslo are immigrants or descendants, and almost one third of this part of the population live in Oslo.

#### **8.4 Refugee population**

The term "refugee population" refers to persons residing in Norway, who have entered as asylum seekers or been transferred on a quota, including their reunited family members. They have been granted a permit to stay because they need protection or on humanitarian grounds, cf. the description of entry categories in ch. 2.2. Children born in Norway with refugee parents are not included.

By January 1st 2007, the refugee population in Norway counted over 125 000 people, or 2.7 per cent of the total population. 94 900 or 76 per cent of the refugee population were registered as principals while 33 200 or 24 per cent came to Norway as dependants. 61 per cent of the principals were initially registered as asylum seekers, 21 per cent as transfer refugees and 11 per cent as refugees granted protection on collective grounds. 7 per cent are in the category "unspecified". Persons from Iraq, Somalia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Iran and Vietnam make up the largest groups of refugees.

10 years ago refugees from Balkan, Vietnam and Iran made up the largest groups of the refugee population in Norway. Since 1997, the number of persons with refugee background has almost doubled. The largest increase is among the refugee population from Iraq (13 900), Somalia (10 100) and Afghanistan (6 000).

Members of the refugee population from Iraq, Somalia, Afghanistan and Russia have the shortest period of stay in Norway, while among the larger groups arriving after 1970 refugees from Vietnam have resided here longest. 43 per cent of the Vietnamese refugees have been residents in Norway for more than 20 years.

## **9 Nationality and naturalization**

### **9.1 Legislation**

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

Some important elements in the act are:

- The applicant has to give up his or her present nationality to be able to acquire Norwegian nationality. If a person does not give up his or her former nationality, the Norwegian nationality will be withdrawn.
- The applicant has to have lived in Norway for seven years to be able to acquire Norwegian nationality, but it is acceptable that these seven years are within a period of ten years.
- Documentation of language skills in Norwegian, or Sami is a condition to obtain Norwegian nationality.
- At birth a child is automatically given the nationality of both parents.
- At the age of 12 a child years can apply for and be granted a Norwegian nationality irrespective of the consent of the parents.
- When applying for Norwegian nationality children, who cannot renounce their other nationality before a certain age, can nevertheless acquire Norwegian nationality.

### **9.2 Naturalizations**

During the first half of the 1990s the number of naturalizations reached an average of 7 300 per year, while it was considerable higher during the second half of the decade (10 200). Since 2000 the average has been 10 000 per year, cf. table A22. In 2006 close to 12 000 persons were naturalized. By January 1st 2007 there were 133 000 immigrants and 60 000 descendants who had become naturalized Norwegians and were registered as residents in the country.

In 2006 almost 32 per cent of the naturalized Norwegians originated in Europe, the same as in 2005. 45 per cent originated in Asia (including Turkey), down from 47 per cent the previous year. More than 18 per cent originated in Africa, an slight increase from 17 per cent. Iraqis were the largest group of naturalized persons in 2006, more than 2 100 persons. Somalis were the second largest group with 1 300 naturalizations, cf. table 9.1.

**Table 9.1 Naturalizations. Major countries of origin. 2001-2006**

<b>Country of origin</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>
<b>Total,</b>	<b>10 838</b>	<b>9 041</b>	<b>7 867</b>	<b>8 154</b>	<b>12 655</b>	<b>11 955</b>
of which:						
Iraq	331	497	403	619	2141	2 142
Somalia	676	546	392	526	1 251	1 281
Serbia and Montenegro*	1 199	614	310	303	852	1 107
Pakistan	409	829	497	568	694	590
Iran	361	324	228	508	834	535
Bosnia-Herzegovina	2 999	1 229	1 965	827	707	519
Russia	192	308	280	365	548	458
Sweden	249	216	211	221	276	376
Turkey	356	412	398	393	385	355

\* Ex-Yugoslavia until 2003

Source: Statistics Norway

The percentage of the eligible foreign nationals who prefer to change nationality, varies between different groups, cf. table A23. In 2006 only 1-4 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 hand, for countries like Iraq, Somalia, Ethiopia, Iran, Russia, Serbia and Montenegro, Ukraine and the Philippines the percentage was very high. For Iraq, Somalia, Ethiopia, Serbia and Montenegro and Ukraine there were more naturalized 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 social inclusion**

### **10.1 Policy goals and guidelines**

The clearly stated goal of the Norwegian government is that Norway should be an inclusive society in the sense that all inhabitants, regardless of their background, should have equal opportunities to contribute and participate actively in the Norwegian society. Immigrants and their descendants should be able to achieve equal living conditions compared to the rest of the population.

To achieve this goal government policies and measures are formulated with the aim that immigrants and refugees can contribute and use their resources in the labour market and in society at large. The evolution of a divided society where persons with an immigrant background have poorer living conditions and lower social and political participation than the rest of the population should be prevented. Participation in the labour market is regarded as the most important tool to fight poverty and exclusion.

Mainstreaming is an important principle for government policies. The needs of immigrants, refugees and their descendants are included in broad general programmes or policies at the various administrative levels (state, regional, and local). Public administration must recognise and respect diversity by ensuring that different needs in the population are reflected in the design of public services and general social systems. Ensuring equal access to public services constitutes recognition in practice of the diversity in the Norwegian society. Dialogue and contact with civil society are important elements of the policy-making process.

Some special measures for newly arrived immigrants are deemed to be necessary to ensure equal opportunities, for example the Introduction Programme, cf. 10.3. Strengthened language and job training are of utmost importance in this respect. Both with regard to objectives and means, a distinction is made between immigrants and their children. An important objective is to secure that descendants of immigrants have the same opportunities as others when they reach adulthood, first of all in education and participation in the labour market.

A coherent policy is sought by giving the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion responsibility for co-ordination of the policies on social inclusion and integration of immigrants, refugees and their descendants as well as the policies concerning the indigenous population and national minorities. From October 2007, following a reorganisation within the government ministries, the Ministry of Children and Equality, was given the coordinating responsibility for all forms of discrimination. The ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion will continue to co-ordinate policies relating to integration and inclusion of immigrants and descendants.

### **10.2 Plan of action for integration and social inclusion**

This plan of action is the response of the government to the challenges in the area of labour, welfare and social inclusion linked to some sections of the immigrant popula-

tion<sup>4</sup>. Higher unemployment levels, higher welfare dependency, less civic participation and school dropout among some groups are documented.

The plan emphasises the importance of participation in working life, knowledge of the Norwegian language and culture, equality of opportunities for immigrants and their descendants, participation in society at large and gender equality. The plan is divided into four areas: Employment, Childhood, Education and Language; Gender Equality and Participation. Combating racism and discrimination should be an integral perspective of all measures.

*Employment:* Participation in the labour market is regarded as the most important tool to fight poverty and exclusion. In this area the action plan focuses both on individual qualification and labour market programmes, on measures like immigrant entrepreneurship activities and on measures to encourage employers to recruit persons with an immigrant background.

A major measure involves increased state funding for the expenditures of municipalities related to the introduction programme to integrate refugees and their families. The aim of the programme is to provide basic skills in Norwegian language, insight into the Norwegian society and to prepare for participation in working life and/or further education and to increase financial independence. The programme organised by the local municipalities combines an introductory programme with an economic benefit that participants are eligible for. Women participate on an equal footing with men.

The qualification programme *New Chance* aims to contribute to give more immigrants permanent ties to the labour market. The target group is persons with a long period of residence in Norway, but with no permanent ties to the labour market and thus dependant on welfare benefits. The programme is based on the model of the introductory programme for refugees, and among participants are many immigrant women.

*Education and language:* The objective of the government is that all children born in Norway should be able to speak Norwegian before they start school and that a larger proportion of children with immigrant background attend kindergarten. Several measures are aimed at achieving these goals, among others are free core time in kindergarten for all four- and five-year-olds in certain areas in Oslo with a high proportion of minority language children and extra resources to schools where more than 25 percent of the pupils have a minority language.

*Gender equality and participation:* In order to promote equal opportunities for all, including women with immigrant background, there is a focus on measures to ensure financial independence for women and measures to counteract actions and traditions that take away the right of young people to decide for themselves and their own lives like forced marriages and genital mutilation.

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<sup>4</sup> For the full text see [http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/aid/doc/rapporter\\_planer/planer/2006/Action-Plan-for-Integration-and-Social-I.html?id=271538](http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/aid/doc/rapporter_planer/planer/2006/Action-Plan-for-Integration-and-Social-I.html?id=271538)

Dialogue and contact with civil society and organisations representing immigrants are deemed important in developing relevant policy. The plan contains increased funding for NGOs and voluntary activities that promote participation and inclusion in local communities.

*Ensuring equal access to public services:* A new guide on equal opportunities was launched in May 2007. The aim of the guide is to ensure that state bodies, in the best way possible, take into consideration what kind of consequences their proposals will have for people with immigrant background, indigenous peoples (the Sami) and national minorities.

The plan of action for integration and social inclusion was presented by the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion in 2006, in connection with the fiscal budget for 2007 and contained 28 measures worth at a total of EURO 50 million. The measures involve eight ministries. The plan of action is renewed and strengthened in the budget for 2008 with additionally EURO 30 million. Measures directed against forced marriages and language instruction for adult immigrants and young children are particularly strengthened in 2008.

### **10.3 Plan of action against forced marriages**

In June 2007 the government presented a new action plan against forced marriages<sup>5</sup>. The plan contains 40 measures involving eight ministries. The Ministry of Children and Equality coordinates the plan that is allocated about 70 million NOK (9 million EURO) in the 2008 fiscal budget.

The principal aims are to prevent that young people are subject to forced marriage, and to provide better assistance and protection to young people who have been victimised or are in danger of this. The government recognises that combating forced marriages necessitates a broad-based approach, as good results are particularly contingent on the success of the policies for equality and social inclusion. Measures therefore include the establishment of *minority advisers* in upper secondary schools (age 16 – 19) with a high percentage of students with minority background, the establishment of *integration advisers* who will assist relevant Norwegian embassies, and more resources to non-governmental organisations working for the elimination of forced marriages. Furthermore, the availability of accommodation for young people exposed to forced marriages will be improved, as well as competence and collaboration within the public support services.

### **10.4 Introduction programme**

The introduction programme (established by the Introductory Act) for new immigrants applies to refugees and family members reunited with them, in addition to persons granted residence on humanitarian grounds and family members reunited with them. The individual's right and obligation under the act only apply to immigrants who require basic qualifications. Women participate on an equal footing with men. 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, as

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/bld/Kampanjer/tvangsekteskap.html?id=466466>

well as insight into the Norwegian society and to prepare for participation in working life and/or further education. The duration of the programmes are to be adjusted to the individual's circumstances, and may run for up to two years with additional periods for approved leaves of absence. The municipalities shall provide programmes for newly arrived immigrants who reside in the municipality as soon as possible and no later than within three months after a person settles in the municipality, cf. 6.4. Participation in the programme is both a right and an obligation for persons between 18 and 55 years within the target groups.

An effective transition to working life is dependent on close cooperation between individual municipalities and the local Labour and Welfare Service (LWS), cf. chapter 12.1. A special circular has been issued which describes the minimum elements that such cooperation comprises. Effects of the Introduction Programme will be monitored. So far there are indications of positive effects. A report from 2007 shows that approximately 8 800 persons, about 4 600 men and 4 200 women, participated in the programme in 2006. 6 per cent of the participants leave during the programme to take part in working life. Most participants are between the ages 26 and 35. The share of women is smaller in the older age groups. An evaluation of the implementation of the Introductory Act and its effects is due by the end of 2007.

An evaluation of the Introduction Programme carried out in 2007 documents that the main elements in the Introductory Act to a large extent had been implemented in the municipalities. Meanwhile, the formal implementation of key instruments does not necessarily imply that the quality of implementation is high, nor the absence of future challenges. Most participants start their training within 3 months after settlement in a municipality, as stipulated by the Act. Significant numbers, however, experience temporary delays in the programme, most often due to childbirth, illness, lack of labour market measures or lack of appropriate childcare. Most municipalities offer their participants a full-time programme, but there is still a distance to go before participants in all parts of the country have access to good and appropriate training. A number of municipalities lack a sufficient repertoire of training measures to be able to offer real individual adaptation.

A majority (73 per cent) of the participants who were registered out of the introductory programme during the first two years it was compulsory, have completed the programme in the sense that they have left because of an offer of work or ordinary education, or because they have finished the time allocated to programme participation. The remaining participants have quit either because they have moved to a different municipality (10 per cent), because of illness or because they have been granted a leave of absence (9 per cent), or unauthorised absence (5 per cent). However, while the completion rate is relatively high, there are also important differences between those who complete and those who quit. Women and men use the allocated time in the programme to the same extent, but men leave more often than women due to a job offer. In other words, women quit the programme more often than men. 32 per cent of former female participants are registered as having quit, compared to 19 per cent of the male ex-participants. The most common reason for women quitting the programme is illness or leave of absence. It is reasonable to assume that a part of these women will return to the programme when their leave of absence is finished.

As of September 2005 the Introductory Act also includes regulations regarding the right and obligation to participate in Norwegian language training and social studies, cf. 11.3.



## **11 Language training and education**

### **11.1 Pre-school children**

All children should be able to speak the Norwegian language before they start school. Funds have been allocated to survey the language skills of four year olds at health clinics. The purpose of this programme is to survey the needs of 4-year olds for language stimulation to improve their language skills prior to starting school. A programme has been established to develop models for such language stimulation locally. Research efforts will also be initiated.

Furthermore, the Government has established a programme for free core time (4 hours per day) in kindergartens for all four and five-year olds in parts of Oslo with a high proportion of language minority<sup>6</sup> children.

The National Centre for Multicultural Education (Nafo) has since 2005 developed courses in language stimulation and multicultural pedagogy for staff in kindergartens. Some regions have supported language stimulation measures for children in kindergartens with a minority language. A special grant for this purpose has been available for the municipalities since 2004. The grant is based on the number of language minority children in the kindergartens. The grant can also be used to develop services outside kindergartens. The total amount is in 2007 NOK 106 million.

*Goal in Action Plan for integration and social inclusion:*

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

*Indicator:*

- The proportion of children with immigrant background in kindergartens compared to the proportion of children in kindergartens in total.

*Status:* An increased share of children with immigrant background<sup>7</sup> attend kindergartens. In 2006 about 15 700 children with immigrant background attended, compared to about 9000 in 2000. By the end of 2006 about 57 per cent of all 1-5 year old children with immigrant background attended kindergarten, compared to 80 per cent for all children. In 2000 the numbers were 44 per cent vs. 62 per cent.

### **11.2 Primary and secondary education**

According to the Norwegian Education Act every pupil has the right to receive teaching adapted to individual abilities and aptitudes. With regard to language minority children, including children seeking asylum and refugees, they have the right and the obligation to 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”. Children start school in the calendar year of their 6<sup>th</sup> birthday and finish their compulsory education normally in the calendar year of their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday.

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<sup>6</sup> The term “language minority/ minority language” is used for children with another native language than Norwegian or Sami who do not master Norwegian adequately to benefit from the regular teaching when given in Norwegian.

<sup>7</sup> Children with “immigrant background” are in this regard children with parents who have a mother tongue other than Norwegian, Sami, Swedish, Danish and English.

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

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

*Goal in Action Plan for Integration and Social Inclusion:* Children and young people with immigrant background shall master the Norwegian language as early as possible in their schooling to ensure that they benefit from education.

*Indicators:*

- The proportion of children and young people receiving special language instruction
- Results from national tests in reading and mathematics in fourth grade for children with immigrant background compared to the group of pupils as a whole

*Status:*

- Of a total of 622 000 pupils in primary and lower secondary in the school year 2006-2007, 40 152 pupils received special instruction in Norwegian, that is 6.5 per cent of all pupils. This is an increase of 0.5 per cent from the school year 2005-2006.
- In the school year 2006-2007, about 71 per cent of the pupils with immigrant background in primary and lower secondary school received special instruction in Norwegian. This is a decrease of 4 percentage points from the school year 2005-2006.

*Goal in Action Plan for Integration and Social Inclusion:* The proportion of descendants completing upper secondary education shall correspond to the proportion of the whole population.

*Indicators:*

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

*Status:*

- In 2006, 96.8 per cent of descendants made a direct transition from lower to upper secondary education, compared to 97.1 per cent of the population as a whole. In 2005 the corresponding numbers were 95.4 and 97 per cent.
- A total of 56.3 per cent of descendants who finished lower secondary school in 2000, attained full general or vocational competence within five years after completing lower secondary school. The proportion for all pupils in total was 60.4 per cent.

*Goal in Action Plan for Integration and Social Inclusion:* The proportion of immigrants, arriving in Norway while they are in the age group for lower or upper secondary education, completing upper secondary education shall be increased.

*Indicator:* The proportion of immigrants aged 13 to 16 when arriving in Norway who complete and pass upper secondary education before the age of 30.

*Status:*

- Of immigrants aged 13 when they arrived in Norway and who currently are between 20 and 30 years of age, 45.8 per cent have completed and passed upper secondary education. Looking closer at the age cohorts we see that only 21 per cent of those who are 20 years have completed and passed upper secondary education. In contrast 60 per cent of those who are 27 years have completed and passed upper secondary education. There is also a significant gender difference. 53.4 per cent of all immigrant women between 20 and 30 years have completed and passed upper secondary education but only 38.9 per cent of the immigrant men.
- Of immigrants aged 16 when they arrived in Norway and who currently are between 20 and 30 years of age, 31.5 per cent have completed and passed upper secondary education. Of those who are 20 years only 5 per cent have completed and passed upper secondary education compared to 57 per cent of those who are 27 years. Of all immigrants in this group, 39.6 per cent of the women and 25.7 per cent of the men have completed and passed upper secondary education.

### **11.3 Adult education**

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

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

Completion of the 300 hours class is from the same date a condition for receiving a settlement permit and Norwegian citizenship. 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 from countries which are not part of the EEA/EFTA have an obligation, but no right to free courses. Persons from within the EEA/EFTA have neither the obligation nor the right to take part in language courses.

Those who have been granted a residence permit before September 2005 will still be offered non-mandatory classes free of charge in a transitional period of five years. 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.

The right and obligation to Norwegian language training and social studies for adult immigrants implemented as of September 2005 was evaluated in 2006/2007 as to how the municipalities handle this right and obligation and how the new subsidy arrangement influences the municipalities ability to run such training. Some main findings were:

- most municipalities offered participants training within three months of claim/application,
- there was a large degree of variation in how persons in the target group were made aware of their right and obligation,
- a conversation with a translator present was the most common assessment of the participant in the municipalities,
- the large municipalities often had more systematic assessment routines than smaller municipalities,
- about 80 per cent of the municipalities had given participants an individual plan,
- it appeared to be little user-influence on the plans due to participants limited knowledge of Norwegian upon arrival,
- the majority of teachers had formal pedagogical training
- ordinary classroom teaching was most common,
- the new financing system did not give all municipalities the opportunity to fulfil the obligations dictated to them by the Introduction Act.

The smaller municipalities have difficulty fulfilling their obligations within the framework given by the subsidization arrangement. The large municipalities can to a higher degree create a reasonable economy for the training program, given their large-scale operating advantage. A positive aspect of the new arrangement is that subsidies are distributed based on more objective criteria. The new funding arrangement has however potential for improvement in order to achieve both increased efficiency, better results and better quality of the teaching.

Altogether 24 849 persons were registered to the target group, of which 75 per cent were persons with the right and obligation. Measuring of the results and effects of education is based on the number passed/failed examinations. The number of persons that meet for examinations have risen since the introduction of the right and obligation. Around 90 per cent pass the oral part of the exam, and this number has been

fairly stable over the years. The percentage that passes the written exam lies at around 50 per cent which is considered unsatisfactory.

From 2003 language training in asylum reception centres was limited to persons with a residence permit, waiting for placement in a municipality. The present government reintroduced training in Norwegian for asylum seekers. From the autumn of 2007 asylum seekers receive 250 lessons of language training.

## **12 The labour market**

### **12.1 Policy and organisation**

The responsibility for labour market policy lies with the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion. The responsibility for implementing labour market policy is since mid-2006 provided by a new Labour and Welfare Service (LWS). The new organisation has been created by merging the Public Employment Service and the National Insurance Service. The LWS works closely with the municipal social welfare offices. There will be 'one stop shop' in each municipality to provide coordinated services to those needing them.

The main objectives of the reform are:

- To include more people in gainful employment or other activity and less on benefits as their main source of income
- To adapt the services to the needs of the users
- To get a unified and efficient employment and welfare service

To achieve these goals, an active approach towards the users, focusing on job oriented activities and an individual adjusted follow-up system is required. The special unit "Intro Service" provides extended assistance to jobseekers with an immigrant background in some larger towns and also assists other local offices in spreading competence.

New LWS-offices are set up in the period 2006 - 2009 to cover every municipality. The municipalities will continue to be responsible for social welfare services. The LWS will have a regional office in each county as well as specialised service centres.

The labour market policy aims to achieve better inclusion of immigrants in the labour market. Efforts to mobilise immigrants are important for the utilisation of resources needed by the Norwegian economy. Moreover, diversity can raise competence levels and stimulate the development of enterprises. In principle the LWS applies methods and measures that are part of the activities of the service for ordinary job seekers and the vocationally disabled. A white paper was submitted to Stortinget in November 2006 containing measures which put greater emphasis on user-orientation and measures tailored to suit the individual job seeker<sup>8</sup>. This is significant in terms of meeting any special needs of immigrants.

In the white paper, the government puts emphasis on e.g. the following challenges to achieve higher labour market participation rates among immigrants:

- Make better use of the resources many immigrants and their descendants with higher education from Norway or abroad represent as labour, competence and within entrepreneurship.
- Low educational level and low basic skills among many immigrants is a serious barrier to improving their labour market participation in an increasingly more knowledge-based economy.

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<sup>8</sup> Stortingsmelding nr. 9 (2006-2007): Arbeid, velferd og inkludering (White paper on work, welfare and inclusion).

- Immigrant women from certain countries have a very low employment rate. Women with an immigrant background represent a resource for the Norwegian labour market, and their employment and own income will give economic independence and possibilities for choice for women and their families. In a society where two-income families are common, the low employment rate of some immigrant women has negative consequences for gender equality and contributes to lower living standards for some families.
- There are great differences between persons with Norwegian as a mother tongue and others with regard to their participation in education and the actual learning outcome. Education is of great importance for avoiding that lower living standards are transferred to the next generation. Descendants of immigrants should be represented in the labour market on par with other Norwegians at the same age.

The government has in its action plan for integration and social inclusion of immigrant population, cf. chapter 10.2, proposed amongst others the following measures to increase the labour market participation rate of immigrants:

- A pilot arrangement of setting moderate quotas of immigrants to employment in the public sector.
- Active recruitment of persons with immigrant background to the public sector, including public health services.
- Continued focus on entrepreneurship among immigrants.
- Increased focus on the use of labour market measures as part of the integration programme in the municipalities.
- Strengthened programme for training at work-places
- A package of measures directed at youth with an immigrant background.

## 12.2 Employment

The register based employment rate<sup>9</sup> among immigrants increased from 57.1 per cent from the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2005 to at 60.1 per cent in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2006.

The employment rate of immigrants increased with 3 percentage points in this period whereas in the entire population the increase was somewhat less with 1.5 percentage points. The difference in rates has been reduced. Male immigrants had an employment rate at 65.7 per cent in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2006, while it was 54.6 per cent for female immigrants. In the population as a whole the rates were 73.3 and 66.6 per cent respectively. The increase in employment from 2005 to 2006 was 3.6 per cent among male immigrants and 2.2 percentage points among females.

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<sup>9</sup> The employment rates up until 2001 included only the number of registered resident employees. However, from 2002, also short term hired employment and self-employment were included. The rates from 2002 are therefore much higher than those reported previously. Cf. table A24 and A25 for more details. From 2005 the registered employees also count those aged 15, so that the age group now used is 15-74 whereas before it was 16-74.

**Table 12.1 Employment rate, total population and immigrants. Per cent of total number aged 16-74 in each group. 2002 – 2004 and aged 15-74 for 2005 and 2006**

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2005	2006
<b>Population</b>	70.1	69.4	69.3	69.4	68.5	70.0
<b>Immigrants</b>	57.5	56.6	56.6	57.5	57.1	60.1

Source: Statistics Norway

There are significant variations in employment rates among immigrants from different regions of origin and with different duration of stay. Whereas immigrants from Nordic countries had an employment rate of 73.5 per cent in 2006, the rate among immigrants from African countries was 45.2, from Asia 53.3, from Eastern Europe (non-EEA-members) 59.2 and from Latin America 62.6 per cent. The employment rate for immigrants from the new EU countries was at the same level as that for immigrants from Western Europe, with 71.3 and 70.9 per cent respectively. All immigrant groups had an increased employment rate from 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2005 to 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2006 ranging from 1.4 percent increase for immigrants from Nordic countries to 3.7 per cent for immigrants from African countries.

There are both structural and cultural factors behind such variations. For example, differences in age structure and educational background might explain some of it. Attitudes among some immigrant groups towards 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 the working age population than there is among the total population.

However, employment rates increase with length of residence, first and foremost among immigrants from Asia, Africa and Latin-America. Among immigrants who have lived in Norway four years or less, the employment rate was 53.4 per cent in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2006, while those with four to six years of residence had a rate which is nearly 7 percentage points higher. Among immigrants with seven years of residence or more, the employment rate was another 2.5 percentage points higher. Among European immigrants with seven years of residence or more the employment rate decreased due to the relative higher portions of elderly in the population.

**Table 12.2 Employment rate according to region of origin and length of stay. Per cent of persons aged 15-74. 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2006**

	- 4 years	4-6 years	7+ years
<b>Immigrants, total</b>	<b>53.4</b>	<b>60.3</b>	<b>62.7</b>
Nordic countries	75.6	79.5	72.1
Western Europe	69.4	78.1	70.3
New EEA–countries	73.3	75.4	66.6
Eastern and Central Europe	46.0	63.9	62.6
North America, Oceania	49.1	64.1	65.7
Latin America	48.2	63.7	67.0
Asia	38.5	53.4	58.1
Africa	34.5	46.6	50.7

Source: Statistics Norway



Immigrants from Somalia, Iraq and Afghanistan had the lowest employment rates with 31.7, 41.3 and 41.7 per cent respectively. This low level must be seen in relation to the relative high shares of refugees with short time of residence in Norway within these three groups. On the other hand, immigrants from some Asian countries had a relatively high level of employment. For instance, immigrants from India, China, Philippines, Sri Lanka, all had an employment rate above 60 per cent, which place them close to immigrants from many western countries. These groups have a relatively high proportion of long time residents or they have a significant share of recent labour immigrants.

Despite these tendencies, we also find a relatively low employment rate among some immigrant groups with a long duration of residence in Norway. Immigrants from Pakistan had a rate at 46.3 per cent. This rate is a result of a very low employment rate among women of Pakistani origin. Their employment rate was 29.1 per cent versus 62.2 per cent among the men. Also among the well-established immigrants from Turkey we found a low employment rate, at 52.2 per cent, due to a considerable gender difference, 39.7 versus 62.2 per cent for women and men.

Persons born in Norway by immigrant parents had a total employment rate of 53.8 per cent, which was 6.3 percentage points below the level of the parent generation. The low employment rate for this group can be explained by their age distribution. 44 per cent of this group are under 20 years old and many of them are likely to be students not included in the labour force. In absolute numbers the employed descendants counted 10 200 persons in the fourth quarter of 2006. The 3 000 persons aged 20 to 24 years had an employment rate of 68.7 per cent, which is 12 percentage points higher than the level in the same age group among the foreign born and just 4 percentage points less than in the total population.

Persons staying in Norway for a period of less than six months, and persons commuting across the border for work on a daily basis, are registered as "non-resident" and are not included in the statistics for employed immigrants. About 55 300 non-resident workers (self-employed excluded) were registered as employed in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2006, an increase of 46.1 per cent (17 400 persons) from 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2005. The largest group of employed persons not registered as residents came from the Nordic countries (more than 20 000 persons), while persons from the new EEA-countries form the second largest group with 13 100 from Poland and 3 500 from Lithuania.

### **12.3 Unemployment**

Unemployment among immigrants is considerably higher than in the population at large. In general immigrants residing in Norway have more problems in finding and keeping jobs than native Norwegians. 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 all factors with large impact on this situation.

The register based unemployment rate among immigrants<sup>10</sup> fell from 7.3 per cent in May 2006 to 5.0 per cent in May 2007. The unemployment for the total labour force decreased from 2.5 per cent to 1.7 per cent during the same period, cf. table 12.3.

**Table 12.3 Unemployment rate - region of origin. Per cent of the labour force. Second quarter 2000 – 2007**

	May 2000	May 2001	May 2002	May 2003	May 2004	May 2005	May 2006	May 2007
<b>Population, total</b>	<b>2.6</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>1.7</b>
<b>Immigrants, total</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>6.6</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>9.6</b>	<b>9.8</b>	<b>9.0</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>5.0</b>
Nordic countries	2.6	2.4	3.1	4.4	4.1	3.6	2.8	1.9
Western Europe	3.2	2.9	3.6	4.4	4.4	3.9	2.5	1.8
New EEA–countries						4.6	3.4	2.1
Eastern Europe	9.9	8.2	9.2	10.5	10.3	10.6*	8.9*	5.8*
North America, Oceania	3.4	2.8	4.4	5.7	5.3	4.5	3.6	2.2
Latin America	8.7	7.5	7.7	11.2	10.8	10.1	8.0	5.0
Asia	10.4	9.2	10.6	13.0	13.1	12.3	10.0	7.1
Africa	14.2	12.6	14.6	17.8	18.2	17.5	14.9	11.2

\* EEA –countries in Central and Eastern Europe not included

Source: Statistics Norway

There are significant variations in unemployment rates among immigrants from different regions. Whereas the rate for immigrants from Nordic countries and Western Europe is 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 11.2 per cent in May 2007, followed by 7.1 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 rates among immigrants from South and Central America and Eastern Europe (non-EEA-members) was 5.0 and 5.8 per cent respectively. Immigrants from Western Europe had the lowest unemployment rate at 1.8 per cent, followed by immigrants from other Nordic countries had at 1.9 per cent. Unemployment among immigrants from North America and Oceania was 2.2 per cent. However, this is the smallest immigrant group, with only 100 registered unemployed. Immigrants from Africa had a decline in unemployment rate of 3.7 percentage points from May 2006 to May 2007, although from a high level. In the same period the unemployment rate fell by 2.3 percentage points for immigrants as a whole.

<sup>10</sup> The register based rate are used here since it is a comparison of unemployment among immigrants and the population in general. The somewhat higher survey based rate (2.5 per cent by May 2007), which is also used in international comparisons, is not suitable. It does not cover a sufficient number of immigrants.

The unemployment among immigrants from the new EEA-countries in Eastern and Central Europe was 2.1 per cent at the end of May 2007. This is much lower than the rate among immigrants from other Eastern European countries.

The unemployment rate among both men and women was 1.7 per cent for all persons in the labour force by the second quarter of 2007. The corresponding rates for immigrants were 4.8 per cent for men and 5.4 per cent for women. For women, the unemployment rate decreased by 0.7 percentage points in the entire population and by 2.1 percentage points in the immigrant population from the second quarter of 2006 to the second quarter of 2007. Unemployment fell by 2.3 percentage points among immigrant men and by 0.9 percentage points for men in the population as a whole in the same period.

The register based unemployment rates only reflect the number of persons who are actively seeking employment; that is, the number of persons who are registered as such with the labour and welfare service. Therefore, it does not reflect the total number of persons without gainful employment.

#### 12.4 Labour market schemes

The emphasis of the LWS is primarily on job seeking and self-activation early in the period of unemployment. In this phase LWS offers information, advice and closer follow-up for those who need it. If this is not enough to get jobseekers into employment, consideration is given to using labour market schemes. Schemes in which job practice and language tuition go hand in hand are often seen as useful for immigrants.

Immigrants, along with other vulnerable groups such as vocationally disabled, youth and long-term unemployed, are considered as target groups within the labour market policy, and are given priority when it comes to labour market measures. Immigrants participate to a much greater extent in labour market measures than do natives.

The labour market schemes of the LWS can be separated into 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 LWS 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 12.4 Participation in labour market schemes - region of origin. Per cent of total number aged 16-74. Second quarter 2000 – 2007**

Region of origin	May 2000	May 2001	May 2002	May 2003	May 2004	May 2005	May 2006	May 2007
<b>Total population</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>0.4</b>
<b>Immigrants, total</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>1.4</b>
Nordic countries	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.2	0.2
Western Europe	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.3	0.3
New EEA-countries							0.4	0.3

Eastern Europe	3.4	2.9	2.2	2.4	2.8	2.1	1.8*	2.0*
North America	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.5	0.9	0.6	0.3	0.2
Latin America	2.0	2.2	1.7	1,9	2.0	1.9	1.3	1.5
Asia	2.3	3.0	2.3	2,8	3.1	2.4	1.7	1.9
Africa	2.7	3.7	3.3	3.9	4.1	3.5	2.5	3.2

\* EEA –countries in Central and Eastern Europe not included

Source: Statistics Norway

The number of persons participating in ordinary labour market schemes (job programmes) was stable from May 2006 to May 2007 with only a slight increase from 11 820 to 11 984. For immigrants, the figure increased from approximately 3 700 to 4 500. Immigrants accounted in 2007 for 38 per cent of all participants on such schemes. Most of them came from non-western countries. At the same time, 24 per cent of all registered unemployed were immigrants.

Immigrants from Africa and Asia had the highest participation rates in ordinary labour market schemes in May 2007 at 3.2 and 1.9 per cent respectively. Certain groups of newly arrived immigrants are covered by the introduction programme, cf. chapter 10.

The Government continues its efforts on labour market schemes and targeted assistance for immigrants through the action plan on integration and social inclusion of the immigrant population, cf. chapter 10.2. Additional efforts will be made to integrate the new immigrants in the labour market and to give special assistance to the immigrants who have resided in Norway for a long period but still face difficulties finding stable employment.

### **12.5 Active recruitment**

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

All employers, whether state, municipal or private, should have a deliberate and active recruitment policy relating to persons with immigrant background and should counteract all types of direct and indirect discrimination. In the public administration, employers are obliged to call in at least one qualified applicant with immigrant background for interviews when hiring personnel. Managers of all state-owned enterprises are urged to introduce the same scheme and the government has also called on the privately-owned companies to follow suit.

Moderate affirmative action for persons with immigrant background to public administration positions will be tried out in a 2-year pilot project, starting in 2008. Moderate affirmative action means that if candidates have equal or approximately equal qualifications, a candidate with an immigrant background is to be preferred.

## 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 March 31 in the year of the election. Rates of participation in the two latest local elections are presented in table 13.1 below.

**Table 13.1 Participation in local elections - 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" origin*	40/33	39/25
- women/men	41/34	35/33
Naturalized voters	50	43
- western/"non-western" origin*	66/43	64/36
- women/men	52/49	41/41

\* From countries in Asia, Africa, Central- and South America and Eastern Europe.

Source: Statistics Norway

The results of the local election in 2007 will be analyzed. A report on the number of candidates with immigrant background on the voting lists, how many were elected and on participation rates among immigrants with voting rights are due in 2008.

### 13.2 National elections

Norwegian nationality is a precondition for voting in national elections, electing representatives for Stortinget. At the national election in 2005, 123 700 Norwegian nationals with immigrant background were entitled to vote. This was an increase of 24 000 since the 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 originated in Pakistan (12 700), Vietnam (11 000) and Bosnia-Herzegovina (7 900). There was an increase of 6 600 persons from Bosnia-Herzegovina who were entitled to vote in the national election in 2005 compared to the election in 2001, due to a high rate of naturalization, cf. chapter 9.2.

In the election in 2005 the participation of Norwegian nationals with immigrant background was 53 per cent compared to 52 per cent in 2001 and 63 per cent in 1997. Compared to the population as a whole, their participation in 2005 was 24 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.

55 per cent of the women and 51 per cent of the men with immigrant background used their right to vote in 2005. Nordic women had the highest participation rate (78 per cent) whereas women with background from Central- and Eastern Europe had the lowest (51 per cent). Considering other parts of the world, women of Sri Lankan origin had a participation rate of almost 70 per cent, more than women from many European countries. Only 42 per cent of the men with background from Central- and Eastern Europe used their right to vote.

The participation rate for the youngest voters (18-21) was in general lower than for other age groups, with an interesting exception for the youngest voters with Somali parents. Their participation rate was higher, almost at the same level as among young people with no immigrant background.

## **14 Racism and discrimination**

### **14.1 Legislation**

The Act on prohibition against discrimination based on ethnicity, religion, etc. (the Anti-Discrimination Act), in force as of 1.1.2006, applies to all areas of society, except for family life and personal relationships. It prohibits discrimination based on ethnicity, national origin, descent, colour, language, religion or belief. The act protects against both direct and indirect discrimination. It covers harassment on the same grounds and instructions to discriminate or harass. The act has a ban on reprisals against a person who files or intends to file a complaint about violation of the act. This protection also covers witnesses. Furthermore it is forbidden to participate in discrimination.

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

The role of the Ombud is to investigate incidents where alleged breaches of the laws have taken place. Following investigations of complaints, the Ombud may then make a recommendation. In the field of employment the Ombud encourages employers to avoid ethnic discrimination and promote ethnic equality in their enterprises. The Ombud has a consultancy and advisory service that is offered free of charge to individual employers in both private and public enterprises. An important function is to disseminate good examples and methods and help to improve knowledge in this field. Out of a total of 288 cases in 2006, the Ombud handled 61 complaints on discrimination based on ethnicity and 10 on language. Furthermore, the Ombud guided in 150 cases concerning ethnicity and 17 concerning language, out of a total of 794 cases.

A Commission to propose a comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation was appointed by the Government 1. June 2007 and shall submit its recommendations within 1. July 2009. A partial recommendation on the exceptions for religious communities shall be submitted within 1. January 2008. Different Acts prohibit discrimination on the basis of gender, ethnic origin, national origin, descent, colour, language, religion, ethical and cultural orientation, political views, membership of a trade union, sexual orientation, disability or age, as well as discrimination of employees who work part-time or on a temporary basis. The protection against discrimination varies depending on the basis of the discrimination.

The Commission shall submit a proposal for a compiled and more comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation. According to the mandate, the Commission shall consider the following questions:

- A compiled act against discrimination, including the question if new groups should be protected by the anti-discrimination legislation.

- Abolition of the special exceptions for religious communities from the prohibition on discrimination on the basis of gender or homosexual cohabitation in the Gender Equality Act and the Working Environment Act.
- Ratification and implementation of The European Human Rights Convention Protocol 12 on discrimination.
- Anti-discrimination provisions in the Constitution, unless a commission appointed by the Parliament is mandated to consider this question.

#### **14.2 Plan of action against racism and discrimination**

Combating racism and discrimination must be based on long-term, continuous, focused attention. Several Norwegian governments have presented action plans to combat racism and discrimination. The most recent plan were implemented in the period 2002–2006. The measures set out in this plan covered 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. An evaluation and status report shows that most of the measures under these target areas were implemented. The government intends to present a new national action plan by the end of 2008.

#### **14.3 Public sector authorities and discrimination**

Due to serious complaints in 2007 about ethnic discrimination exercised by some public sector authorities, anti-discrimination activities have been stepped up. A descriptive study of the situation regarding ethnic discrimination exercised by public authorities has been initiated. The objective is to accumulate more knowledge about the level and occurrence of discrimination within the public/state sector and what measures that have been taken to prevent and combat such discrimination. The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud will summarize the results of the study and propose new measures if considered necessary.



## **15 Information and recent reports**

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

[http://www.ssb.no/innvandring\\_en/](http://www.ssb.no/innvandring_en/)

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

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

In addition the directorate publishes annually (in March) an Annual Report and Facts and Figures. The most recent editions are found here:

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

### Some recent reports in English:

Brekke, Jan-Paul and Vevstad, Vigdis

*Reception Conditions for asylum seekers in Norway and the EU. Report 2007: 4, Institute for Social Research*

[http://www.samfunnsforskning.no/files/R\\_2007\\_4.pdf](http://www.samfunnsforskning.no/files/R_2007_4.pdf)

Carling, Jørgen, Bivand Erdal, Marta, Horst, Cindy and Wallacher, Hilde

*Legal, Rapid and Reasonably Priced? A Survey of Remittance Services in Norway*

[http://www.prio.no/files/file50113\\_prio\\_report\\_3-2007\\_legal\\_rapid\\_and\\_reasonably\\_priced.pdf](http://www.prio.no/files/file50113_prio_report_3-2007_legal_rapid_and_reasonably_priced.pdf)

Haagensen, Eva

*Norway's Action Plan for Integration and Social Inclusion of the Immigrant Population,*

Metropolis World Bulletin September 2007, Volume 7 Social Cohesion

[http://www.international.metropolis.net/index\\_e.html](http://www.international.metropolis.net/index_e.html)

Makkonen, Timo

*Good as far as it goes, but does it go far enough? A report on Norway's Anti Discrimination Laws and Policies,*

Migration Policy Group report (forthcoming November 2007)

<http://www.migpolgroup.com/publications/>

Mathiesen, Bjørn (ed.)

*Immigration and immigrants 2006*

Statistical Analyses 87, Statistics Norway 2007

[http://www.ssb.no/english/subjects/02/sa\\_innvand\\_en/sa87/](http://www.ssb.no/english/subjects/02/sa_innvand_en/sa87/)

Olsen, Bjørn

*Are young immigrants a marginalised group?*

Statistical magazine (on the web), Statistics Norway 2007.

<http://www.ssb.no/english/magazine/>

Skilbrei, May-Len and Tveit, Marianne

*Facing return. Perceptions of Repatriation among Nigerian Women in Prostitution in Norway.* Fafo-report 2007:01

<http://www.fafo.no/pub/rapp/20001/20001.pdf>

Daugstad, Gunnlaug (ed.)

*Facts on immigrants and their descendants 2007*

Documents 2008/1, Statistics Norway

[http://www.ssb.no/english/subjects/02/doc\\_200801\\_en/doc\\_200801\\_en.pdf](http://www.ssb.no/english/subjects/02/doc_200801_en/doc_200801_en.pdf)