

EVALUATION THE NORWEGIAN PROGRAM FOR THE RESETTLEMENT OF UN REFUGEES

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SUMMARY

The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI) has commissioned a holistic evaluation (UDI Project Number: 07/919) of the Norwegian program for the resettlement of UN refugees¹ with an emphasis on integration potential as a criterion for selection².

This project commenced on 1 September 2007 and was completed on 1 May 2008³. It is based on data collected in this period.

This report has sought to answer the following questions:

1. How has integration potential been employed in the selection of UN refugees to Norway?
2. How have organisational changes affected administrative practices and routines regarding the criteria for the selection of UN refugees?
3. What are the problematic issues, if any, connected to integration potential as a selection criterion?
4. What are the challenges, dilemmas and issues that need further clarification or research?

1. How has integration potential been employed in the selection of UN refugees to Norway?

- The Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion (AID) is responsible for deciding which criteria should be employed in the selection of UN refugees.
- It is difficult to pinpoint when integration potential was introduced as a selection criterion because no documents which date its introduction are available.
- Integration potential is first mentioned in the annual "quota letter" from the Ministry to UDI in 2003. However, several documents refer to the criterion, indicating that integration potential has been employed as a selection criterion earlier. Interviews with senior officials confirm that UN refugees have been rejected because of the lack of integration potential even in the 1980s. It is probable that integration potential has been a selection criterion ever since Norway established its resettlement programme for UN refugees.
- Difficulty in pinpointing the introduction of integration potential as a selection criterion has consequences for research which seeks to understand how the "profile" of UN refugees has changed after its introduction.
- Collective decisions are the general rule in the selection of UN refugees by Norwegian authorities; this administrative routine takes individual subjectivity out of the selection process.

¹ In Norway, so-called "quota refugees", "UN refugees" and "UN refugees" are used interchangeably for refugees who are selected to come to Norway through the UNHCR resettlement program. In this report, the term "UN refugee" will be used.

² Integration potential is not a selection criterion in emergency cases presented by the UNHCR.

³ There was a pre-study from 1 June 2007 to 1 September 2007 prior to this project. The pre-study resulted in a memo to UDI entitled "A comparative study of integration potential as an additional selection criterion for the resettlement of refugees" (1 September 2007, UDI).

- Selection criteria may be objective (e.g. age) or subjective (e.g. motivation, resourcefulness). However, all decisions finally taken are based on discretion - within the framework of existing laws, instructions and guidelines.
- Discretion, and not a codified practice, is the underlying philosophy in the selection of UN refugees.
- The selection process with regard to integration potential boils down to the key question: what are the chances of the refugee to integrate well in Norwegian society?
- Decisions based on discretion increase the risk of unequal treatment and lack of transparency. However, such problems are not insurmountable. For example, they can be dealt with by written guidelines for the administration which are also available to the general public.
- New officers to the Asylum Division in general and to selection missions in particular are recruited on the basis of their qualifications and eligibility. Specialised training for conducting interviews or courses in cultural awareness is currently not mandatory. Many new officers learn on the job. Some may read up on relevant literature on politics, culture, religion etc before they travel on selection missions, others not.
- The experience of selection mission teams therefore varies. Continuity in team members has been pointed out to be an issue at times. These are elements which may affect the selection of UN refugees.
- The selection mission teams interview three or four refugees (and their families) per day. The interviews usually last one to two hours with an interpreter. If necessary, more time may be used. During the interviews, Norwegian officials confirm information from the UNHCR, collect relevant data and assess integration potential. The UNHCR presents about 20 % more UN refugees to the Norwegian authorities than there are places for in the Norwegian quota; selection missions often last for a few weeks.
- Information collected regarding integration potential is critical for the planning of placement and arrangements for settlement. "Placement competency" of selection mission teams varies with the composition of the team. This usually is related to how the selection of refugees is organised⁴.

2. How have organisational changes affected administrative practices and routines regarding the criteria for the selection of UN refugees?

- Protection need is the most important selection criterion for UN refugees. Integration potential is also an important selection criterion. However, *the way* in which the two selection criteria have been employed has varied over time; organisational shifts in responsibility between the Legal Division and the Integration Division for the selection of UN refugees have coincided with changes in emphasis between the two selection criteria.
- Put simply, under the responsibility of the Legal Division, expertise from the Integration Division is called upon in cases where there is doubt regarding the refugee's integration prospects.
- The opposite also holds true when the Integration Division has had the main responsibility: legal advice has been sought in cases where there has been doubt regarding the refugee's protection need.

⁴ Responsibility for the selection of UN refugees has alternated between Legal and Integration Divisions in UDI/Norwegian authorities.

- The shifts in responsibility between the Legal and the Integration Divisions – and their consequences for how the two selection criteria have been employed - have implications for questions Norwegian authorities are interested in understanding, such as how has the “profile” of UN refugees changed following the introduction of the selection criterion.
- Norwegian authorities use both an individual and group approach when utilizing integration potential as a selection criterion. Therefore, the final list of accepted UN refugees includes refugees representing a range of integration potential profiles; some high, some low.
- The “profiles” of UN refugees selected are therefore not homogenous. The fact that all cohorts of UN refugees include the whole range of integration potential also has implications for research design.
- The problematic issues connected to integration potential as a selection criterion discussed in this report refer to both the individual and group approaches.

3. What are the problematic issues, if any, connected to integration potential as a selection criterion?

- The concept of integration potential – whether this refers to the individual or group - presumes a definition of what integration success would be. The report therefore, also looks at how Norwegian authorities define and measure integration success.
- Norwegian integration policy has 17 inclusion goals⁵. For the last three years, Norwegian authorities have published status reports on indicators of these goals. This is a good point of departure for operationalising the concept of integration potential.
- However, the selection of the inclusion goals and the manner in which they are formulated raise several questions. For example:
 - What are the critical barriers to inclusion in the various policy areas? It is necessary to identify these barriers in order to ensure constant and effective monitoring.
 - Integration is a multi-faceted process. Some goals take longer to achieve than others. What is the time frame for the various inclusion goals?
 - Integration is not only a long-term process; it is also multi-generational. What constitutes success for one generation would be an unsuitable standard for another. How is it reflected in the inclusion goals?
 - The inclusion goals generally aim “to reduce” or “to increase” a particular phenomenon in the immigrant population. If it is an aim that inclusion goals for immigrants should correspond to their relevant levels in the overall population, this should be clearly stated.
- Norwegian inclusion goals focus mainly on participation and inclusion in society. An example from New Zealand shows how integration success as a policy goal can encompass *more than* immigrant settlement; the New Zealand goal of “social cohesion” includes the host community and the conditions needed for social cohesion in society as a whole. Underlying the New Zealand model is the idea that integration

⁵ Action plan for integration and social inclusion of the immigrant population and goals for social inclusion. Norwegian Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion. 2007.

is a two-way process as well as an acknowledgement that immigration will change society. In addition to participation and inclusion, the New Zealand social cohesion policy also focuses on belonging, recognition and legitimacy.

- The report also looks at what we currently know about the integration process of UN refugees in Norway. There is scant research on this topic. The little which is available has usually studied UN refugees a couple of years after their arrival, usually too soon if we are to take in the findings from Statistics Norway regarding the time UN refugees need before they participate in the labour market. In most research, UN refugees are part of a larger category (refugees in general or the whole immigrant population).
 - Length of residence is the single most important factor that increases the UN refugees' chances of success in the labour market. After 10-15 years, UN refugees have the same degree of participation in the labour market as immigrants in general (60%)⁶.
 - In ten immigrant groups studied⁷, the employment rate jumps from 48 % to 59 % between 4 to 6 years of residence. After 11-15 years, the employment rate leaps again for the category referred to as non-Western immigrants. Many of these are also refugees.
 - These findings are echoed by research from abroad.
- Limited interviews with local municipalities in Norway provide some understanding of the attitude of local municipalities in the resettlement of UN refugees and of the issues which are important to them.
 - In reflecting on factors which contribute to integration success, their views shift from the integration potential of refugees to more practical matters like available housing, time needed to recognise foreign credentials, contacts with willing employers in the private and public sectors who could provide refugees with their first jobs, etc.
 - From the perspective of local municipalities, the Introductory programme⁸, mandatory since 2004, provides a welcome structure in the first two years of the refugees' lives – after their arrival in Norway.
 - Interviews with local municipalities reveal that there is a wide range of external factors which contribute or hinder integration success, such as economic growth in the local municipality, local unemployment levels, how experienced the local municipality is with settling refugees, etc.
- Integration is a complex interplay of many factors; the individual or group resources of the UN refugees being only one of them.
- Some suggestions are given in the report to the following challenge in resettlement policy implementation:
 - Given that the assessment of integration potential is not an exact science, how can Norwegian authorities improve the assessment of integration potential?

6 In the general population, participation in the labour market is approximately 70 %.

7 Living conditions study of the immigrant population, Statistics Norway, 2008.

8 Introduksjonsprogrammet http://www.IMDi.no/upload/4106/29184_folder_eng.pdf

4. What are the challenges, dilemmas and issues that need further clarification or research?

- It is important to fill knowledge gaps regarding the critical factors for integration success in local municipalities. Filling the knowledge gap of the critical factors for integration success in local municipalities will ensure that resettlement policy will be based on empirical experience and not assumptions about individuals or groups of UN refugees.
- The report makes a few suggestions regarding themes for further research. For example, there is also a knowledge gap regarding the integration careers of UN refugees from the viewpoint of their individual resources. For example, how have those viewed to have had high integration potential fared? How have those viewed to have had low integration potential fared?
- This question is also interesting from a group perspective; how have groups who were once “popular” or “unpopular” with local municipalities fared e.g. after 15 years following their arrival?
- Knowledge regarding “successful” and “unsuccessful” UN refugees is also important for the authorities. What are the characteristics of their individual resources and of their conditions of settlement? It is probably more interesting for the authorities to study “successful” and “unsuccessful” UN refugees, irrespective of their country background than to limit their understanding of the integration process to the country backgrounds of UN refugees⁹.
- “Expeditious and good” placement in local municipalities is a policy goal; it is the basis on which refugees can lead an active life in a safe environment. The challenge for Norwegian authorities is to ensure the best possible match – from an integration perspective – between UN refugees and local municipalities. UDI’s partner in resettlement, the Directorate of Diversity and Integration (IMDi), is in direct contact with the local municipalities where the UN refugees are placed. IMDi is most concerned about the quality of information received from UDI about the refugees before their arrival. UDI’s response to IMDi’s concern is a request for more specifics regarding the type of information currently perceived as lacking from IMDi.
- To the researcher, this is a sign that the cooperation and dialogue between UDI and IMDi still needs to be further developed.
 - The quality of information received about the refugees before their arrival is dependent on the level of cooperation between IMDi and UDI in general.
 - The quality of information is also dependent on how “placement experience and competency” is channeled into the selection process in particular.
- For Norwegian authorities, the double policy objective of international protection and integration success has an inherent contradiction that results in the following dilemma: It may result in the rejection of UN refugees in need of protection and thereby putting the lives of vulnerable refugees – individuals and groups - at risk when no other solutions are available.
- To sum up, many of UDI’s possibilities to improve the selection of UN refugees - individuals or groups – are dependent on interplay with other actors. On one hand, UDI is dependent on a clear definition of integration success and empirical research

⁹ The latest written guidelines from AID state that more systematic emphasis will be put on the capacity of local municipalities to adjust their services to special needs of groups of refugees when deciding the composition of the quota. In short, the group approach is a relevant consideration in deciding sub-groups of refugees in the national quota.

on integration processes of individuals and groups of UN refugees. On the other hand, UDI is dependent on information about the services and experiences of local municipalities in resettlement and integration.

- UDI can nonetheless ensure better continuity of selection mission teams, better mandatory training and more transparency regarding guidelines.

5. The new set of guidelines regarding the resettlement of UN refugees in Norway: some comments.

AID has recently (27 March 2007) sent new guidelines for the selection of UN refugees to UDI¹⁰. We shall therefore also comment on these briefly here in this report.

The new guidelines from AID close the discussion on some issues e.g. integration potential at the individual level will no longer continue to be a selection criterion. No reason is given for this change in the new guidelines.

However, the guidelines also raise many new questions.

1. The guidelines state that more systematic emphasis will be put on the capacity of local municipalities to adjust their services to special needs of groups of refugees when deciding the composition of the quota. In addition, weight will be put on how the local municipalities evaluate the results from their settlement and integration efforts vis-à-vis various groups of UN refugees. Senior officials from AID explain that it is a misunderstanding to say that integration potential as a selection criterion at group level has been retained in the new guidelines. According to the Ministry, it is more correct to say that the group approach is a consideration when sub-groups in the following year's national quota are to be decided; it is in this sense, according to the Ministry, that integration potential will still be considered in the future.
2. The question is: what are the practical consequences of "considering" the integration results of groups of refugees in the composition of the following year's quota? This is not defined in the new guidelines. In practice, does this not mean that groups who are considered by local municipalities to be integrating well will continue to figure on the list? Does this not mean that integration potential at group level will be a de facto selection criterion (not when prospective UN refugees are being interviewed face-to-face, but in the composition of the national quota)? It is generally positive that local municipalities will be consulted; however, giving the local municipalities a larger say, in practical terms, also implies that integration potential at group level will be a de facto selection criterion.
3. The new shift raises other questions e.g. does this mean that Norway now no longer expects the UNHCR to present cases with high integration potential?
4. This shift in resettlement policy is not unproblematic for further reasons. For example, statistics from Statistics Norway show that Vietnamese refugees have become more independent economically over time; the Vietnamese were once a group which Norwegian authorities were "worried" about. This underlines the fact that length of residence is an important element in the integration process, probably more so than cultural background. Refugees who are "unpopular" with the local municipalities today could be "popular" tomorrow. The preferences of local municipalities for one group of UN refugees instead of another could be influenced by factors other than long-term integration success. For example, groups who remain for a long time at asylum transit centers might be "unpopular" with local municipalities for one reason or another. The new guidelines do not acknowledge that the preferences of local municipalities are not unproblematic.

¹⁰ <https://www.udiregelverk.no/default.aspx?path={DBE5D169-7CBF-4AB1-8C8E-6B510046D1CE}>

5. The “flexibility” of UDI in meeting the annual quota in the three-year period is now specified and detailed; UDI’s flexibility has therefore been reduced. When we study the Norwegian quota and the final numbers accepted for resettlement since 1992 (see table 1). In some three year periods, more refugees were accepted. In others, less. Partly, this can be explained by varying capacities in the UNHCR to present resettlement cases and in the local municipalities to accept UN refugees. As shown in table 1, between 1992-2007, there has been a “deficit” between the number of places in the Norwegian quota and the number of UN refugees who were selected by 513. Even if we include the number of places which have been “converted” since 1992, ie. more than 195 places, we find that fewer UN refugees¹¹ have been selected by Norwegian authorities than there have been provisions for in the Norwegian quota. To a large degree, this can be explained by factors external to UDI. In the view of the researcher, the “flexibility” of UDI should therefore be increased, not reduced. The guidelines do not state the reason for reducing UDI’s flexibility.

6. Among the selection criteria for individual UN refugees mentioned is the “women’s perspective”. The guidelines state that at least 55 % of the total number of UN refugees must be female. As families are preferred by local municipalities (because of housing possibilities) to single persons, does this mean that Norway will now favor families with more daughters than sons? Such a conclusion sounds unreasonable; however it is unclear to the researcher what the practical consequences of this guideline will be.

7. When the local municipalities are to have a larger say in the composition of sub-groups in the national quota, this could leave some vulnerable refugee groups with fewer chances to resettle in Norway. The new guidelines delegate weighing the needs of the UNCHR and the wishes of the local municipalities to UDI and IMDi.

8. The assessment of integration potential is not an exact science regardless of a group and/or individual approach to integration potential. This is the case whether we are referring to the selection of UN refugees, or, as the new guidelines now specify, in the composition of the national quota. However, the new guidelines do not mention how its assessment can be improved. This report suggests that the assessment of integration potential of groups can be improved by the Ministry providing following steps:

- by providing a clear, measurable definition of integration success.
- by empirical knowledge about the integration process over time.

In addition, up-to-date information about specific settlement possibilities in local municipalities from IMDi must be channelled into the selection process more effectively. For its own part, UDI can train all new officials in selection procedures (courses in interview technique, cultural sensitivity etc), ensure better continuity of officials (for both dossier and selection missions) and make sure that there is more transparency regarding the selection process.

9. Interviews with local municipalities after the introduction of the guidelines reveal that IMDi’s task to suggest groups of refugees for consideration will not be easy e.g. refugees from X might be “popular” in Oslo, but not in another part of the country. Settlement and integration is a complex process and is dependent on many factors e.g. personal network, level of trauma, personal resources, the skills and experience of the local refugee consultant, the manner in which settlement is organised by the local municipality etc. Some of these factors are external to the refugee groups. The new guidelines reduce this complexity. The risk that Norwegian policy will continue to be based on popular assumptions and not empirical knowledge is high.

¹¹ Over the 15 year period., the figure is 317 places.

10. The new guidelines do not suggest any changes in the current partnership between UDI and IMDi in the selection process. This report has not focussed specially on the partnership between UDI and IMDi. From the limited data the project has collected in this area, the researcher is of the view that improving the partnership is critical to the final goal of "expeditious and good" placement in local municipalities and the successful integration of UN refugees. Resettlement policy and settlement policy are closely linked; the success of one affects the success of the other. This is an area where more detailed guidelines would have been useful. For example, selection missions abroad are popular internal tasks and therefore, not tasks which will be "given up" by choice. It is unfortunate that the latest guidelines are silent here.

11. IMDi's role in the selection process is limited to its area of expertise and network (integration and contact with local municipalities). However, the scale of IMDi's role is not specified in the guidelines. As mentioned previously, in 2007, IMDi participated in two of four selection missions. Varying combinations of UDI/IMDi participation in the selection process also imply that the information different cohorts of UN refugees receive vary accordingly. The same applies to the information collected about the UN refugees which will be sent to the local municipalities prior to their arrival. The researcher is of the view that IMDi needs to participate in all selection missions, not only one or two per year. There is no doubt that as long as integration potential remains an issue – also when it is limited to groups and to the composition of the national quota ie. pre-selection – the partnership between UDI and IMDi needs to be defined more closely.

12. Resettlement from abroad and settlement in local municipalities are two processes which are closely linked. Research that is needed for better resettlement and settlement might have elements of both the selection process (which UDI is responsible for) and the integration process (which IMDi is responsible for). When allocating scarce resources for research and development, UDI might be unwilling to fund research which has elements of the integration process and IMDi might be unwilling to fund research which has elements of the selection process. The partnership between UDI and IMDi – also in the area of research and development - is an area where more detailed guidelines would have been useful.

13. In 2007, a total of 1362 refugees were presented by the UNHCR to Norway's selection missions. Of these, 229 were rejected after pre-screening and a further 97 were rejected after interviews. The selection mission reports do not differentiate between the reasons for rejections after pre-screening and after the interviews. However, interviews with experienced officials in UDI confirm that there are more refugees who are rejected because of UDI's estimation of the need for international protection after pre-screening than after the interviews. In other words, very few are rejected after the interview because of the lack of the need for international protection; they are rejected then because of the lack of integration potential.

Refugees presented by UNHCR to Norway in 2007, rejections and reasons¹².

| First country asylum | Presented by UNHCR | Rejected after pre-screening | Rejected after interview | Reason for rejection after pre-screening and after interview |
|----------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Thailand | 562 | 134 | 23 | Not available |
| Zambia | 353 | 37 | 47 | Mostly lack of integration potential |
| Malaysia | 267 | 36 | 3 | " |
| India | 180 | 22 | 24 | " |

More refugees rejected because of the **lack of need for international protection** after pre-screening.

More refugees rejected because of the **lack of integration potential** after interview.

14. When integration potential at the individual level is no longer to be a selection criterion, questions can be raised if interviews with UN refugees are still necessary; the need for international protection of the large majority of UN refugees has earlier been examined effectively by Norwegian authorities at the pre-screening phase. To the researcher, this opens up the possibility of IMDi using the interviews to collect the information they need – and which they have been concerned about – for placement and settlement in local municipalities. This could be an improvement compared to past practice. However, since the guidelines leave this matter to UDI and IMDi, it is not certain that this will be the outcome of future selection missions abroad.

15. In short, the challenges which have been mentioned in this report refer to both an individual and a group approach to integration potential; they are still valid even when integration potential as a selection criterion at the individual level is removed and when the group approach is limited only to the composition of sub-groups in the national quota. In order to do a good job, UDI and IMDi still need a definition of integration success from the Ministry and both directorates still need research regarding integration processes of groups of UN refugees if Norwegian resettlement policy is to build on empirical knowledge and not popular assumptions. In addition, UDI and IMDi need to develop a new division of labour so that Norwegian resettlement and settlement policy will be more effective in the future.

AID has recently (27 March 2007) sent new guidelines for the selection of UN refugees to UDI¹³. We shall therefore also comment on these briefly here in this report.

¹² This table has been compiled by the researcher from reports by UDI following selection missions in 2007.

¹³ <https://www.udiregelverk.no/default.aspx?path={DBE5D169-7CBF-4AB1-8C8E-6B510046D1CE}>

1 Introduction

1.1 The assignment

The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI) has commissioned a holistic evaluation of the Norwegian program for the resettlement of UN refugees¹⁴ with an emphasis on *integration potential as a criterion for selection*.

This project commenced on 1 September 2007 and was completed on 1 May 2008. It is based on data collected in this period.

The main focus of the project is the selection process leading up to the refugees' arrival in Norway. This report will therefore concentrate on how the Norwegian authorities implement the use of integration potential as a selection criterion.

The aim of the project is to arrive at a set of recommendations which can improve Norway's resettlement program – within the aims and values manifested in relevant and current laws and regulations.

The report is relevant to current discussions between the Ministry of Labor and Social Inclusion (AID) and UDI regarding changes and adjustments to the Norwegian criteria for the selection of UN refugees¹⁵.

Norwegian resettlement policy has two main policy objectives:

- Norway wishes to contribute to international protection and to resettlement as a durable solution for refugees.
- It is not only important for UN refugees to resettle well and to become self-reliant for their own sakes. It is also important because it creates a cycle of goodwill in the local municipality and in national politics that, in the end, benefits the UNHCR and addresses the global refugee challenge.

The issue of selection criteria is therefore important for the above reasons.

Taking the activities of Norwegian selection missions abroad as its point of departure, this report will specifically focus on the following questions:

1. How has integration potential been employed in the selection of UN refugees to Norway?
2. How have organisational changes¹⁶ affected administrative practices and routines regarding the use of criteria for the selection of UN refugees?
3. What are the problematic issues, if any, connected to integration potential as a selection criterion?
4. What are the challenges, dilemmas and issues related to the selection of UN refugees that need further clarification or research?

¹⁴ In Norway, so-called "quota refugees", "UN refugees" and "UN refugees" are used interchangeably for refugees who are selected to come to Norway through the UNHCR resettlement program. In this report, the term "UN refugee" will be used.

¹⁵ The Ministry (AID) has recently published a new set of guidelines for selection criteria of UN refugees (27.3.2008).

¹⁶ Until 1.1.2006, UDI was in charge of both immigration and integration. After 1.1.2006, UDI was in charge of immigration and IMDi in charge of integration. The report will mainly focus on organizational changes within UDI, but will also refer to changes after 1.1.2006. Prior to 1.1.2006, the responsibility for the selection of UN refugees has alternated between the Legal and Integration Divisions in UDI.

In general, UDI wishes to acquire further insight into questions like:

1. Has the "profile" of UN refugees who have been selected changed since the introduction of integration potential as a selection criterion?
2. Have local municipalities changed their attitudes to settle UN refugees since the introduction of integration potential as a selection criterion?
3. How has the introduction of integration potential as a selection criterion affected the integration success of UN refugees in Norway?

By concentrating specifically on integration potential as a selection criterion, it is the researcher's aim that this report will contribute towards a better understanding of some of the above questions regarding the resettlement of UN refugees in Norway.

1.2 Organisation

The researcher is Long Litt Woon, a social anthropologist trained in qualitative methodology, former Head of Division at the Norwegian Ministry responsible for Immigration and Integration Policy and a consultant with several years of experience in the field of migration.

There has been a reference group for the assignment with representatives from UDI and the Ministry for Labour and Social Inclusion (AID).

The reference group has met three times.

1.3 Scope and limits

This report takes the dual policy objectives of international protection and integration potential as its point of departure. It is beyond the scope of this report to discuss if they should be changed.

It is also beyond the scope of this study to compare the selection process of UN refugees with the application process from asylum seekers in Norway.

The scope of this study is limited to the selection process *leading up to arrival in Norway*.

The settlement and long-term integration of UN refugees is *not* within the scope of this study. However, since the concept of integration potential, in fact, refers to the "integration careers" of UN refugees and their families, the researcher has also interviewed some officials from local municipalities. The report will also refer to research regarding the integration process of refugees when this has been available.

The report will also refer to studies and experiences from other countries.

The reader should be aware that written guidelines regarding the resettlement policy for UN refugees were sent by the Ministry to UDI on 27 March 2008. These guidelines have yet to be put into practice and are beyond the scope of this report. However, the report will comment on these guidelines (see Chapter Five).

1.4 Methodology

1.4.1 Literature

As preparation for this assignment, the researcher wrote a paper for UDI entitled "*A comparative study of integration potential as an additional selection criterion for the resettlement of refugees*"¹⁷. This paper gave an overview of the policy of employing integration potential as an additional selection criterion in various countries.

In this current assignment, the bibliography from the above paper has been expanded.

1.4.2 Interviews

The researcher has conducted open-ended interviews with relevant officials, many of whom are involved at various levels of the Norwegian program for the resettlement of UN refugees.

The persons interviewed represent the following institutions: UDI, IMDi, AID UNHCR, IOM, Statistics Norway and local municipalities with broad experience from the resettlement of UN refugees.

1.4.3 Observations

The researcher accompanied a Norwegian selection mission¹⁸ to select UN refugees and participated in the interviews of the UN refugees as an observer.

The researcher was present at pre-screening meetings, both within UDI and between UDI and IMDi.

The researcher was also present at the Annual Tripartite Consultations (ATC) meeting in Geneva in June 2007. A major theme for the meeting was "integration potential".

1.5 Structure of this report

Chapter 1 introduces the assignment and the background for the report.

Chapter 2 provides a general introduction to resettlement for readers who are not familiar with the topic.

Chapter 3 starts to focus specifically on resettlement in Norway and the Norwegian quota. It addresses two questions:

- How has integration potential been employed in the selection of UN refugees?
- How have organisational changes affected administrative practices and routines regarding the criteria for the selection of UN refugees?

This chapter describes the current selection process in detail, including the assessment of integration potential in practice. It looks at historical material in the effort to try to pinpoint when integration potential was introduced as a selection criterion – since this is

¹⁷ UDI, 1 September 2007.

¹⁸ There were four Norwegian selection missions in 2007. The researcher participated in one selection mission. UNHCR presented persons to the Norwegian authorities prior to their travel. Officials from UDI pre-screened the documents and selected the persons to be interviewed. The UDI pre-screening meetings examined the documents regarding the two selection criteria: protection need and integration potential. This meeting was followed by another a pre-screening meeting with IMDi, This meeting focused solely on the few cases whose integration potential was doubtful to UDI.

the point of departure for how UDI frames the general questions it is interested in shedding light upon.

It also looks at organisational changes and how shifting responsibility for the selection of UN refugees between the Legal and Integration Divisions contribute to a difference in emphasis on the two main selection criteria: protection need and integration potential. This chapter also addresses the general interest that UDI has in the question whether the "profile" of UN refugees has changed since the introduction of integration potential as a selection criterion.

It is beyond the scope of this report to examine how local municipalities have changed their attitudes to resettle UN refugees after the introduction of integration potential as a selection criterion. However, limited interviews with local municipalities provide some understanding of the attitude of local municipalities in the settlement of UN refugees and of the issues which are important to them.

Chapter 4 addresses the following question:

- What problematic issues, if any, are connected to integration potential as a selection criterion?

In order to answer this question, Chapter 4 goes beyond the selection process and focuses on the conditions for UDI's resettlement policy, namely Norwegian integration policy in general.

The concept of integration potential presumes a definition of integration success. Therefore, this chapter also looks at how Norwegian authorities define and measure integration success. Selected examples from abroad are included.

Chapter 4 also looks at what we currently know about the integration process of UN refugees in Norway.

This chapter also includes practical experience from the view of a handful of local municipalities and from UDI's partner in resettlement, the directorate of Diversity and Integration (IMDi) – which is in direct contact with the local municipalities where the UN refugees are placed.

Chapter 5 introduces an outline from policy objectives to societal outcome to guide the discussion.

This chapter sums up the challenges, dilemmas and questions that need further clarification or research in order for UDI to gain a better understanding of the external and internal factors which play critical roles in integration success.

This chapter also comments on the latest guidelines for the selection of UN refugees.

2 On resettlement

The UNHCR sees the resettlement of refugees as a protection tool, as a strategic tool, as a durable solution and as a responsibility and burden-sharing mechanism.

Resettlement involves the selection and transfer of refugees from a State in which they have sought protection to a third State which has agreed to admit them as refugees.

Ideally, the status provided by the third State ensures protection against *refoulement* and the local integration of the resettled refugee and his/her family or dependants.

Resettlement is seen as part of an international protection "continuum" ranging from the initial contact by the refugee with UNHCR in seeking protection¹⁹ to the final achievement of a durable solution, i.e. voluntary repatriation, local integration or resettlement.

From the view of Norwegian authorities, these alternatives are also ranked in the above order. In other words, resettlement in Norway is the third-ranked alternative and promoted only when the refugee is unable to return home in the foreseeable future (voluntary repatriation) or is without local integration prospects because the refugee is unable/not allowed to integrate locally.

The objectives of resettlement are to quickly save or rescue individuals with specific protection needs and to address major protection problems such as the prevention of : military recruitment of refugees, sexual gender-based violence and secondary movements. Countries which work actively with resettlement often recognise UN refugees in the following categories : persons with legal and physical protection needs, survivors of violence and torture, persons with medical needs, Women-at-Risk, family reunification, children and adolescents and elderly refugees.

Within the international community, resettlement also has a clear element of burden sharing. For example, it can be used in parallel with another durable solution or to unlock another durable solution.

Persons resettled under resettlement programmes are referred to by various terms in different countries. In Norway, they are popularly referred to as "quota refugees"²⁰.

¹⁹ Steps in resettlement processing as seen from UNHCR's perspective:

1. Identification of refugees in need of resettlement consideration
2. Assessment of individual resettlement need
3. Preparation of a resettlement submission
4. UNHCR submission decision (dossier or selection mission)
5. Resettlement country decision
6. Departure arrangements & monitoring.

In identifying a possible Resettlement Country, UNHCR considers e.g. family links and health requirements or the availability of health treatment. UNHCR also consider supplementary criteria of countries of such as: language, nationality, education, skills, family composition, motivation and "potential to integrate".

²⁰ In Canada the term "convention refugee" refers to referrals from the UNHCR In contrast, in New Zealand, "convention refugees" are former asylum seekers whose refugee status has been recognized in New Zealand.

2.1 Changing attitudes towards resettlement

Public opinion in traditional resettlement countries has shifted; many industrialised states which once welcomed refugees started showing a reluctance to admit them in the 1990s. This can be partly attributed to what is often described as the “asylum crisis” when the number of asylum seekers soared.

Government officials and the public at large, in particular in industrialised countries in the North, have generally been concerned about the consequences of immigration on their economies and cultural homogeneity, leading some governments to pursue more restrictive immigration policies. Growing illegal migration has also contributed to the turn in immigration policies.

Immigrants as a category include both involuntary migrants, such as refugees, and voluntary migrants, ie people who migrate to better their chances of employment.

The complicated relationship between involuntary and voluntary migration challenges States to distinguish between refugees and voluntary migrants. For example, bona fide refugees might turn to sophisticated smuggling and trafficking operations in order to circumvent immigration controls which they fear will exclude them even though they need protection²¹.

Mechanisms which fail to distinguish between involuntary and voluntary migrants can lead to limited protection afforded to refugees and other persons in need. A vicious cycle then develops of governments imposing new restrictions on immigration in general²² and causing rippling, negative effects for access to asylum.

21 Some critics argue that restrictive policies threaten to undermine the international guidelines established by the 1951 Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol and present new obstacles to those seeking asylum and protection from refoulement. See e.g. Michael McBride, Working paper no 3, The evolution of US immigration and refugee policy: public opinion, domestic politics and the UNHCR, UNHCR, May 1999.

22 Although refugees are only a small segment of the total migrant population, measures designed to manage migration and control unauthorised movements often have disproportionate negative effects for them. Martin, Susan (2001) “Global migration trends and asylum”, working paper no. 41, UNHCR, 2001.

2.2 Global resettlement needs and capacity²³

By the end of 2006, the total population of concern to UNHCR was estimated at 32.9 million people, including 9.9 million refugees and 744,000 asylum-seekers²⁴.

The number of refugees increased for the first time in five years (+14%). By the end of 2006, developing regions hosted 7.1 million refugees, 72 per cent of the global refugee population.

By the end of 2006, Asia hosted the largest number of refugees (46%), followed by Africa (26%), Europe (16%), North America (10%), Oceania (1%), and Latin America and the Caribbean (0.4%).

Among those who come into contact with the UNHCR, refugees who are judged to be in need of resettlement in a third country and not in the first country of asylum, are presented by the UNHCR to potential resettlement countries.

According to government statistics, 14 industrialised countries reported the admission of 71,700 resettled refugees during 2006. The countries resettling most refugees during 2006 were the United States of America (41,300; during the US Fiscal Year), Australia (13,400), Canada (10,700), and Sweden (2,400).

Global resettlement needs

Needs in 2008: 154,701

Capacity of resettlement countries

| | |
|--|---------------------|
| USA : | 50,000 |
| CANADA: | 12,000 |
| AUSTRALIA: | 14,000 |
| EUROPEAN COUNTRIES (9) ²⁵ : | 5,580 ²⁶ |
| NEW ZEALAND: | 750 |
| LATIN AMERICA COUNTRIES (5): | 430 |
| <i>Total capacity of resettlement countries:</i> | 82.760 |

Global resettlement capacity currently only manages to address about half of global resettlement needs.

However, the gap between needs and capacity is a relatively new phenomenon. One of the main reasons for the rise in resettlement needs is the use of new tools by the UNHCR to identify cases for resettlement.

²³ As reported by UNHCR as of 12 November 2007.

²⁴ Statistical Yearbook 2006, UNHCR, December 2007.

²⁵ European countries with a specific resettlement program: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden and UK.

²⁶ The Norwegian quota in 2007 was 1200.

2.3 National resettlement policy

2.3.1 The context of national resettlement policy

Issues and challenges related to national resettlement policy cannot be addressed in isolation from broader migration trends and issues as these are seen from the perspective of resettlement countries.

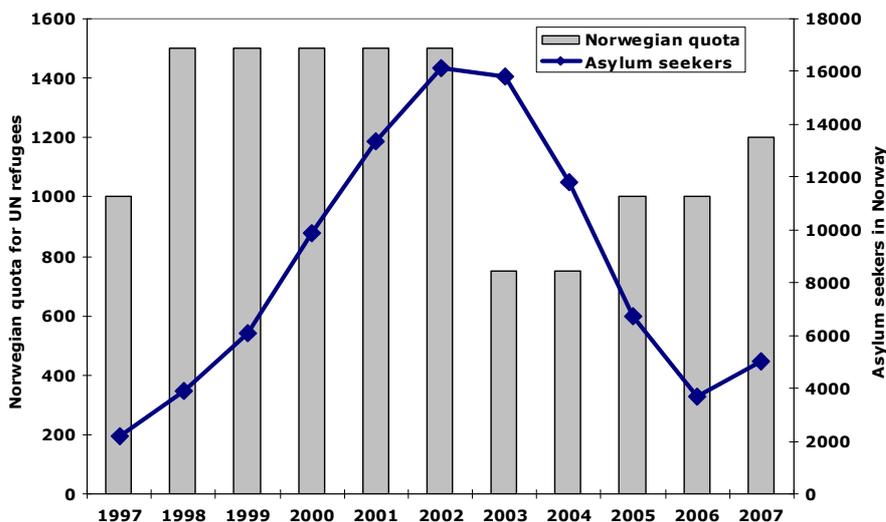
While the international community like the UN views immigration and refugee policies from a humanitarian perspective and through the parameters provided by international agreements, resettlement countries tend to view these issues through a combination of humanitarian, domestic and foreign policy considerations²⁷.

In its broadest terms, refugee policies are also connected to immigration admissions law and to integration policy. For example, a debate about the plight of children of asylum seekers whose applications have been rejected and who are hiding from the authorities in Norway has raised the question about the de facto rights of the children regarding schooling, health care, etc. Many national authorities are involved and, not uncommonly, domestic "tugs-of-war" take place between various national authorities.

National public discussions on resettlement do not take place in a vacuum but are entangled with other migration issues, for example, the number of asylum seekers. Rising numbers of asylum seekers are usually met with political interest and heated public debate.

For example, the Norwegian quota dropped from 1500 to 750 in 2003; in the years 1998 to 2002, the number of asylum seekers rose dramatically from 3900 to 16000. Most observers believe that the two phenomena are not unconnected.

Figure 1
The Norwegian quota for UN refugees and asylum seekers in Norway.
1997-2007.



²⁷John Fredriksson and Christine Mougne, Resettlement in the 1990s, A review of policy and practice, UNHCR Dec 1994. For example, Aristide Zolberg has suggested that immigration policy in the USA, has been driven primarily by domestic concerns, while refugee policy has been shaped by ideology and foreign policy interests²⁷. Aristide Zolberg (1995), "From Invitation to Interdiction: US Foreign Policy and Immigration since 1945" in Michael S. Teitelbaum and Myron Weiner (eds.). Threatened Peoples, Threatened Borders: World Migration Policy. New York: The American Assembly, Columbia University.

2.4 Resettlement as a refugee admissions tool

In 2006, a total of 71,700 refugees²⁸ were admitted by 15 resettlement countries²⁹. Overall, this was 11 per cent below the total resettled for 2005 (80,800).

The US, Australia and Canada represent the countries which resettle the major proportion of the world's refugees³⁰; here, resettlement is a dominant part of the protection system, while in Europe, resettlement has a marginal role³¹. As mentioned earlier, Europe accounted for the resettlement of around 5,500 refugees in 2007.

In Europe, seven EU Member States (Portugal, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, the Netherlands, the UK and Ireland) as well as Norway and Iceland currently operate resettlement programmes³².

These resettlement programmes differ among themselves e.g. in terms of level-setting and in terms of selection criteria beyond the refugee definition and procedures. Beyond these nine states, no European state has a formal resettlement programme at present³³.

However, there are ongoing discussions between the UNHCR and Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Romania, Spain, Italy, France and Switzerland regarding resettlement programmes.

In addition, countries like Benin, Brazil, Burkina Faso and Chile have emerging³⁴ refugee resettlement programs.

28 Resettlement statistics for the United States, Canada and Australia may also include persons resettled for the purpose of family reunification or other humanitarian purpose. (UNHCR 2006 Global Trends).

29 The fifteen countries are: Australia, Benin, Burkina Faso, Canada, Chile, Denmark, Finland, Great Britain, Iceland, Ireland, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden and the United States.

30 Between 1992 and 2001, the resettlement arrivals in all EU Members totalled 47,000, while the US received 916,000 .

31 However, when resettlement figures are added to those of accepted spontaneous arrivals, it emerges that the EU and the US grant protection on a roughly comparable level (3.7 admissions per 1,000 inhabitants in the EU between 1992 and 2001, with the corresponding figure for the US being 3.8).

32 The other EU member states use their asylum systems for the admission of refugees in need of international protection.

33 The Hague Program , an ambitious five-year course, launched in November 2004, to strengthen freedom, security and justice within the 25 Member States of the EU, does not include resettlement as a common goal. However, the EU does provide Member States with a "funding carrot" of 4000 euros per resettled person. Belgium and France respond to urgent appeals from UNHCR for admission and protection in special circumstances³³. And though Iceland and Spain do not have an annual national quota for the resettlement of refugees, they are among the so-called emerging resettlement countries. Spain, for example, has demonstrated interest in resettlement through fact-finding missions to Rwanda and Jordan. In South America, Brazil, Argentina and Chile are important resettlement partners for the UNCHR.

34 Emerging resettlement countries are those that may have been accepting refugees in various capacities for many years and are now formalizing their resettlement programs.

3 Resettlement in Norway

In this chapter, we will address the following questions:

- How has integration potential been employed as a selection criterion in the selection of UN refugees?
- How have organisational changes within UDI/Norwegian authorities affected administrative practices and routines regarding the criteria for the selection of UN refugees?

In answering the above questions, we will also be able to provide some insight into a question which UDI is also interested in, namely, how the “profile” of UN refugees has changed since the introduction of integration potential as a selection criterion.

3.1 The Norwegian quota

Norway has resettled refugees on an ad hoc basis since the end of World War II and has had an annual program for resettlement for more than thirty years. The first refugees who were resettled in Norway through this program were the Vietnamese in the 1970s.

Resettlement policy is, in the first instance, based on humanitarian values and is aimed at protecting refugees. Norway recognises that the global need for resettlement is currently larger than the global capacity. Norway aspires to protect refugees and to contribute towards the efforts of UNHCR.

The size of the quota is decided every year by the Parliament.

Norway sets and allocates the quota on the basis of the assessment of current resettlement needs and priorities as viewed by UNHCR. The Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion (AID) determines the quota in dialogue with UDI and the Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi).

The annual quota is part of a flexible, three-year quota period³⁵. If there are any unfilled resettlement places at the end of a year, they may be used within the next two years in a three-year quota period. However, if there are unfilled resettlement places at the end of the three-year quota period, they will not be made available.

In some three-year periods there were *fewer* UN refugees than the quota permitted. This was the case, for example, in the following periods 1992-1994, 1998-2000 and 2004-2006. However, in 1998-2000, a total of 8326 refugees from the former Yugoslavia arrived under collective protection. They were not included in the Norwegian quota for UN refugees.

In other three-year periods there were *more* UN refugees than the quota permitted. In 1995-97, there were 660 more refugees and in 2001-03 there were 23 more refugees than the three-year quota permitted. In addition, 495 arrived under collective protection in 1995-1997.

Both the above and following figures need to be seen in the light of the fact that since 2003, the Norwegian quota has also included the possibility of “converting” resettlement places to Norwegian support for alternative resettlement activities.

³⁵ At the request of the UNHCR, Norway made its annual quota part of a flexible three_year quota period (White Paper 17, 1994-1995).

Table 1
The Norwegian quota (in three-year periods) and the final numbers accepted for resettlement. 1992-2007.

| Year | Quota | No. accepted for resettlement |
|------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|
| 2007 | 1200 | 1350 |
| 2006 | 1000 | 992 |
| 2005 | 1000 | 942 |
| 2004 | 750 | 758 |
| 2003 | 750 | 1149 |
| 2002 | 1500 | 1355 |
| 2001 | 1500 | 1269 |
| 2000 | 1500 | 1481 |
| 1999 | 1500 | 1480 ³⁶ |
| 1998 | 1500 | 1118 ³⁷ |
| 1997 | 1000 | 1281 ³⁸ |
| 1996 | 1000 | 788 |
| 1995 | 1000 | 1591 |
| 1994 | 1000 | 1395 |
| 1993 | 1000 | 517 |
| 1992 | 1000 | 221 |
| TOTAL 1992-2007 | 18200 | 17687³⁹ |

Table 2
Converted resettlement places since 2003 and how they have been used.

| Year | No. of converted resettlement places | Alternative resettlement activity |
|------|--------------------------------------|--|
| 2008 | 33 | Secondment of two officials to UNHCR; Support of UNHCR's resettlement work among vulnerable female refugees in Latin America |
| 2008 | 32 | IOM's Culture Orientation Program (IMDi's budget) |
| 2008 | 15 | Resettlement in Norway |
| 2007 | 20 | 2 secondments to UNHCR (1 in Beirut, 1 in Nairobi) |
| 2007 | 10 | Twinning project with Latin America |
| 2007 | 25.4 | IOM's Culture Orientation Program |
| 2006 | 20 | IOM's Culture Orientation Program |
| 2005 | 20 | 2 secondments to UNHCR (1 in Beirut, 1 in Bangkok) |
| 2005 | 4 | Support of UNHCR's resettlement meeting in Quito, Ecuador where the Mexico Plan of Action was developed. |
| 2005 | 18 | Support of UNHCR's resettlement work in Latin America |

36 In addition, 8059 arrived under collective protection.

37 In addition, 267 arrived under collective protection.

38 In addition, 495 arrived under collective protection.

39 Since 2003, it has been possible to "convert" places in the Norwegian quota to alternative resettlement activities.

| | | |
|------|----|-----------------------------------|
| 2005 | 20 | IOM's Culture Orientation Program |
| 2004 | 24 | IOM's Culture Orientation Program |
| 2004 | 3 | Burma project |
| 2003 | 19 | IOM's Culture Orientation Program |
| 2003 | 2 | Liberia project |
| 2003 | 10 | Resettlement officer in Ankara |

Between 2003 and 2007, the number of converted resettlement places was 195.

It is a political question whether alternative resettlement activities should be funded by "converting" resettlement places from the quota or whether they should be funded by other means. It is beyond the scope of this report to go into this issue.

In retrospect, we see that it has not been easy for Norwegian authorities to resettle the exact numbers set by the quota, even though the three-year period allows for increased flexibility. Partly, this is because of practical and logistical issues; partly, this is because the global refugee situation can change quickly. In short, UDI is dependent on external factors and actors.

It is also difficult to judge how well the quota has been met without taking into consideration *other avenues* for the resettlement of other groups of refugees. For example, collective protection was granted to many during the Balkan crisis. In addition, the number of asylum seekers can also increase rather quickly in a short period of time⁴⁰. This, in turn, can impact the placement pressures of the local municipalities and therefore their interest in accepting UN refugees for local settlement.

Resettlement in Norway is based mostly on UNHCR referrals⁴¹.

Until recently, there have been 2 to 4 selection missions a year to interview potential UN refugees. A final decision is made regarding the refugees accepted for resettlement around a month after the selection mission.

In addition, there are also dossier-based decisions⁴². UN refugees who are dossier cases are not interviewed by the Norwegian authorities. In 2007, there were around 330 dossier refugees within the quota of 1200. Dossier cases are generally processed within three weeks⁴³. The rejection percentage in dossier cases is higher than the rejection percentage of selection missions. Some officials estimate that the rejection rate is 60-70%. However, others estimate that it is lower. UDI does not have exact figures here.

The Norwegian program also has emergency resettlement procedures for individuals who need rescue and immediate resettlement. Normally, Norwegian authorities are able to process emergency cases submitted by UNHCR within 48 hours.

For emergency cases, integration potential has not been, and still is not, a selection criterion.

⁴⁰ Table. Asylum seekers in Norway, 1997-2007

| Year | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 |
|----------------|------|------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|------|
| Asylum seekers | 2164 | 3919 | 6090 | 9871 | 13344 | 16119 | 15793 | 11826 | 6750 | 3707 | 5030 |

⁴¹ In addition, cases may be submitted through Norwegian Embassies or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and by NGOs (e.g. International PEN and Norwegian Helsinki Committee).

⁴² Dossier cases presented by UNHCR are assessed in Norway on basis of the submitted information.

⁴³ Apart from most of the emergency and twenty-or-more cases – which are processed within 48 hours.

The Norwegian quota has country sub-quotas which are adjusted every year. In addition, there are sub-quotas like medical cases (so-called Twenty-or-more) and emergency cases. "Women-at-risk" is a category cutting across all sub-quotas and which is given priority⁴⁴.

The quota for 2008 is 1,200 UN refugees. Sub-quotas for 2008⁴⁵:

- 250 Burmese refugees in Thailand
- 200 Eritrean refugees in Sudan or Ethiopia
- 150 Bhutanese refugees in Nepal
- 150 Iraqi refugees in Syria
- 85 refugees with unspecified countries of origin
- 80 emergency cases
- 20 refugees in need of medical treatment.

Currently, around 70% of the UN refugees are selected by selection missions overseas⁴⁶.

Table 3

| Year | Dossier | Selection missions | Others ⁴⁷ | Total | % selected by selection missions |
|------|---------|--------------------|----------------------|-------|----------------------------------|
| 2007 | 331 | 971 | 33 | 1335 | 73% |
| 2006 | 154 | 661 | 108 | 923 | 72% |
| 2005 | 145 | 730 | 48 | 923 | 79% |
| 2004 | 211 | 541 | | 752 | 72% |

44 UNHCR's target for 2007 was that 10 % of those resettled should be "Women-at-risk". In 2008 this target has been increased to 15 %. The Norwegian authorities aim to contribute towards this goal. The recent guidelines from the Ministry (27.3.2008) state that the Norwegian goal regarding this group is 15%.

45 As UDI accepted more refugees than the annual quota in 2007, the quota letter has sub-quotas specified only for 1000 refugees even though the annual quota is 1200.

46 In 2007, there were selection missions from Norway to Zambia, Malaysia, India and Thailand. Since 2004, the percentage of the quota filled by selection missions abroad has been between 72-79 %.

47 Vietnamese refugees in the Philippines with close relatives in Norway who were accepted as UN refugees because of a temporary legal arrangement.

3.2 Recent organisational changes

On 1.1.2006, two new institutions, UDI and the Directorate of Diversity and Integration (IMDi), were established. To more simply describe this change, it meant that the "old" UDI was then divided into two new areas of administration: immigration (UDI) and integration (IMDi).

This change affected the organisation of the resettlement of refugees at the national level.

It should be noted that these changes did not take place immediately on 1.1.2006 but that the changes have been part of a gradual process.

| PRIOR TO 1.1.2006 | PRESENT DAY (ie. since IMDi was established in 1.1.2006) |
|--|---|
| UDI (Integration division) was responsible for | UDI (Asylum division): selection of refugees and entry to Norway. |

- selection of refugees
 - entry to Norway
 - placement in local municipalities.
- IMDi: placement in local municipalities In Norway.
- IMDi to advise UDI regarding integration potential in general.

Contact between UDI and IMDi⁴⁸ during pre-screening of refugees.

IMDi has the option of being part of selection missions abroad.⁴⁹

Following selection missions abroad, there is contact between UDI and IMDi in cases of doubt regarding integration potential.

⁴⁸ There is a contract between IMDI and UDI defining the division of labour between the two institutions and the manner of cooperation.

⁴⁹ IMDI participated in two selection missions for the first time in 2007 (to Zambia and Malaysia).

3.2.1 The current selection process involving selection missions⁵⁰

| Process phase | Notes |
|---|--|
| 1 UDI receives official letter about refugee quota for the year from the Ministry. | |
| 2 Caseloads are presented by UNHCR in advance of a selection mission. Every selection mission has a specified target number. UNHCR normally increases the caseloads presented by around 20 per cent of the specified target number. | Every case is checked in relation to the 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. In addition, exclusion is also assessed for applicable cases ⁵¹ . |
| The UNHCR caseloads are pre-screened. | Alignment with Norwegian asylum practice checked ⁵² . |
| The pre-screening process determines which refugees will be interviewed by the selection mission. | Officials present "their" cases to two other officials, consensus is reached and a common decision is taken. If they cannot agree among themselves, the case is presented to a superior who makes the final decision regarding the final list to be interviewed. |
| Pre-screening regarding protection need and integration potential. | |
| 3. IMDi joins in pre-screening to discuss cases UDI thinks might be problematic from an integration perspective. Decision is reached regarding which people will be interviewed by the selection mission ⁵³ . | |
| 4. Selection mission; usually lasting 1 to 3 weeks. Refugees are interviewed. | When IMDi also participated in the selection mission, they provided information about Norway to all refugees prior to their interview. IMDi also asked additional questions during the interview. |

⁵⁰ Prior to the selection process is the process for deciding the level of the national quota and the sub-groups in the quota. The new written guidelines from AID dated 27.3.2008 refer to this process. It is still not known how the new guidelines will affect the selection process.

⁵¹ E.g. military activities.

⁵² There is an aim that assessments of protection needs should not differ substantially from assessments done in similar cases for spontaneous asylum seekers. Such cases are assessed according to the Norwegian Immigration Act.

⁵³ Roughly 10 % are pre-screened out of the interviews. r

UNHCR's form is checked and UDI-form is filled in by UDI official.

The selection team makes a preliminary recommendation (Yes/No/More information required) regarding each case.

5. Upon return to Norway, a final decision is taken by UDI after additional information e.g. regarding health is accessed.

A final list of the refugees accepted for resettlement is made.

6. The final list is sent to UNHCR which then informs the refugees.

UDI also contacts IMDi, IOM and the relevant Norwegian Foreign Service Mission.

7. A telephone conference is held between IMDi's regional offices and UDI.

IMDi decides how the cases will be distributed between the regions.

UDI is informed of IMDi's decision and sends the cases to the respective IMDi regional office.

8. IMDi regional office then decides how the cases will be distributed between the local municipalities in the region.

In addition, IMDi conducted field trips to evaluate the refugees' camp/living situation. This has provided useful information to local municipalities which resettle the refugees.

The selection team meets at the end of each working day to discuss their reflections and impressions of each interview.

Cases which UDI thinks might be problematic from an integration perspective are discussed with IMDi.

The decision is final and is not subject to appeal.

IOM starts to make plans for cultural orientation⁵⁴ activities.

Municipalities receive refugees on a voluntary basis.

⁵⁴ Information in Norwegian: <http://www.iomosloco.com/>

IMDi agrees with the respective local municipalities and sends the documentation to each of them.

9. The local municipalities inform IMDi when the refugees may arrive. IMDi in turn informs UDI of the (possible) arrival date.

UDI informs IOM which then makes travel arrangements and informs UDI of the refugees' date of arrival. UDI then informs the local municipalities (with a copy to IMDi).

The Foreign Service Mission issues a Laissez-Passer and an entry visa. Where relevant, IOM/UNHCR apply for an exit permit.

10. The refugees are resettled directly in a local municipality.

The local municipality receives the refugees at the airport within six months of the acceptance date by the Norwegian authorities.

In recent years, a pre-departure, 5-day cultural orientation⁵⁵ is held by IOM for refugees in first country of asylum. In addition, the local municipalities also receive cultural orientation by IOM⁵⁶.

UN refugees between 18 and 55 years of age have the right and the duty to participate in a two-year Introductory programme⁵⁷.

55 The aim of the program is to reduce culture shock and to prepare for life in Norway. Bi-cultural trainers run the cultural orientation program for IOM.

56 The local municipalities are informed about the cultural background of the refugees and of the refugees' transit conditions in the first country of asylum.

57 The two-year introductory programme is a fulltime program which is adapted to the individual participant. The curriculum of the introductory programme includes Norwegian language and preparations for further studies and/or the labour market. The refugees receive allowances for living expenses while they participate in the introductory programme.

3.2.2 The selection process for dossier cases

Dossier cases make up only about 30 % of the quota; currently, the Norwegian quota is mainly filled by selection missions.

| Current Process | |
|------------------------|---|
| 1 | <p>Caseloads are presented by UNHCR to Norway when the need arises.</p> <p>These could be emergency cases sent by UNHCR in Geneva or cases sent directly from UNHCR's hub-offices.</p> |
| 2 | <p>Every case is checked in relation to the 1951 UN Convention. Alignment with Norwegian asylum practice is checked. Every case is also evaluated in terms of its integration potential.</p> <p>Officials present "their" cases to two other officials and a common decision is taken. If they cannot agree among themselves, the case is presented to a superior who makes the final decision.</p> |

3.3 The selection process

As mentioned earlier, the two selection criteria in the selection process are the need for international protection and integration potential – in that order.

The resettlement selection process is based on consensus and a collective decision-making process. This administrative routine takes individual subjectivity out of the selection process. The interview is the only phase where officials are alone with the refugee; however, the decision made after the interview is taken collectively.

Table 4
Phases in the selection process. Collective decisions are the rule.

| PHASE | ACTIVITY | INDIVIDUAL OBSERVATION | COLLECTIVE DECISION |
|-------|------------------------|--|--|
| 1 | UDI pre-screening | | X Superior goes through all rejections and cases which are doubtful |
| 2 | UID-IMDi pre-screening | | X |
| 3 | Interview | Official is alone with applicant and interpreter | X |
| 4 | Interview debrief | | X |
| 5 | Final decision | | X Superior goes through all rejections. |

3.3.1 Phases in the selection process: examples from a selection mission

PHASE 1. UDI pre-screening.

CASE 1

Married couple, husband born in 1966, wife in 1972, no children

- Man (born 1966) can read and write language A. He can speak languages B and C. He has had two years of schooling and has been a car mechanic.
- Woman (born 1972) has had four years of schooling and has completed a course in beauty therapy but has no work experience.
- Man's parents had a small farm. They have passed away. In 19XX, there was a shift in political leadership in their home country. Man's uncle worked for the authorities. Man was accused of cooperating with the authorities by an oppositional group. He was attacked and injured. Fled to first country of asylum where he received medical treatment.

Official A: what about the wife's refugee claim?

Official B: The basis of their protection need is collective, not individual

Official C: No...

Official B: Married couple, no children....This case is difficult unless they can be part of a larger group (of resettled refugees).

Official C: They are weak on both criteria (integration potential and protection need).

UDI pre-screening decision: No interview

CASE 2

Three people: Husband born in 1960, wife born in 1964, son born in 1986.

- The whole family speaks, reads and writes language A.
- Husband has 6 years of schooling, wife 5 years, son 8 years.
- Prior to their flight, husband was a woodcarver and wife a farmer. In the first country of asylum, both have been manual laborers.
- Man was member of underground opposition movement. Fled to first country of asylum in 19XX when he heard that the authorities were looking for him. Belongs to religion X.
- Very difficult life in first country of asylum for the family. Man has not received wages from employer. Man has been sexually harassed by employer. Stomach pains. Eye disease.

UDI pre-screening decision: Interview.

Case details regarding the need for international protection (not included here) were examined and found to be legitimate.

CASE 3

Married couple, husband born in 1971, wife born in 1978, married in 2007, no children.

- Husband has 9 years of schooling and can speak, read and write three languages.
- Wife has a bachelor degree and can speak, read and write four languages.
- Husband has work experience as a journalist
- Wife has been active in voluntary work
- Husband and wife have been active in the local church and have both been a target for forced labor by the authorities.
- Wife has an independent refugee claim and was arrested three times.
- Wife has been sexually harassed by employer in first country of asylum.
- Couple has relatives in Norway.

UDI pre-screening decision: Interview

Case details regarding the need for international protection (not included here) were examined and found to be legitimate.

After the interviews, case 2 was rejected and case 3 accepted for resettlement in Norway.

PHASE 2. UDI-IMDi pre-screening

The UDI-IMDi pre-screening meeting was held at UDI.

UDI described the whole caseload in general terms to IMDi.

- Mixture of families and single individuals, many of the latter were women at risk
- Many have lived in the first country of asylum for a long time; some since 1988
- Many, especially the women, have a tough time in the first country of asylum because of living conditions and the lack of rights for refugees in the labor market
- Many of the women live with a daily risk of sexual violence; many rapes have been reported
- A handful have been denied interviews because their protection need was not confirmed by Norwegian authorities
- A handful were rejected because of the lack of integration potential

The integration potential of three cases was in doubt. The focus of the UDI-IMDi pre-screening meeting was to obtain IMDi's evaluation of the integration potential of these refugees.

IMDi mentioned that local municipalities use a lot of resources on family reunification. Therefore, it was important for UDI to chart family relations of the refugees who were without families during the selection mission interviews. It was also important to check if it was at all possible for their families to leave their homeland because this gave Norwegian authorities an idea of how realistic it was to plan for family reunification.

CASE 4

Young man born in 1982, son of CASE 2 above. Cannot read or write.

Wife – with a “weak” leg

Two children, one with a medical syndrome

A step- daughter

The case was seen as being weak in integration potential, in general because of the health situation of the whole family, but in particular because of the child with Down’s syndrome.

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Official A (UDI): | There are health and educational challenges in this family. What are our possibilities to follow up here? |
| Official B (UDI): | The parents (CASE 2) are a resource for this young family. |
| Official C (IMDi): | We have well-established institutions which can take care of children with the syndrome. This alone is not a reason not to interview the family. |
| Official D (UDI): | That is not the problem. The question is if we can, with our eyes open, add to the burdens of our overburdened health care system in Norway |
| Official C (IMDi): | We cannot refrain from interviewing this family just because of the child with the syndrome. |
| Official D (UDI): | Does the “quota letter” from the Ministry instruct us to interview families with such a profile? |
| Official A (UDI): | It is an advantage that the child is young. Integration is more challenging if the child is older. |
| Official E (IMDi): | The grandparents of the child (CASE 2) can also be resource persons for the child with the medical syndrome. It is not really a problem that the adults are illiterate. The man is 22 years old. Do we still have place in the quota? I suggest that we interview them. |
| Official A (UDI) | We are going to interview others who are illiterate. However, they are Women At Risk or part of a larger group. If the final decision is going to be negative, it is much better not to interview them at all. |

UDI-IMDi pre-screening decision: Interview.

After the interview, case 4 was rejected.

It is interesting also to note the group dynamics in the above pre-screening, especially the dynamics between the two institutions, UDI and IMDi. No conclusion can, however, be drawn as the number of refugees discussed was too small.

PHASE 3. Interview

As a rule, families are interviewed together. All interviews are conducted with an interpreter. The selection team tries to organise the interview load by being sensitive to special needs, e.g. by allowing Women At Risk to be interviewed by a female official accompanied by a female interpreter.

In the beginning of the interview, which lasts one to two hours, the refugee is told the purpose of the interview and the issues which the interview will cover. These include personal data like education, work experience and languages. The refugees are also asked about their flight history and health situation. Finally, the refugees are asked about their expectations to life in Norway and about any family or other close relations that they might have in the country.

The aim of the interview is twofold: to collect information necessary for making a selection decision and, for the selected refugees, information necessary for making a best possible decision about their placement in a local municipality.

If there are young children, they are given paper and crayons to occupy themselves. Sometimes, one parent needs to leave the room with a child for a short while during the interview. Older children are asked general questions about what they would like to do in Norway.

The officials go through the information in the UNHCR resettlement registration form (RRF) with the refugee. The form contains personal information about the refugee and his/her family members (including gender, age, marital status, ethnic origin, education, occupation/skills, languages and special needs). In addition, there is detailed information regarding the refugee claim and need for resettlement. There is also detailed information on the refugee's lack of prospects to return to his/her home country "in safety and dignity".

The officials in the selection team try to create an atmosphere for dialogue with the refugee.

They are supposed to accomplish a great deal within a short space of time⁵⁸.

PHASE 4 Interview debrief

Every evening after a day of interviews, the Norwegian team goes through the cases interviewed that same day. At this stage, it becomes clear as to which cases are "strong" and which still have unanswered questions.

As it isn't possible for the team to verify most of the information from the interviews, the final decision boils down to how the selection team views the refugee's chances to settle well and integrate successfully in Norway.

PHASE 5 Final decision

When the Norwegian team returns, further questions might be sent to UNHCR, medical authorities or IMDi. When all needed information is gathered, a final decision is made – usually within a month following a selection mission – and UNHCR is informed.

⁵⁸ Kavli and Svensen 2001 also mention that much of the interview is spent checking personal and practical information in addition to the refugee claim.

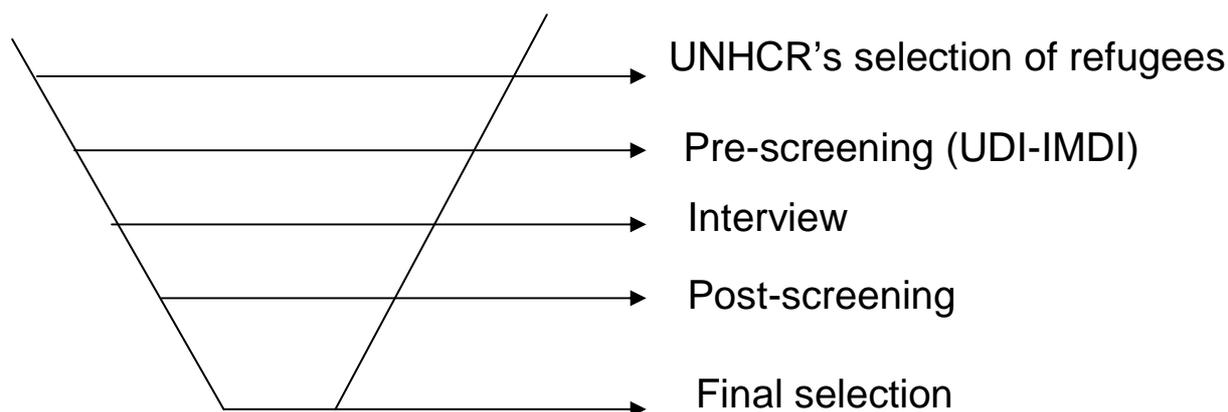


Figure 2. The selection “funnel”

The selection “funnel” gradually narrows from the pre-screening, interview and post-screening processes described above.

3.3.2 Results of selection missions 2007

Table 5
Results of selection missions in 2007

| First country of asylum | Refugees presented by UNHCR | After pre-screening (Number of refugees interviewed) | Refugees finally selected | Percentage accepted of refugees presented by UNHCR | Percentage accepted of refugees interviewed |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|--|---------------------------|--|---|
| Zambia | 353 | 299 | 261 | 74% | 87% |
| Malaysia | 267 | 230 | 215 | 81% | 93% |
| India | 180 | 145 | 128 | 71% | 88% |
| Thailand | 562 | 425 | 376 | 67% | 88% |

According to the selection mission reports for 2007, most of the rejections (after both the pre-screening and the interviews) were a result of the lack of integration potential.

3.3.3 The assessment of integration potential

Integration potential is future-oriented and refers to prospects of integration at a future date.

Selection of UN refugees first begins with cases that the UNHCR sends to the Norwegian authorities. The UNHCR selects cases which it thinks are most “suitable” for the Norwegian selection mission – and not e.g. the next selection mission from another country. Examining how the UNHCR arrives at the caseload to be presented to Norway is beyond the limits of this current study.

As mentioned earlier, the administrative routine emphasizes collective decision-making in the selection process.

In the interviews, the officials tend to look for

- The ability to become self-sufficient and to be an active participant in the labour market.
- Alternately, they must show ability to be able to benefit from the Norwegian education system
- The ability to become an active participant in the local community in the long run.

The Norwegian resettlement administration philosophy is generally based on “discretion based on a total evaluation”, and not a codified practice⁵⁹.

In the selection process, Norwegian authorities consider both objective and subjective criteria.

Objective criteria include age, educational background and occupational skills. Based on these criteria, an assessment is made of the refugee’s chances to integrate in general and to succeed in the labour market in particular.

The refugee’s personal interests and hobbies are also considered. There is an assumption that these could be points of contact with Norwegian society and could contribute towards integration. Furthermore, marital status and the accompanying family members are taken into consideration. There is a general assumption that families integrate better than single men⁶⁰. The refugee’s mother tongue is also considered today because the availability of interpreters is seen as an important factor facilitating integration⁶¹.

Since the establishment of the Introductory Program for refugees, it has been important to see if the refugee’s age disqualifies him/her from attendance. This assessment is not based on discretion. Refugees who are not between 18-55 years of age do not normally qualify for attendance. This fact alone, however, is only one element in the total evaluation and the final decision.

Along with the above objective criteria that are considered are also more *subjective criteria* like motivation and personality. “Does the refugee have what it takes to start life anew in Norway?” is a question which Norwegian officials try to consider. Selection missions try to ascertain if the refugee being interviewed could be described as a “resourceful person”. The assumption here is that resourceful individuals will integrate faster and better as well as be in a position to help family members and other members of their ethnic group integrate.

Refugees with children are evaluated in terms of their role as parents: will they be able to function as good parents for their children in Norway? The background for this is the fact that schools and sports organisations in Norway demand active participation on the part of parents. Therefore, the officials reason, refugee parents who are able to provide the guidance the children need in Norway will also better facilitate the integration of the younger generation.

It is important to note here that not only is the evaluation of subjective criteria, but also the evaluation of objective criteria based on discretion (within relevant laws, instructions

59 Kavli and Svensen (2001).

60 Partly this is because local municipalities have more available housing for families (though not if they are very large) than for singles. Another factor which plays a role here is the fact that most asylum seekers are single men: in other words, those who are granted asylum are mostly single men.

61 The number of “new” language groups is constantly increasing. For the first wave of such groups, Norwegian authorities try to identify potential interpreters among the refugees.

and written guidelines). For example, whether or not seven years schooling increases or reduces the refugee's integration potential is a subjective, not an objective, evaluation.

From observations of interviews and the collective interview debrief discussions, there is a tendency that refugees who ask many questions and who have plans for the future are seen to be motivated and interested in building a new life in Norway. Other observations which were viewed positively include two siblings who seemed to have "good relations with each other", refugees who wished to help other refugees, be interpreters in Norway, complete their education or who were engaged in voluntary work.

On the other hand, refugees who were observed to be lacking in "drive and initiative" were not seen to be demonstrating integration potential. Questions were e.g. raised during the collective interview debrief discussion regarding a father who did not appear to the Norwegian selection team to be engaged in his children who were present at the interview.

When the interviewers meet refugees who appear apathetic and who do not engage in a dialogue with them, questions are raised, such as about trauma. However, as officials from UDI are normally not specialists in mental health, such questions cannot be answered then and there⁶².

As mentioned, it is not unusual for Norwegian officials to reject refugees for resettlement on grounds of integration potential. At the same time, they point out that these cases are always difficult because "you never know how things could have turned out".

This does not mean that Norway does not accept, for example, people who are badly traumatised, in need of extensive and expensive medical treatment, etc. Such people have always been resettled in Norway⁶³. However, officials emphasise that it has been important to ensure that they do not make up the majority of the quota. For example, if one parent is illiterate, it is important that the other is not.

Drug abuse and a criminal record are grounds on which refugees are rejected for resettlement. Refugees can be rejected if they demonstrate values which do not harmonise with life in Norway. For example, a Buddhist monk was explicitly asked if he could envisage himself taking paid employment in Norway. The reason for this is because in his home country monks live off the alms given by the congregation and do not work for a living⁶⁴.

Because integration potential as a selection criterion is a subjective evaluation, officials emphasise the importance of selection missions where they meet and interview the prospective resettlement candidates face-to-face⁶⁵. In some cases, people with low integration potential due to, for example, lack of schooling have been able to convince officials that they will resettle well because of their "guts and initiative".

Norwegian authorities have a list of groups to prioritise⁶⁶. They employ both an individual and a group approach to integration potential as a selection criterion. The resulting final list of accepted UN refugees will therefore also include individuals with so-called "low" integration potential. They can be accepted if there are other refugees in the group who

62 There was a period when a psychiatrist was a member of selection missions; this practice, however, has been terminated.

63 For example in sub-categories in the Norwegian quota like the "Twenty or more program".

64 This question was asked by the legal division – which has the main responsibility for the selection of refugees. An official from the integration division remarked that they would not have asked such a question because, recognizing that refugees also have religious needs, a monk would be seen as a resource for the rest of the refugee group. This is also a good example of the way in which legal and integration divisions would both ask questions and interpret answers (see 3.4).

65 Kavli and Svendsen 2001, FAFO 2001:8

66 As signalled in the indication process and prior to selection commissions abroad.

are assumed to be resourceful with so-called "high integration potential"; it is hoped that these will facilitate the integration process of the ones with "weaker" integration potential. In other words, the two approaches do not carry equal weight; the individual approach is the general rule⁶⁷. A wide range of integration potential is therefore represented in the final list of accepted refugees following any one selection mission.

In other words, though the Norwegian authorities tend to select refugees who are deemed to have relatively higher integration prospects in Norway, this strategy does not exclude individual refugees with seemingly low integration prospects.

In total, this strategy reflects the rationale that resettlement, as a durable solution, needs to be incorporated into a broader, humanitarian protection framework.

3.3.4 Some questions which can be raised about the assessment of integration potential

- The Norwegian selection procedure alternates between individual and team assessments before finally arriving at a final decision in each resettlement case. This is a way of safeguarding against personal biases by individual officers and of ensuring that all aspects of a case are covered before a final decision is made. While this procedure contributes to more equal treatment between cases, it cannot completely rule out the subjectivity of assessments.
- A system based on discretion (within existing laws, instructions and guidelines) does not mean that the possibility of unequal treatment between cases cannot be reduced. In Canada, for example, the authorities have detailed manuals regarding the assessment of refugees for their "ability to successfully establish"⁶⁸. These manuals are available to the public on the internet (see appendix).
- Detailed manuals regarding the Norwegian selection procedure are not available – neither to selection officers nor to the general public – in Norway⁶⁹. This raises questions of transparency, in addition to equal treatment of all cases.
- Many factors connected to displacement increase the possibilities of making imprecise assessments in an interview situation: the impact of a life under extremely difficult and sometimes life-threatening circumstances; the interview situation as such, which often is a stressful experience for the refugee; the language differences and use of interpreters⁷⁰; how children are assessed, etc.
- Language is a "filter" through which the selection team communicates with the refugee. Even though Norwegian officials are generally fluent in English, it is not their mother tongue. It is also not the mother tongue of the interpreters. The quality of interpreting varies. Even though there is little that can be done to improve this situation, it should be kept in mind in a discussion of the interview process, regardless of selection criterion.

⁶⁷ This was the case until the latest guidelines from the Ministry were published on 27 March 2008. However, it should be noted that these are high-level guidelines and are not detailed like e.g. the Canadian example.

⁶⁸ The visa officer will consider whether the refugee has relatives or a sponsor in Canada, is able to learn to speak English or French, and has the potential for employment. When a family unit is applying, these factors are assessed for the family as a unit. Detailed manuals used by Canadian officials are published on the internet. See: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/manuals/op/index.asp>

⁶⁹ For example, the newly launched information portal, www.udiregelverk.no, does not include any information about integration potential as a selection criterion.

⁷⁰ In one selection mission, the interpreters spoke another dialect from the refugees interviewed.

- The selection mission teams are generally aware that there are cultural issues in the interview situation. However, awareness does not automatically mean that one is able to overcome one's own cultural biases. For example, "being a good parent" in one culture can be defined as being quite different in another culture. From the viewpoint of the refugee, not only does he need to present his case but he also needs to do this in a way that "cracks the cultural code" of the selection mission. For example, a selection mission might assume that when a refugee looks at officers from the selection mission in the eye, with questions about life in the country in question and shares his plans and hopes for his new life, these are signs of his "motivation" and therefore of his "integration potential". In the same vein, someone who does none of the above might be viewed as "not motivated" and, consequently, low in "integration potential".

As there is no mandatory standardised training of Norwegian officials who participate in selection missions, their sensitivity to cultural differences might vary: some might be aware of their personal cultural biases, others less so. Some might read up more about the country background of the refugees to be interviewed, others less. The critical question is: how can selection missions overcome their own cultural biases in their assessment of the refugees? There are no easy answers here.

- To sum up, UDI can train all new officials in selection procedures (courses in interview technique, cultural sensitivity etc), ensure better continuity of officials (for both dossier and selection missions) and provide more transparency regarding the selection process to the general public.

3.3.5 The assessment of integration capacity

The integration capacity of local municipalities is also seen as a critical dimension in the assessment of the integration potential of refugees. Local municipalities are the settings in which the integration potential of refugees will "bloom and blossom"; it has therefore been important for Norwegian authorities to find a good "match" between refugees and local municipalities.

In the words of one official, even at the first reading of the documents when these are sent over by the UNHCR, "thought is already given to the question of which local municipality will provide the best fit". At pre-screening meetings with integration authorities, this is the question which is at the centre of the discussion.

The information which is gathered by selection missions is crucial for the task of assigning a local municipality to a refugee to be settled in. This places great demands on the competency of the selection mission; the better the "placement competency" of selection mission, the better it can assist in the "matching" between refugees and local municipalities.

"Placement competency" is more concrete than the ability to assess integration potential. It includes up-to-date knowledge of the general strengths and weaknesses of local municipalities, more specific knowledge of areas where the major ethnic groups are resettled, which local municipality has special competency regarding settling refugees with certain health profiles, etc. In addition, the qualifying programs for refugees differ between local municipalities and some might be more suitable to some refugees than others.

During the Balkan crisis in the 1990s, it was a political goal that *all* local municipalities should settle refugees. This is not the case today.

Interviews with officials reveal that there is a growing understanding that the employment and educational possibilities for refugees may vary greatly between local municipalities. The current manner in which resettlement municipalities are “matched” to refugees reflects this understanding: it is an aim to settle refugees in the local municipalities which offer the best opportunities for employment and education for refugees and their families in the long run, not only in the short term.

In recent years, refugees have also been settled in local municipalities where they have family ties or friends or where there has been a sizable ethnic group which they belong to. Of the 431 local municipalities in Norway, only about half of these settle refugees⁷¹ today⁷².

3.3.6 Other factors which might affect the selection process

Previous research has highlighted the question of continuity⁷³ and training of Norwegian officials who participate in selection missions. While some have many years of relevant work experience and have participated in several selection missions, others are new to the selection process. There is no mandatory specialised training for new team members; they learn on the job. Research⁷⁴ has also made mention of how the number of places every selection mission aims to fill affects how “strict” or “lenient” it is in its selection.

The selection process involves several officials representing different institutions (UDI and IMDi). The question of who finally ends up being selected as a UN refugee to Norway can also be dependent on the “negotiation dynamics” of the meetings between the institutions.

3.4 The introduction of integration potential as a selection criterion

Questions have been raised concerning when integration potential was introduced as a selection criterion. Some of the more general questions formulated by UDI (see point 1.1) were based on the assumption that integration potential was introduced as a selection criterion in 2002.

A search in official documents reveals that selection criteria were first mentioned in 1998 in a letter to the UNHCR from the Norwegian minister Ragnhild Queseth Haarstad.

The Minister had invited UNHCR to a meeting in Oslo because she wished to invite the UNHCR to present more resettlement cases to Norway⁷⁵. In her letter to UNHCR dated 3rd July 1998, she wrote:

“How do the Norwegian selection criteria match the actual resettlement needs? Our selection criteria reflect balanced considerations to the needs of the refugees and the ability of the Norwegian society to absorb them in the long run. The latter consideration should not be disregarded, if resettlement is to sustain as an instrument of protection.”

From this we can infer that resettlement policy in 1998 included what can be termed as *integration capacity* (“ability of the Norwegian society to absorb them”) as a selection criterion.

71 Including UN refugees and other refugees.

72 Today the local municipalities who resettle refugees are larger and more centrally located.

73 Kavli and Svensen 2001.

74 Kvali and Svensen 2001.

75 The quota for the three year period 1995-1997 was 1000 x 3 years. However, this was raised to 1500 x 3 years for the three year period 1998-2000.

In a letter from UDI the following year, in 1999, "ability of the Norwegian society" is not mentioned. However, personal characteristics of individual refugees are emphasised. In a letter to the Ministry dated 26.2.1999 and titled "Current selection criteria for UN refugees"⁷⁶ UDI states that

"Evaluation of integration potential is based on knowledge and experience regarding how different factors (political activity, flight history, religious background, prison stays, social background, education, ethnic background, etc) connected to the refugee affects the possibility of adjusting to the Norwegian society."

In addition "*ties to Norway and occupational experience*" is also mentioned in the same letter in describing integration potential as a selection criterion.

In March 1999, there was a Nordic meeting concerning resettlement criteria⁷⁷. A short report was presented comparing the selection criteria in the various Nordic countries. The criteria were divided into three sections: criteria connected to the home country, criteria connected to the first country of asylum and criteria connected to the country of resettlement. The last category dealt with integration potential as a selection criterion.

All Nordic countries differentiated between the group level and the individual level. Within a group, the Nordic countries aimed to select resource individuals who could function as a point of contact between the refugees and the host society. While there were few other characteristics which were emphasised, the following led to rejection: polygamy, a criminal record, drug or substance abuse. A good education, a good command of languages and work experience were looked upon positively but they did not automatically lead to selection.

In this short report from 1999, it was also explicitly mentioned that the age, marital status and family situation of the refugee were not criteria for selection or rejection.

When interviewed about which selection criteria were employed and how this was practiced, several senior officials emphasised that integration potential has *always* been a selection criterion - also before the 1990s.

They date the practice to the 1980s when the Norwegian Government Refugee Agency⁷⁸ was in charge of the selection of UN refugees⁷⁹. From these interviews, it does not seem that the manner in which integration potential was practiced then differed significantly from how it is practiced today.

Previously, as now, it was important to consider "if Norway had something to offer these people in terms of education, employment, medical treatment, etc and if these people were able to take advantage of what Norway could offer," as one senior official stated

76 UDI's letter to the Ministry of 26.02.99 on current selection criteria (In Norwegian)

"Gjeldende kriterier for uttak av overføringsflyktninger". Her heter det:

"Vurderingen av integreringsmessige hensyn er basert på kunnskap om og erfaring med hvordan forskjellige forhold (politisk aktivitet, flukt, religiøs tilknytning, fengselsforhold, sosial bakgrunn, utdanning, gruppetilhørighet med mer) knyttet til den enkelte flyktning virker inn på mulighet til tilpasning til det norske samfunn."

77 23 March 1999, Oslo. Report in Norwegian. De nordiske lands kriterier for uttak av overføringsflyktninger. Rapport fra arbeidsgruppen for gjenbosettingsspørsmål. (Nordisk samrådsgruppe for flyktningsespørsmål, NSHF)

78 Statens flyktningssekretariatet.

79 UDI was established only in 1988. It then took over the duties and responsibilities of the Norwegian Government Refugee Agency .

Previously, as now, it was important to ensure that the refugee had a legitimate protection need⁸⁰ and that resettlement in a third country was the most durable solution for the person concerned⁸¹.

Interviews confirm that the final decision has typically been based on an interplay of two selection criteria: protection need and integration potential.

The two most recent White Papers on Norwegian refugee policy⁸² both refer to resettlement. However, neither document mentions the issue of selection criteria. According to senior officials, this confirms the fact that selection criteria have not been high on the political agenda. They have been part of the "normal practice".

Every year, the Ministry sends a so-called "quota letter" to UDI. This letter formally states the size of the quota, the various sub-quotas, the countries which UN refugees should come from and any other issues which the Ministry wants to emphasise.

The annual "quota letter" from the Ministry to UDI mentions integration potential as a selection criterion for the first time in 2003⁸³. There have been no detailed instructions from the Ministry to UDI regarding how integration potential should be employed as a selection criterion. On the other hand, neither have there been any letters from UDI to the Ministry with requests for more detailed instructions.

The formal basis for employing integration potential as a selection criterion in Norwegian UN refugee selection is unclear.

It is difficult to pinpoint the point in time when integration potential was introduced as a selection criterion. However, it seems as though integration potential has been part of policy practice for as long as Norway has had a resettlement policy.

3.4.1 How have the two selection criteria – protection need and integration potential - been implemented over time?

Interviews with officials reveal that this is not an easy question to answer.

Integration potential alone is not a ground for acceptance; protection need must always be demonstrated to the Norwegian authorities. Ever since Norway has had a resettlement program, refugees have experienced being rejected on grounds of integration potential alone – but not selected on those grounds alone.

All officials interviewed emphasise that protection need is fundamental in the selection of refugees. However, we need to look more closely at the organisation around the selection of UN refugees in order to understand the practical side of how protection need has been evaluated.

80 In accordance to the UN refugee convention.

81 Norwegian authorities ensure that the refugee is in need of resettlement in a third country because repatriation and local integration in the first country of asylum is not a durable solution.

82 Om flyktningspolitikken, nr.17 (1994-1995) nr. 17 (2000-2001).

83 In the National Budget 2000-2001, it was mentioned that in addition to the need for protection, it was important that Norwegian authorities considered the "possibilities that UN refugees had to integrate and settle well in Norwegian society". It is unclear if this refers to the integration potential of refugees themselves or the integration capacity of local municipalities.

For the most part, the Integration Division⁸⁴. has had primary responsibility regarding the selection of refugees and their settlement in local municipalities. Officials from the Legal Division typically did not participate in selection missions. Protection need was seen more as a "given"; even though each refugee claim was examined by the integration division, only the more complicated cases - often no more than a handful - were put under more legal scrutiny. For example, when the Norwegian Government Refugee Agency was responsible for the selection of refugees, only "complicated cases" were forwarded to the Alien Office⁸⁵ so that a legal examination could be made.

At other times⁸⁶, the Legal Division has had principle responsibility regarding the selection of refugees. Officials from the Integration Division were then typically given a minor role in selection missions. Each and every refugee claim was examined by the Legal Division. For example, in the current selection process, IMDi is involved only in cases where there are doubts about the refugee's integration potential. IMDi officials are currently invited to participate in selection missions where they give information about life in Norwegian society to the refugees and participate in the interviews. In the two selection missions in which IMDi participated in 2007 (out of four missions), they also charted the living conditions of the refugees in order to provide resettlement municipalities with more information.

Here it should be noted that whether we are speaking about legal examination by the integration division or legal scrutiny by the legal division, it all boils down to one question: *How credible is the refugee claim?* To answer this, Norwegian officials are dependent on information from the UNHCR. It is not possible for Norwegian authorities to verify the information from the UNHCR⁸⁷.

Table 6
Responsibility for the selection of UN refugees has alternated between legal and integration divisions⁸⁸ (approx. dates)

| Year | Legal division | Integration division |
|---------------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| 2006 - | X | |
| 2002 - 2005 ⁸⁹ | | X |
| 1995 - 2001 | X | |
| 1980 - 1995? | | X |

Even though protection need and integration potential have both been central selection criteria in Norwegian resettlement policy, and even though protection need has to be demonstrated in each case, the way in which this is carried out has varied through the years. The alternating shift in responsibility between the legal and integration divisions in UDI has probably also meant a shift in emphasis regarding the selection criteria.

84 In the 1980s, the National Refugee Secretariat and the Alien Office were responsible for integration and legal matters concerning refugees respectively. When UDI was established in 1988, the Integration Division and the Legal Division were responsible for these areas. When IMDI was established in 2006, UDI was responsible for the legal side and IMDI for integration matters.

85 Statens utlendingskontor.

86 Second half of the 1990s.

87 This can be contrasted to the interviews and verification process for asylum seekers where, for example, the color of the houses in the street will be an issue, the dialects spoken are double-checked and the flight is examined, in the words of an official, "down to the millisecond".

88 Because of a series of reorganizations, these divisions have had different names over the years. In this report, they will simply be referred to as the Legal Division and the Integration Division.

89 Two research reports confirmed rumors that UN refugees were not integrating well in local municipalities. The two reports are: "Overføringsflykninger - uttak og integrering" by Hanne Cecilie Kavli and Elin Svensen (FAFO, 2001:8) and "Jeg kom for å redde livet" by Berit Berg, Lise Dalby and Torunn Fladstad (SINTEF, 2002). This led to the decision to put the integration division in charge of selecting the UN refugees in 2002.

3.5 Integration potential as a selection criterion in other countries⁹⁰

Some countries have formally introduced integration potential as a selection criterion.

Other countries have not officially introduced integration potential formally but employ other concepts - which could be argued as being similar to, or which at least are close to, integration potential.

Like Norway, integration potential is seen by many countries not only as an individual characteristic but also as a group asset or attribute.

Interestingly, all countries are very clear about which categories are inadmissible for resettlement. It could be argued that such classification might imply employing integration potential as a selection category by default.

Finally, many countries are very clear about groups or situations when integration potential or similar concepts are waived.

3.6 Summary

In chapter 3, we have tried to answer the following questions:

- **How has integration potential been employed in the selection of UN refugees?**
- **How have organisational changes affected administrative practices and routines regarding the criteria for the selection of UN refugees.**

- The current selection process is described in detail in this chapter, including the assessment of integration potential in practice.
- Collective decisions are the general rule in the selection of UN refugees; this administrative routine takes individual subjectivity out of the selection process. However, even though the selection criteria may be objective (e.g. age) or subjective (e.g. motivation, resourcefulness), decisions finally taken are based on discretion (within current laws, instructions and guidelines). Codified practice is not the underlying philosophy in Norwegian selection of UN refugees. The selection process boils down to the key question: what are the chances that the refugee will settle well and integrate?
- There are no written guidelines for the assessment of integration potential. New officers learn on the job; there is also no mandatory specialised training for interviews. The total experience of selection mission teams and how continuity is secured are elements which may affect how a team selects UN refugees. The selection mission teams have usually one to two hours to confirm and to collect data.
- Information collected during a selection mission is also critical for the planning of placement and arrangements for settlement. "Placement competency" of selection mission teams varies with the composition of the team. This is, to a large degree, dependent on how information and experience from local municipalities is "channeled" into the selection process.
- It is difficult to pinpoint when integration potential was introduced as a selection criterion for the resettlement of UN refugees in Norway; several documents show that

⁹⁰ Long, Litt Woon, "A comparative study of integration potential as an additional selection criterion for the resettlement of refugees"
1 September 2007, UDI

this happened *before* 2002. Interviews with senior officials confirm that refugees have been rejected because of the lack of integration potential even in the 1980s. It is probable that it has been part of the selection practice ever since Norway started resettling UN refugees.

- Difficulty in pinpointing exactly when integration potential was introduced as a selection criterion also means that it is difficult to directly address UDI's question of how the "profile" of UN refugees has changed following the introduction of the criterion.
- Protection need is the most important selection criterion for UN refugees. Integration potential is another central criterion. However, the way in which the two selection criteria have been practiced has varied over time and has changed in emphasis, with the organizational shift in responsibility between the Legal Division and the Integration Division.
- Put simply, when the Legal Division has had primary responsibility, expertise from the Integration Division has been called upon in cases where there has been doubt regarding the refugee's integration prospects. The opposite holds when the Integration Division has had the main responsibility: legal advice has been sought in cases where there has been doubt regarding the refugee's protection need.
- Norwegian authorities use both an individual and group approach to integration potential. Therefore, the final list of accepted UN refugees includes refugees representing a range of integration potential profiles; some high, some low.
- The "profiles" of UN refugees selected are therefore not homogenous. This has implications for research design.

4 Integration success: goals and realities

In this chapter we will address the following question:

- What problematic issues, if any, are connected to integration potential as a selection criterion?

The concept of “integration potential” presumes a definition of “integration success”.

This is interesting to UDI because its resettlement policy builds on the national policy for integration.

4.1 Integration as a policy goal: focus on the individual or societal conditions?

Policy makers and researchers use the term “integration” in many different contexts and ways.

It may refer to an individual psychological perspective, starting at the time of arrival in the host country and concluding when a refugee becomes an active member of that society from a legal, social, economic, education and cultural dimension.

For example, the UNHCR’s framework for planning refugee integration programmes⁹¹ lists the following goals for integration in countries of resettlement:

1. To restore security, control and social and economic independence by meeting basic needs, facilitating communication and fostering the understanding of the receiving society.
2. To promote the capacity to rebuild a positive future in the receiving society.
3. To promote family reunification and restore supportive relationships within families.
4. To promote connections with volunteers and professionals who are able to provide support.
5. To restore confidence in political systems and institutions and to reinforce the concept of human rights and the rule of law.
6. To promote cultural and religious integrity and to restore attachments to, and promote participation in, community, social, cultural and economic systems by valuing diversity.
7. To counter racism, discrimination and xenophobia and build welcoming and hospitable communities.
8. To support the development of strong, cohesive refugee communities and credible refugee leadership.
9. To foster conditions that support the integration potential of all resettled refugees taking into account the impact of age, gender, family status and past experience.

⁹¹ Refugee Resettlement: An International Handbook to Guide Reception and Integration, September 2002

An individual, psychological perspective – as employed here by the UNHCR – focuses solely on the refugee.

Integration as a policy goal may also relate to the *conditions for and equal participation* in all aspects of society.

As a policy-driven goal, it counteracts social marginalisation by removing legal, cultural and language barriers while simultaneously empowers refugees to benefit fully from available opportunities according to their abilities and aspirations.

This requires the policy to be specific about the barriers to and key areas critical for integration.

For example, the Migration Integration Policy Index⁹² has selected six major areas: labour market access, family reunion, long-term residence, political participation, access to nationality and anti-discrimination. In all six areas, barriers are identified; if opportunities for participation are not available, they cannot be taken by the migrants.

4.1.1 What is the main focus in Norwegian integration policy?

In general, Norwegian integration policy is essentially not based on individual, psychological perspectives. This is also the case of Norwegian refugee policy, including UN refugee policy.

The focus in Norwegian integration policy regarding immigrants - including UN refugees - is on equal participation in all aspects of society. The key area for integration is employment; through employment immigrants can become economically independent and stand on their own feet. Some barriers to equal participation are identified in the Norwegian National Plan Against Racism.

92 Jan Niessen, Thomas Huddleston and Laura Citron in cooperation with Andrew Geddes and Dirk Jacobs, British Council and Migration Policy Group, September 2007. The index measures policies to integrate migrants in 25 EU Member States and three non-EU countries (including Norway). It uses over 140 policy indicators to create a multi-dimensional picture of migrants' opportunities to participate in European societies

4.2 Integration as a two-way process

According to ECRE (European Council on Refugees and Exiles)⁹³,

“The integration of refugees is a dynamic two-way process. This process begins from day one when a refugee arrives within the new host society. The approach that governments choose will determine the outcome of integration efforts and services and will ultimately influence integration for individual refugees. Refugee integration therefore places demands both on receiving societies and on the individuals and communities concerned.”⁹⁴

ECRE’s emphasis on integration being a two-way process is also echoed in research.

Social anthropologist Bernard Wong compared the integration of Chinese in Lima, Peru and New York City, U.S.A⁹⁵. The Chinese had migrated at the same time (around 1900), from the same region (South China) and had the same background (peasants with little education). However, when Wong examined the adaptation patterns of the first generation of Chinese immigrants in Lima and New York City, he found striking differences in their lives. Generally speaking, the Chinese in Lima are more assimilated than the Chinese in New York.

According to Wong, the Chinese in Peru adopted Peruvian speech behavior and the Peruvian way of social interaction. They readily entered clubs and institutions of Peruvian society. Inter-marriage with Peruvians was frequent and the offspring of these marriages spoke Spanish. In Lima, there is no exclusively Chinese neighborhood. The so-called “Chinatown” in Lima is not a residential area but a place with a high concentration of Chinese businesses. On the other hand, the Chinese in New York rarely participated in the institutions of larger society or married members of the host society when Wong conducted his research in 1978. His explanation for the different adaptation patterns of the first generation of immigrants in the two countries is what he terms the macro-environmental factors: political-legal, socio-economic.

- US Immigration Law, until recently, has been more drastic, restrictive and discriminatory⁹⁶ than that of Peru.
- Limited economic opportunities, due to for example, the requirement of US citizenship which was denied the Chinese⁹⁷, forced many Chinese in New York to restrict themselves to working in laundries and Chinese restaurants where all the workers were Chinese. In Peru, the Chinese were able to work in all businesses. As employers, the Chinese also hired Peruvians, not only Chinese.

The non-existence of exclusively ethnic neighborhoods, the absence of a close-knit ethnic niche and frequent contact between Chinese and Peruvians in business and in neighborhoods led to a more integrated adaptation by the Chinese in Peru.

In the current political debate on immigration and integration, there is a tendency to argue that the pattern of integration displayed by immigrants is a result of their culture or religion. Following this line of thought, there is a tendency to circle around the question of how much change and adjustment the majority should demand of immigrants.

93 ECRE is a major non-governmental organization in the field of asylum. It is a pan-European network of refugee-assisting non-governmental organisations that promotes a humane and generous European asylum policy.

94 Integration Policy Briefings, ECRE, March 2007. http://www.ecre.org/resources/project_documents/812

95 Wong, Bernard P. 1978. A comparative study of the assimilation of the Chinese in New York City and Lima, Peru. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 20(3):335-358.

96 The infamous “Chinese Exclusion Law” in 1884 specifically prohibits Chinese from entering the United States.

97 Legislation from 1878 which prevented Chinese from obtaining US citizenship and naturalising was finally repealed in 1943.

Wong's research demonstrates that such arguments assume that integration is a one-way process and that the responsibility for integration lies in the hands of the immigrants. His comparison of the Chinese in Lima, Peru and New York City, U.S.A. demonstrates that integration is a two-way process and that responsibility for integration lies in the hands of both the hosts and the newcomers.

4.2.1 Norwegian policy: integration as a one- or two-way process?

Norwegian integration policy is clear that its goal is *not* assimilation in the sense that immigrants should be as "Norwegian" as possible as soon as possible. This was once the national policy regarding the indigenous population of the Sami and national minorities in Norway. However, there is broad understanding that Norwegian values today are not compatible with the former assimilation policy. Assimilation views integration as a one-way process; the responsibility for integration success lies in the hands of the minorities.

The most recent White Paper on this topic states that

"The Government will promote a tolerant, multicultural society and combat racism. Diversity enriches our society.

Rights, obligations and opportunities will be the same for all, regardless of ethnic background, gender, religion, sexual orientation or degree of functioning. Gender equality is also a precondition for an inclusive society.

The government will combat discrimination, prejudice and racism in order to give everyone the same opportunities for social participation. At the same time we will make it clear that all inhabitants are obliged to participate, comply with the law and support the fundamental democratic values of our society⁹⁸.

Compared to earlier White Papers, there is now an explicit emphasis on inclusion; the reason for this is that the Government wants to prevent the development of a class society based on ethnicity whereby immigrants are disadvantaged in all aspects of society.

Compared to the former assimilation policy, it is clear that Norwegian integration policy today views integration as a two-way process, with clear responsibilities lying also with the authorities. Norwegian integration policy goals focus mainly on participation and inclusion.

4.2.2 Integration potential as a selection criterion and Norwegian integration policy

Seen on its own, integration potential as a selection criterion is grounded in the view that integration is a one-way process; the responsibility for integration success lies in the hands of the UN refugees.

However, integration potential as a selection criterion must also be seen in context. "Expeditious and good" placement in local municipalities is a Norwegian policy goal; it is the basis on which refugees can lead an active life in a safe environment. From this we can infer that there is a view that the responsibility for integration success also lies with the authorities.

As long as asylum seekers in Norway fulfill conditions for asylum, they have a right to be granted asylum. UN refugees, on the other hand, do not have a right to be resettled in

98 Norwegian White Paper. Stortingsmelding nr. 49 (2003-2004).

Norway (or in any other country). Since resettlement need is currently greater than resettlement capacity, an element of "picking and choosing" will be involved in the selection of UN refugees.

Norway does not have an active policy for encouraging immigration and admits only immigrants who fulfill specified criteria⁹⁹. However, apart from immigration of UN refugees via resettlement, none of the other channels of immigration to Norway includes integration potential as a selection criterion. Such a criterion is therefore unusual in the context of Norwegian immigration policy.

4.3 The role of social capital in economic integration

Many countries, including Norway, have a special focus on economic integration. This is viewed as the key to equal participation in all areas of society.

How do we get a job? Sociologist Mark Granovetter's work "Getting A Job"¹⁰⁰ focuses on the flow of information within social networks as it pertains to job mobility.

Granovetter's well-known study focuses on how the information that facilitates mobility is secured and disseminated. Past studies had shown that formal mechanisms of job allocation rarely accounted for more than 20% of placements. Most jobs were found informally through friends or through direct application.

In the majority of cases people hear about new jobs through their personal contacts. No matter how great the net advantage of a new opportunity, the person can't take advantage of it unless they know about it.

Workers use three means to find out about job opportunities -- formal means, personal contacts, and direct application. Formal means include advertisements, public and private employment agencies, interviews and placements sponsored by universities and professional associations. In most cases, there is an intermediary between the person and the employer. Personal contacts are people that the person has come to know for reasons other than the search for a job. Direct application means the person has gone directly to the firm and has not heard about a specific opening.

In Granovetter's study 56% used personal contacts, 18.8% formal means, and 18.8% used direct application. Most respondents prefer personal contacts (as do employers), and believe the information is of higher quality. They feel that better jobs are obtained through personal contacts. Not everyone pursued jobs via personal contacts because not everyone has useful contacts (a major treatise in this study). The structure of their social network determines what possibilities are open to respondents.

In the words of an official from a local municipality, "Norway sees itself as an open society. However, for UN refugees and other newcomers, Norway can be experienced as a closed society with a high wall around it". He continues, "It is not enough to master the Norwegian language".

⁹⁹ Recent unmet demands for workers locally has led to a sharp increase in work migration to Norway, especially from countries like Poland and other countries in the region. This is a new situation for Norwegian authorities.

¹⁰⁰ Granovetter, Mark. 1995. Getting a Job: A Study of Contacts and Careers. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

The role of voluntary organisations in the resettlement of UN refugees is limited in Norway. Increasing the role of voluntary organizations is a way of acknowledging the role of social capital in the economic integration of UN refugees. This is an area which could be explored and developed further in Norway.

4.4 How is integration success defined and measured by Norwegian authorities?

The aim of Norwegian integration policy is that newly arrived immigrants are quickly able to contribute to and participate in society. The desired outcome of Norwegian refugee policy is that refugees should participate in the labour market and to be independent "as soon as possible". Economic integration is seen as the key to equal participation in society - the ultimate goal for Norwegian immigration policy¹⁰¹.

There is no official timeframe for the integration benchmark Norwegian authorities aim for.

All local municipalities which resettle refugees receive an "integration grant"¹⁰² per refugee from the central authorities for a total of five years. During this period, all refugees undergo an Introductory programme¹⁰³ including Norwegian language instruction and employment training for a period of two years¹⁰⁴.

From this we can, indirectly, draw the conclusion that Norwegian authorities calculate with a minimum integration timeframe of two years and a maximum integration timeframe of five years.

Whichever the timeframe, the most recent White Paper on refugee policy¹⁰⁵ states that Norway is far from its goal of integration success. The White Paper refers to statistics on income distribution, social welfare assistance and unemployment to illustrate the challenge Norway still faces in its refugee policy.

In an attached document ("Inclusion Goals") to the Norwegian National Budget for 2008¹⁰⁶, seventeen goals for the inclusion of the immigrant population¹⁰⁷ are listed.

101 Norwegian White Papers: Stortingsmelding 17 (2000-2001) Asyl- og flyktningpolitikken i Noreg. Stortingsmelding nr. 17 (1994-95) Om flyktningpolitikken.

102 "Integreringstilskudd". Currently, the level is 140 000 Nkr per refugee per annum for five years.

103 The "introductory programme" whereby refugees and their family members between 18-55 years are given a minimum allowance on the condition that they undergo language instruction and employment training for two years became mandatory from 1 September 2004.

104 This period may, in special circumstances, be extended an extra year.

105 Norwegian White Paper: Stortingsmelding 17 (2000-2001) Asyl- og flyktningpolitikken i Noreg.

106 Previous attachments also in 2006 and 2007.

107 These are:

1. Providing immigrants and their descendents with increasing ties to the labour market
2. Reducing the proportion of immigrants with persistently low incomes
3. Ensuring that adult immigrants learn adequate Norwegian during the five first years of their residence in Norway
4. Increasing the proportion of employees with immigrant backgrounds in child welfare services
5. Reducing health differences between ethnic groups
6. Increasing the proportion of employees with immigrant backgrounds in the police, the prosecuting authority and the correctional service
7. Increasing the proportion of lay judges with immigrant backgrounds
8. Increasing the voting participation of persons with immigrant backgrounds with the right to vote in municipal, county and parliamentary elections
9. Ensuring that immigrants have a place to live and that they are not excluded in housing markets
10. Increasing the proportion of persons with immigrant backgrounds who are employed by the State
11. Increasing the participation of active performers with immigrant background in the culture and media sector

There are indicators and a status report for each of the goals. The refugee population is not singled out specifically; they are included as part of the immigrant population. As this document has only been available for the last three years, it is still too early to track how these selected indicators have changed over time.

The document states that the 17 goals provide only a partial picture of the progress of the social inclusion activities. The goals are sorted under the various Ministries.

It is an important step that Norwegian authorities today define and track integration success and, as importantly, which Ministry is responsible for the various goals. Some Ministries have set many goals, others few. Some goals are more general, others more concrete.

The fact that Norwegian authorities today have 17 goals for the inclusion of immigrants raises several questions. For example:

- Integration is a multi-faceted process. Some goals take longer to achieve than others. What is the time dimension for the various goals?
- There is no mention of the differences, if any, between any of the goals for immigrants and its respective level in the overall population¹⁰⁸. For example, it is a goal to increase the voting participation of persons with immigrant backgrounds. It is not clear if the ultimate goal is just to increase immigrant voting participation a little, a lot, or if Norwegian authorities will only be satisfied when it reaches the same level as the overall population.
- Integration is not only a long-term process; it is also multi-generational. What constitutes success for one generation would be an unsuitable standard for another. How is it reflected in the inclusion goals?
- There is an assumption that equality of input ensures equality of societal inclusion. However, there is diversity within immigrant groups with respect to several elements, for example demography. Should this be reflected in inclusion goals?

The Norwegian inclusion goals are focused on immigrants and their increased participation and inclusion in the host society.

4.4.1 Planning and evaluating integration policies

How can integration success be formulated and measured? Here are some ideas from the European Commission.

-
12. Ensuring that children and young people with immigrant backgrounds master the Norwegian language as early as possible in their schooling
 13. Increasing the proportion of descendants of immigrants who complete upper secondary education
 14. Increasing the proportion of immigrants who arrive in Norway while of lower secondary school or upper secondary school age who complete upper secondary education
 15. Increasing the proportion of employees in primary and lower secondary school and upper secondary education with immigrant backgrounds
 16. Increasing the number of children with immigrant backgrounds in day-care centres
 17. Increasing the number of preschool teachers with immigrant backgrounds.

¹⁰⁸ In Denmark, the three most important goals are that immigrants should, in the same degree as Danes, have an education, a job and be able to support themselves. Four other goals are that immigrants must not be discriminated, that there should be contact between immigrants and Danes in their daily life, that immigrants, in the same degree as Danes, should participate in political life and that immigrants should support and practice some basic norms and values in Danish society. Since 2001, Danish authorities have published annual reports regarding integration in Denmark of immigrants and their descendants.

The Handbook on integration from the European Commission¹⁰⁹ states that the translation of overall policy goals into concrete integration programmes and projects requires careful planning, of which the definition of clear objectives is an integral part.

It uses the acronym SMART to sum up its points. According to the handbook, objectives should be:

| | | |
|---|----------------|--|
| S | Specific | Objectives should be precise and concrete enough not to be open to varying interpretations. |
| M | Measurable | Objectives should define a desired future state in measurable terms, so that it is possible to verify whether the objective has been achieved or not. Such objectives are either quantified or based on a combination of description and scoring scales. |
| A | Accepted | If objectives and target levels are to influence behaviour, they must be accepted, understood and interpreted similarly by all of those who are expected to take responsibility for achieving them. |
| R | Realistic | Setting an objective that only reflects the current level of achievement is not useful. Objectives and target levels should be ambitious. However, they should also be realistic so that those responsible see them as meaningful. |
| T | Time-dependent | Objectives and target levels remain vague if they are not related to a fixed date or time period. |

4.4.2 An example from New Zealand

In **New Zealand**, social cohesion as a policy goal *encompasses much more than immigrant settlement*. It follows a growing recognition that services and policies are critical to ensuring *successful outcomes for immigrant settlement and for community cohesion*.

The five key intermediate outcomes – *belonging, participation, inclusion, recognition and legitimacy* – provide the basis for a framework of elements of a socially cohesive society. Indicators are developed for both host communities and for immigrants. They reflect the *two-way processes* necessary for social cohesion, as well as a distinction between individual and community level considerations.

109 Handbook on integration for policy-makers and practitioners, European Communities, May 2007

The New Zealand Government's indicator framework¹¹⁰

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| High level outcome | New Zealand becomes an increasingly socially cohesive society with a climate of collaboration because all groups have a sense of belonging, participation, inclusion, recognition and legitimacy. | |
| Migrant/refugee community | Host communities | |
| ELEMENTS OF SOCIALLY COHESIVE BEHAVIOUR | | |
| Belonging <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sense of belonging ▪ Frequency of intimate/family friend contact/networks ▪ Social involvement index ▪ Membership of groups ▪ Telephone and internet access ▪ Unpaid work outside the home | Belonging <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sense of belonging ▪ Frequency of contact in intimate networks ▪ Social involvement index ▪ Membership of groups ▪ Telephone and internet access ▪ Unpaid work outside the home | |
| Participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participation in tertiary and adult education ▪ Participation in pre-school education ▪ Participation in arts and cultural activities ▪ Participation in sports teams and leisure ▪ Percentage of immigrants voting ▪ Civic engagement | Participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participation in tertiary and adult education ▪ Participation in pre-school education ▪ Participation in arts and cultural activities ▪ Participation in sports teams and leisure ▪ Percentage of individuals voting ▪ Civic engagement | |
| CONDITIONS FOR A SOCIALLY COHESIVE SOCIETY | | |
| Inclusion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Market income per person ▪ Paid employment rate ▪ Labour market participation rates ▪ English literacy skills ▪ Unemployment rates ▪ Education and qualification Recognition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Welfare receipt ▪ Occupational distribution ▪ Home ownership | Inclusion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Market income per person ▪ Paid employment rate ▪ Unemployment rates ▪ Welfare receipt ▪ Occupational distribution ▪ Home ownership ▪ Education and qualifications ▪ Numbers of support programmes | |
| Recognition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Racism and discrimination ▪ Representation in local/national govt ▪ Own language media ▪ Own language use | Recognition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Racism and discrimination ▪ Resourcing for media | |
| Legitimacy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Confidence in key societal institutions | Legitimacy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Surveys on racism and | |

¹¹⁰ Peace, R. et al. 2005, Immigration and Social Cohesion: Developing an Indicator Framework for measuring the impact of settlement policies in New Zealand. Working Paper 01/05, Wellington: Ministry of Social Development (November)

Spoonley, P., et al. 2005. "Social Cohesion: A Policy and Indicator Framework for Assessing immigrant and Host outcomes." Social Policy Journal of New Zealand. No 24 (April)

Spoonley, P., J. Chapman, and G. Young. 2006. Ethnic Diversity in New Zealand: Outcomes and Indicators. Report prepared for the Office for Ethnic Affairs, Wellington: Office of Ethnic Affairs.

| | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Perceptions of safety ▪ Service delivery to refugee and migrant groups ▪ Health levels and access to health services ▪ Appropriate representation in the mass media | <p>discrimination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Confidence in key societal institutions ▪ Credential and qualification Verification ▪ Position in relation to New Zealand's bi-cultural commitments |
|--|---|

Compared to Norway, the above model from New Zealand also includes the host society.

In addition, the model looks beyond participation and inclusion and focuses also on immigrant belonging, recognition and legitimacy in society.

Underlying the New Zealand model is the idea that integration is a two-way process and that immigration will change society in New Zealand as a whole. The model is a way of managing the change.

4.5 What do we know about the integration process of UN refugees in Norway?

Research that only focuses on the integration process of UN refugees alone is scant; these individuals are normally not singled out as a category in research on immigrants. We know that the average income of the immigrant population is two thirds that of the population in general. Among non-Western immigrants, 24 per cent have a persistently low income with only half of the median income of the general population.

Statistics Norway recently published a study in 2008¹¹¹ on the participation of UN refugees in the labour market. Of the 20,000¹¹² UN refugees in Norway, some arriving as early as the 1970s, 43 % are currently employed compared to 60 % in the overall immigrant population. By comparison, the employment rate for the population as a whole is 70 %. UN refugees from Vietnam, Iraq and Iran form the largest groups; together they comprise 60 per cent of the UN refugee population. According to this study, most of the Vietnamese came to Norway between 1987-1991, Iraqis between 1992-1999 and the Iranians between 1997-2003. The rest of the UN refugee population comes from about 90 other countries. In other words, we have some sizable groups of UN refugees and many small ones.

The above study from Statistics Norway shows that UN refugees have limited success in the labour market and that *length of residence* is the one single factor that increases their chances of success¹¹³.

UN refugees take about ten to fifteen years to reach employment levels comparable to the immigrant population (ie. 60%)¹¹⁴.

111 Overføringsflyktningers integrering i det norske samfunn. Vebjørn Aalandslid. SSB (2008)

112 16 per cent of the total refugee population of UN refugees and former asylum seekers and their families. In 2006, this group was as large as 117000, coming from 158 countries.

113 In 2003, the Danish Ministry of Integration completed an analysis of the education and employment situation of UN refugees in Denmark. The study looked at the educational and employment situation of the UN refugees who came to Denmark in 1997-2001. The study focused in particular on a group of refugees who arrived in 1997. These refugees were compared to a group of immigrants who had arrived in Denmark at the same time. The percentage of refugees who arrived in 1997 who were undergoing an educational program increased from 2 to 12 % in 5 years. In 2002, after five years in Denmark, 13 % of the refugees had a job compared to 25 % of the immigrants. The largest group of UN refugees who arrived in 1997 were from Iraq and Iran. In general, the Iranians had a higher rate of employment than the Iraqis.

114 In Canada, research shows that after two years after arrival, about 38% of refugees use social assistance at some point during the year – 62% do not. By 10 years after arrival, about 15% use social assistance, and 78% have employment income.

However, it must be noted that there are differences between UN refugees from various countries; some find employment quicker than others.

The above study from Statistics Norway supports the observation that UN refugees take much longer time to become economically independent compared to other refugees and to immigrants in general. Available research arrives at this conclusion using various indicators for economic independence and different cohorts of refugees¹¹⁵. However, there is scant research regarding where UN refugees find employment¹¹⁶ or how well their employment matched their background and competence.

It is not easy to pinpoint why UN refugees need more time to become economically independent.

Some of the possible explanations are external and structural: Some researchers take the view that this is because former asylum seekers start their integration process earlier - at transit reception centers while waiting for their applications for asylum to be granted - compared to UN refugees who are placed directly in local municipalities. There is also the issue of where¹¹⁷ the UN refugees are resettled; some local municipalities have long experience resettling refugees, others not¹¹⁸. Furthermore, there is also the issue of the economic situation in the local municipalities; some have high rates of employment, others low¹¹⁹.

Other possible explanations are internal to the refugees, individually or as a group: Other researchers point to unknown medical conditions which become apparent when the UN refugees start settling down¹²⁰. In addition, there are relatively more single men among UN refugees compared to other refugees in most age groups - despite the widespread assumption that most UN refugees come to Norway together with their families¹²¹.

Statistics Norway published a report in 2001 on refugees in general (i.e. both UN refugees and asylum seekers who have been granted residence after applying for asylum) and their integration process¹²². The areas which were covered in the report were employment, unemployment, education and social welfare assistance.

The report showed that refugees who came during the 1980s found work relatively speaking, quicker than refugees who came to Norway during the early 1990s. During the late 1990s, the refugees' rate of employment picked up again but it is difficult to say if this is because the administration of refugee policy had improved, because the improved economy created a growing need for workers in the work force or a combination of both the above factors. The report points out that the state of the economy at the time of the refugees' arrival probably plays a bigger and more positive role than how the economy develops in the initial years after the refugees' arrival.

115 Djuve and Kavli 2000, Kavli and Svendsen 2001, Djuve 2002

116 The recent Living Conditions study of immigrants by Statistics Norway (2008) show that compared to the general population, many immigrants have work which they are overqualified for. Refugees comprised half of the persons surveyed.

117 While UN refugees in general are resettled in local municipalities around the largest Norwegian cities, the newly arrived UN refugees (arriving within the last five years) are resettled all over the country - with the exception of Oslo where relatively few newly arrived UN refugees are resettled. There are UN refugees in 278 of Norway's 431 local municipalities, but in 100 of these, there are 10 or fewer UN refugees.

118 Anne Britt Djuve. Overføringsflyktninger: Bosettingskommuner og integrering. Forprosjekt. FAFO 2002:08. Djuve (2002) found that UN refugees were more likely to be resettled in the North of Norway in more peripheral local municipalities with less experience with resettling refugees.

119 Østby 2001

120 Djuve 2002

121 Aalandslid 2008, Djuve (2002)

122 Lars Østby: Beskrivelse av nyankomne flyktningers vei inn i det norske samfunnet , 2001/23

The report also found that in general, after five years residence the rate of employment was still around 30-40 per cent. Furthermore, after five years, some 40-50 per cent was still dependent on social welfare assistance. The report therefore pointed out that after the five year integration grant from central authorities to local municipalities, many refugees and their family members were still not economically independent.

The 2001 report also compared refugees from different countries and found that refugees from some countries managed to find employment and were economically independent after comparatively short periods of time. The report takes the refugee's year of arrival as the main point of departure and does not e.g. differentiate between the level of trauma among the various refugee cohorts. Local municipalities who resettle refugees often remark that persons coming from certain refugee camps are more marked by trauma than others. This, in turn, affects their general integration process. However, Statistics Norway points out that we also need to take into account the demographic differences between refugee groups like age, gender and family situation.

Interestingly, the report shows that refugee families use less time in becoming economically independent¹²³ and suggests that single refugees have a harder time settling in than refugees with families in Norway.

The report also compared refugees with immigrants; it shows that despite the immigrants settling in quicker after their arrival, the differences in the economic integration between these two groups are more or less erased after around ten years.

Statistics Norway has recently published a study¹²⁴ in 2008 on the living conditions of immigrants in Norway¹²⁵. The study does not specifically single out refugees in general or UN refugees in particular; refugees are part of the immigrant population. However, it is interesting to note that about half of the respondents have a refugee background¹²⁶.

The study makes it possible to compare the living conditions of immigrants in 1996 and in 2005/2006 in a few areas.

The immigrant population is heterogeneous and dynamic. The immigrant population in 2005/2006 was almost double the size of the immigrant population in 1996. In the 1990s, the increase was mainly due to the arrival of many refugees from the Balkans. The median length of residence for the study in 1996 was 8 years while the median length of residence for the study in 2005/2006 was 12 years.

In 1996, the nationalities in the living conditions study were from Turkey, Pakistan, Vietnam, Chile, former Yugoslavia (except Bosnia-Herzegovina), Iran, Sri Lanka and Somalia. However, in 2005/2006, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Irak were also included in the study. In other words, the living conditions study does not only compare living conditions at two given points in time; they also refer to changing immigrant populations.

This is to say, for example, that rising unemployment rates among immigrants could very well be due to the arrival of large immigrant groups at a time when the unemployment rate actually declined for the rest of the immigrant population. We are, in other words, dealing with complex data for which no quick, generalised conclusions can be drawn.

123 Between 1994-1998

124 http://www.ssb.no/emner/00/02/rapp_200805/

125 The Living conditions study in 2005/2006 covered 3053 persons with at least two years residence in Norway from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia-Montenegro, Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Somalia and Chile.

126 As UN refugees (6%) or as former asylum seekers who have been granted asylum (16%) or a resident permit on humanitarian grounds (33%).

Having said this, what does the latest living condition study show? Among many things, the study shows that housing conditions have improved for the immigrant population in the last ten years - though they are still not on par with the rest of the population. Non-Western immigrants who live in detached houses and who own their own home have increased since 1996. Fewer immigrants live in apartments and the proportion of tenants has decreased. The degree of reported overcrowding has also declined. However, immigrant families have comparatively poorer housing quality (e.g. noise and dampness) compared to the general population.

The income of the ten immigrant groups in the current study is between 15-45 per cent lower than that of the population in general. Again, statistics show that length of residence is a critical factor in employment. Between 4 and 6 years of residence, the employment rate jumps from 48 % to 59 %¹²⁷. This could mean that many immigrants need at least four years to establish themselves in the job market. After 11 - 15 years of residence, the employment rate leaps again between 4 to 6 percentage points for so-called non-Western immigrants. In 1996, 44 % of the immigrants from Vietnam were employed; 62% were employed in 2005/2006.

Of all the people with refugee backgrounds in Norway¹²⁸, half have lived in Norway for less than ten years. Only 7 per cent have lived in Norway for over 20 years.

Long residence in Norway does not, however, "neutralise" the differences between ethnic groups. Some groups still have the lowest rates of employment even though they have lived in Norway for more than 15 years.

The highest incomes are registered for people from Bosnia-Hercegovina and from Sri Lanka. Those from Somalia and Irak have the lowest incomes and are the most dependent on social welfare assistance. This can be explained by their relatively short period of residence.

Statistics Norway has, in other studies¹²⁹, shown how the level of social welfare assistance among refugees decreases as their length of residence increases. However, immigrants are in general more dependent on social welfare assistance than the overall population.

The living conditions study from Statistics Norway also shows that immigrants are overrepresented in jobs which do not require any educational background. It also shows that compared to the population in general, there is a marked mismatch between educational background and the currently-held job in the immigrant population; 45 % of immigrants with higher education have jobs for which higher education is a requirement - the others with higher education are currently holding jobs for which higher education is not a requirement.

Half of the immigrants in the survey have experienced discrimination in one or more of the following areas: housing, health services, education, work life. Immigrants from Somalia and Iran report the most discrimination. Men experience more discrimination than women.

Naturalisation to Norwegian citizenship is not defined as an inclusion goal or indicator by Norwegian authorities. Statistics Norway's annual publication which describes

127 Innvandring og innvandrere 2006. Daugstad, G. (red.)

128 In 2005, there were a total of 117 000 persons with refugee backgrounds. Of these, 89 000 were either UN refugees or persons who had come to Norway as asylum seekers while 28 000 were their family members.

129 Blom 2004, Daugstad 2007.

immigration and immigrants includes statistics on naturalisation¹³⁰. In 2005, 12,700 people naturalised, the highest number ever. Nine out of ten new Norwegian citizens had a former nationality from a so-called non-Western country.

The living conditions study in 2005/2006 makes it possible to collect data regarding how immigrants themselves view their own situation in many areas. It is therefore a useful supplement to the annual registers regarding e.g. employment, income etc.

However, because there have been changes to some of the questions asked in 2005/2006 compared to 1996, it is not possible to compare living conditions for immigrants in several areas, such as education over time.

The 2008 report mentioned above from Statistics Norway is currently the only study on UN refugees and their participation in the labor market. In the other reports mentioned here from Statistics Norway, UN refugees are either part of the overall refugee population or part of the immigrant population.

This researcher specially commissioned Statistics Norway to compare the differences in educational backgrounds of UN refugees who arrived in 1996 and in 2005/2006. For those over 18 years of age, 14 per cent had higher education in 1996 and 24 per cent had higher education in 2005/2006. However, as the selected population is very small (146 in 1996 and 93 in 2005/2006), it is difficult to draw any conclusions here. However, this might be a way of checking how selection criterion changes might have an effect on the profile of UN refugees in the future.

There are a handful of other reports commissioned by the Norwegian national authorities about UN refugees. The researcher has examined these for more information on the integration process of UN refugees.

- Berg, Dalby and Fladstad (SINTEF, 2002) look at direct placement of UN refugees in local municipalities from the viewpoints of both the UN refugees themselves and the local authorities. Even though many UN refugees do manage to resettle fairly well, the report draws our attention to many of the mental health problems which the refugees face and to the improvements which need to be made by the local authorities. The refugees interviewed come from 15 countries.
- Kavli and Svensen's report (FAFO, 2001) on the selection and integration of UN refugees explores various models for selection and placement. The report analyses interviews conducted in the year 2000 of refugees from Bosnia, the former Yugoslavia, Iraq and Somalia who arrived 4-6 years ago (in 1994-1996). In addition, the researchers interviewed and conducted a survey of selected officials. The section on refugee selection is relevant to this report. Many administrative features remain unchanged from the year 2000 (including integration potential as a selection criterion).
- Djuve's report (FAFO 2002) on placement municipalities and integration discusses where UN refugees have been resettled and what the characteristics of these municipalities are. They have comparatively less experience with resettlement and higher unemployment.
- Djuve og Kavli (FAFO 2000) show that UN refugees have problems finding employment and that local municipalities find UN refugees more demanding to integrate than other refugees.

130 In order to be able to apply for naturalisation, one must have resided in Norway for seven years. In the period 1977-2005, 174,000 foreign citizens have naturalised. 150.00 of these had nationalities from so-called non-Western countries.

4.5.1 Selected research and experience from abroad

Recent research from abroad confirms the Norwegian experience that refugees face many barriers entering the workforce.

In **Canada**, the longitudinal social trend study in 2007 of 7,700 immigrants, including refugees, over a period of 4 years¹³¹ is a representative survey of 157,600 new immigrants from all admissions categories, i.e. economic, family and refugee groupings.

Immigrants in all admissions categories have very positive assessments of the *quality of life in Canada*. All in all, expectations of two thirds of the new immigrants have been exceeded, met or improved upon after four years in Canada.

All categories, however, encounter difficulties regarding employment and language/cultural acquisition.

Job difficulties are also reported in year four. The reasons for the difficulties include:

- not enough Canadian job experience,
- no connection in the job market,
- foreign experience not accepted,
- foreign qualifications not accepted,
- lack of employment opportunities,
- not enough Canadian job references,
- language problems,
- not able to find job in field of expertise,
- not knowing enough people working,
- not having family/friends who could help,
- discrimination,
- not knowing how to find a job,
- childcare constraints,
- transportation constraints,
- not knowing the city.

While immigrants face multiple barriers to employment, it is noted that they also face *extra barriers* not faced by locals like credential recognition, lack of Canadian work experience, language barriers and lack of social networks.

An extensive research project in 2004 on refugee resettlement in **New Zealand**¹³² interviewed two groups: recently arrived and established refugees. The recently arrived were interviewed twice; once after six months and again after two years. In total, 398 refugees were interviewed. Nearly all participants reported that New Zealand provided them with a safe and pleasant environment. What the refugees liked about New Zealand reflected what most did not have in their former countries – freedom and democracy, safety and security, and peace and quiet. There was a similarity in responses and issues raised across both the recently arrived and the established refugees. In general, the greatest challenges faced by the refugees in New Zealand were the numerous barriers to entering the workforce.

Closer to Norway, a report from **Denmark**¹³³ in 1999 focused on refugees from two particular refugee camps in the Middle East where conditions were very difficult. It looked at the participation of these refugees in the labour market, housing situation, language skills and their connection to the Danish society in general.

131 Approx at 6 months, 2 years and 4 years after arrival in 2001-2002

132 Refugee Voices. A Journey Towards Resettlement (June 2004)

133 By PLS Consult, Denmark.

The report also compared these UN refugees and so-called "spontaneous refugees" ie. people who had arrived in Denmark as asylum seekers and who had been granted residence. The report focused on two groups of refugees from the Middle East: a group of Iraqis from the Rafha-camp in Saudi Arabia who came to Denmark in 1992 and in 1995, and a group of Iranians from the Al-Tash-camp in Irak who came to Denmark in 1996. The report compared these groups with a control group of "spontaneous refugees" from Irak and Iran. The general conclusion was that the UN refugees from the two camps were less integrated than the control group from Iraq and Iran. However, all refugees had problems finding employment; 4 % of the UN refugees and 13 % of the "spontaneous refugees" were employed at the time of the study, 3 to 7 years after arrival to Denmark.

A **transatlantic project**¹³⁴ that sought to transfer insights and information on resettlement through two roundtables and a series of interviews in both Washington DC and in Brussels revealed differences between Europe and the US along several dimensions:

Integration and welfare: A major point of difference was the perception of how long it would take before resettled refugees would be employable. In the US, the view was that some 90 % of the resettled refugees within the relevant age groups would be employable (and indeed are in reality) within months of arriving there¹³⁵. In contrast, officials in Nordic resettlement countries expect that refugees need at least several years of welfare support, language training, etc to become employable.

Voluntary agencies or non-governmental organisations play different roles in Europe and the US in the resettling of refugees. While they have key roles in all phases in the US resettlement program, they have little or no role to play at the selection of UN refugees in Europe¹³⁶.

Canada and the United States have private assistance programs for resettled refugees. For example, in Canada, refugees are either assisted through government programs or are privately sponsored. Research has shown that privately sponsored refugees become financially self-supporting far quicker¹³⁷ than government assisted refugees. However, research also showed that the privately sponsored program was more expensive to administer and that the difference between the two programs diminished over time¹³⁸. Compared to the refugees on the government program, the privately sponsored refugees received more support "in kind" and less financial support.

4.6 Critical factors for integration success - from the perspective of local municipalities

"Integration potential" as a concept is based on an assumption that there is a direct connection between, on one hand, integration success and, on the other, a set of characteristics describing the refugee which can lead, or at least contribute, to a positive integration outcome.

There are many assumptions regarding this connection but there is limited systematic knowledge regarding the factors – either referring to external factors like the integration capacity of local municipalities or to internal factors like the integration potential of individual refugees - which *lead or contribute* towards integration success (of the lack of it).

134 Funded by the German Marshall Fund and undertaken by two researchers: Gregor Noll from Lund Univderstiy in Sweden and Joanne van Selm at Migration Policy Institue (MPI), Brussels.

135 This does not necessarily mean that the refugees have jobs that reflect their qualifications or employment history.

136 Denmark being the only exception here.

137 Within six months.

138 CIC_PSRP Final Report Apr16.doc

It is beyond the scope of this report to examine how local municipalities have changed their attitudes to resettle UN refugees after the introduction of integration potential as a selection criterion. However, interviews with local municipalities will provide some understanding of the attitude of local municipalities in the resettlement of UN refugees and of the issues which are important to them.

Local municipality A

One local official claimed that the single most critical factor contributing to the integration success of refugees – defined as economic independence – was *how successful the local authorities were in getting a permanent job for the refugees*.

Local authorities, in his opinion, need to form and build good relations with suitable local employers who are willing not only to give the refugees a chance but who also are willing to commit themselves by offering successful refugees a permanent job at the end of their trial period.

According to this official, there is little in common among the refugees who have been “successful” after the Introductory programme and among those who have “failed”.

In other words, it is highly difficult to predict the integration outcome of refugees if we limit ourselves to the characteristics of the refugees themselves.

He went on to add that the local municipality had their own selection criterion when they negotiated with IMDi regarding which refugee they were going to accept for resettlement.

The most important criterion was the availability of suitable housing. If the local municipality had an apartment for five people available, it made most sense – both in practical and in financial terms – to ask IMDi for a family of five. Whether the refugee was a UN refugee or someone who had been an asylum seeker was of secondary interest.

The next most important criterion was the ethnic background of the refugee. The local municipality in question did *not* wish to have large concentrations of any ethnic group as they only had three apartment buildings in which other ethnic Norwegians also lived. The official said that it was always possible to find an interpreter so this was not an issue for them when selecting a refugee for local placement.

The third most important criterion was the family situation of the refugee. The local municipality preferred refugees who were together with their families. The reason for this was that the family reunification process was time consuming and that this affected the mental health of the refugees. Many UN refugees arrive with their families while many refugees who have been asylum seekers need to apply for family reunification after they have been granted asylum. In this respect, UN refugees were more “popular” than the other refugees.

As a rule, the local municipality did not resettle refugees with physical disabilities or handicaps as the compensation from the central authorities¹³⁹ was not sufficient to care for the refugees who might need assistance the rest of their lives.

Even though the local municipality tended to prefer refugees with more education, their experience was that even illiterate UN refugees managed to “catch up” with the refugees who had been asylum seekers (“within six months”) because of their drive

139 750 000 Nkr per annum for five years.

and motivation. The local official said that many refugees were illiterate only because they had not had the opportunity to go to school, not because they lacked mental capabilities. In short, illiteracy was “not a problem” for integration.

However, he added that because the local municipality was not a “cheap place to live”, many of the refugees who had managed to get jobs still needed social welfare assistance to top up their monthly allowance.

The few refugees who had higher education did not necessarily fare better than the others. According to the official, integration success for this group was dependent on the recognition of foreign credentials. This was a process which could take “more than a hundred years”. However, the experience was that for those who managed to get their foreign credentials (partially) recognised, they normally did finally manage to get jobs in their fields of specialisation.

Local municipality B

The local official emphasised that the UN refugees who had been resettled were so different and had such varied backgrounds that it was difficult for her to infer how UDI defined “integration potential” unless the definition was “extremely broad”.

The local municipality’s experience was that it was not easy to balance the availability of family relations in Norway and the availability of interpreters locally. Time and again, they had had problems with getting suitable interpreters for some UN refugees who had family relations locally but who spoke a language for which no local interpreter was available. On the other hand, they had some UN refugees who spoke a language where there were local interpreters available but who had family relations in another municipality far away.

When selecting “their” refugees from IMDi, the local municipality aimed for a mix of backgrounds (education, health situation, family situation, etc.) The practical possibilities, especially available housing, was also an important selection criterion.

Though their experience was that UN refugees often were more demanding to resettle because they needed more time and more follow-up to get used to life in Norway – compared to the refugees who had been asylum seekers and who had already spent considerable time in Norwegian transit centers – the local official felt they the UN refugees were more “grateful” for the assistance given to them.

When asked to name the critical factors which contributed towards successful integration, the local official emphasised that the integration process was complex and that there was no single factor which could explain success or failure. For example, she pointed out, higher education did not necessarily lead to integration success¹⁴⁰.

Furthermore, while one ethnic group did well in the local municipality, the same ethnic group did not thrive in another local municipality. The children’s situation was also very different; some managed well and others did not in the Norwegian school system.

On the other hand, it seemed to the local official that family reunification always

140 “Greater predisplacement of intellectual and economic resources may imply a greater subsequent loss of status rather than a protective effect on refugees against their predicament” Predisplacement and postdisplacement factors associated with mental health of refugees and internally displaced persons. A meta-analysis. Mather Porter and Nick Haslam, American Medical Association, August 3, 2005, vol 294, no. 5.

speeded up the integration process. Political engagement – even though it was for better conditions in their homeland and not oriented towards Norway – was another factor which seemed to help some refugees integrate better.

Some of the refugees had “leadership qualities” and quickly became spokespeople for their groups. Though it was easier for the local administration to communicate with someone who spoke better Norwegian or English, the local official emphasised that it was important for them to ensure that they did not overlook the needs of the whole group and of the refugees who had more problems communicating their needs.

The local official was pleased that the Introductory programme was established in 2004 because it provides “structure” to the initial period after arrival, but she questions the so-called success rate that IMDi claims¹⁴¹. She also pointed out that those who are so-called “successful” after two years probably would have been successful anyway without the Introductory programme.

She was more concerned for the refugees who did not manage to get a job or to enroll for a Norwegian education after the Introductory programme. Many never manage to stand on their own feet and, in her opinion; an underclass of refugees was developing in Norwegian society.

What the refugees needed most was employers who were willing to take them in on trial and according to the local official, both the local municipalities and the central administration did not go forward as good examples here.

These interviews raise questions about knowledge gaps in the settlement of UN refugees.

We need more systematic knowledge which isolates individual resources of UN refugees from the external factors which make up the conditions for their integration.

For example:

- How have those viewed to have high integration potential fared?
- How have those viewed to have low integration potential fared?
- How have those viewed to be a “leader” in a group of refugees fared? Have they managed to facilitate the integration of others in the group?
- What are the success criteria for UN refugees who have settled well?

We also need more knowledge about how external factors which influence the settlement process and, ultimately, integration success:

- economic growth
- unemployment levels
- education: recognition of foreign credentials, needs assessments, etc
- experience with resettlement in general, relations between Refugee Office and potential employers in both the private and public sectors in particular
- interpreters
- available family relations in the local municipality.

A more solid general knowledge base regarding the internal and external factors which contribute or hinder integration success will benefit the implementation of resettlement policy. This will ensure that the policy will be based on empirical experience and not popular assumptions.

141 After the program ends, six out of ten participants go on to a regular job or educational program. Research by Hanne Kavli (FAFO) shows that of those with a job, only half have a fulltime job; the others work between 1-19 hours a week.

4.7 Critical factors for integration success - from the perspective of IMDi

A senior official from the Directorate for Diversity and Integration (IMDi) said "IMDi can integrate anyone – as long as we have enough information about them"¹⁴² to emphasise the point that the integration potential of UN refugees was not the main challenge the local municipalities faced in resettlement but the quality of the information about the refugees.

The information collected during the selection mission interviews is crucial in the planning of placement and resettlement prior to the arrival of the UN refugees. This is an area which IMDi is concerned about.

As mentioned previously, IMDi's role in the selection of UN refugees is currently limited; they take part in the pre-screening process regarding the refugees whose integration potential UDI needs a second opinion on, they have taken part in two of the four selection missions in 2007 and their opinion is sought post-screening regarding the handful of refugees where there are further questions regarding their integration potential. When IMDi took part in the selection missions in 2007, they charted the living conditions of the refugees, provided information about life in Norway and participated in the interviews together with officials from UDI. In 2008, the National Budget will allow for participation during all selection missions.

From IMDi's perspective, the main factors which influence integration success of UN refugees is the cooperation between IMDi and UDI in general and how "placement experience and competency" is channeled into the selection process.

In addition, specific knowledge of the strengths of particular local municipalities needs to be channeled into the selection process in a more systematic and robust manner. This will ensure that the selection and placement policies are better aligned and that there is a best possible "match" between the UN refugees and the local municipality where they will be resettled. This will also contribute towards better planning and preparation for resettlement in the local municipalities.

142 UDI's response is that they need further specification from IMDi. To the researcher, this could mean that the cooperation and dialogue between UDI and IMDi needs to be further developed.

4.8 Summary

In chapter 4, we ask if there are any problematic issues connected to assessing the integration potential of individuals and groups.

- This report argues that integration as a two-way process in general. In addition, the role of social capital in economic integration can be further emphasised and developed in integration policy e.g. by giving voluntary organisations a larger role in the resettlement of UN refugees.
- Chapter 4 takes a wider view of the selection process and focuses on the conditions for UDI's resettlement policy, namely the national integration policy for immigrants and their families.
- The concept of integration potential presumes a definition of integration success. This chapter therefore, also looks at how Norwegian authorities define and measure integration success.
- Norwegian integration policy has 17 inclusion goals. For the last three years, there have been status reports on indicators of these goals. This is a good point of departure.
- However, the selection of the inclusion goals and the manner in which they are formulated raise several questions. For example:
 - What are the critical barriers to inclusion in the various areas. This is useful in order to ensure constant monitoring.
 - Integration is a multi-faceted process. Some goals take longer to achieve than others. What is the time dimension for the various goals?
 - There is no mention of the differences, if any, between any of the goals for immigrants and its respective level in the overall population.
 - Integration is not only a long term process; it is also multi-generational. What constitutes success for one generation would be an unsuitable standard for another. How is it reflected in the inclusion goals?
- The Norwegian inclusion goals focus mainly on participation and inclusion in society. An example from New Zealand shows how social cohesion as a policy goal encompasses more than immigrant settlement; it also covers the host community and the conditions needed for social cohesion in society as a whole. Underlying the New Zealand model is the idea that integration is a two-way process and that immigration will change society. In addition to participation and inclusion, the New Zealand social cohesion policy also focuses on belonging, recognition and legitimacy.
- Chapter 4 also looks at what we do know about the integration process of UN refugees in Norway.
- Length of residence is the single most important factor that increases the UN refugees' chances of success in the labour market. After 10-15 years, UN refugees have the same degree of participation in the labour market as immigrants in general (60%).
- In ten immigrant groups, the employment rate jumps from 48 % to 59 % between 4 to 6 years of residence. After 11-15 years, the employment rate leaps

again for so-called non-Western immigrants. Many of these are also refugees. This is echoed by research from abroad.

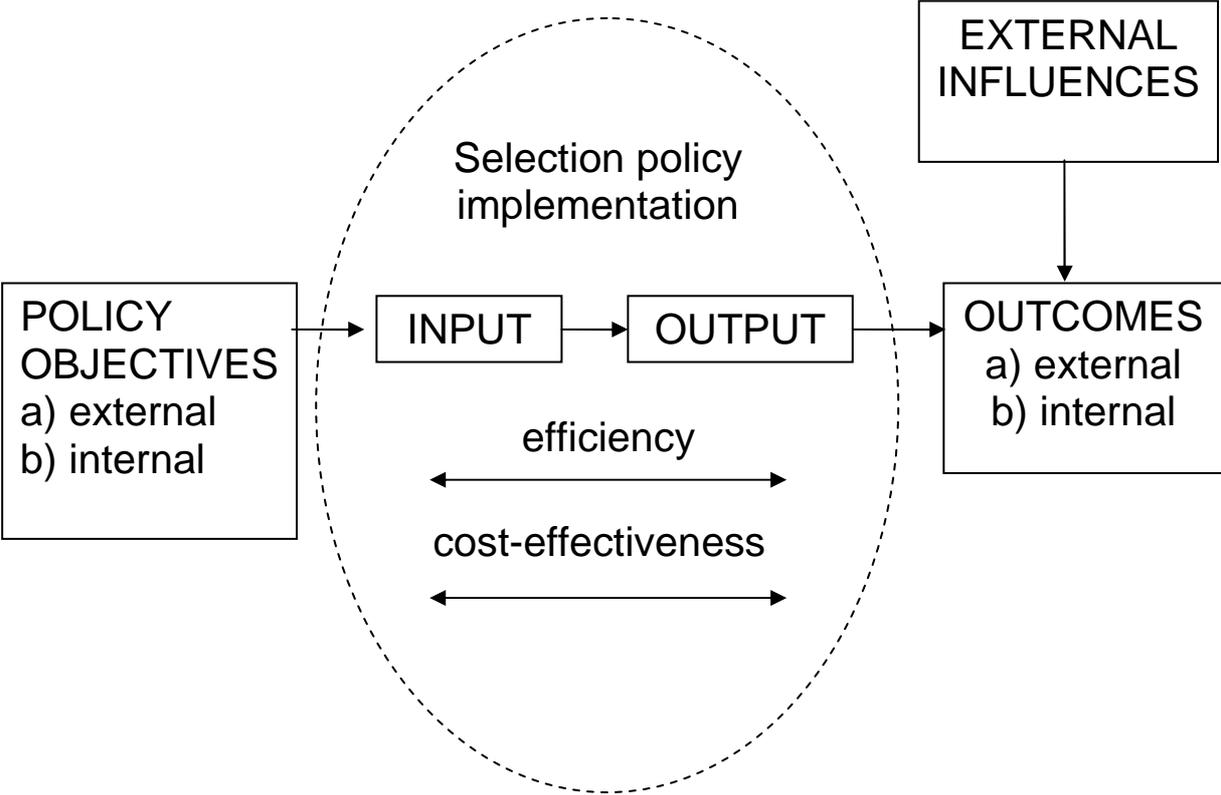
- Limited interviews with local municipalities provide some understanding of the attitude of local municipalities in the settlement of UN refugees and of the issues which are important to them.
- In reflecting on factors which contribute to integration success, their views shift from the integration potential of refugees to more practical matters like available housing, time needed to recognise foreign credentials, contacts with willing employers in the private and public sectors who could provide refugees with their first jobs, etc.
- From the view of local municipalities, the Introductory programme, mandatory since 2004, provides a welcome structure in the first two years of the refugees' lives – after their arrival in Norway.
- Interviews with local municipalities reveal that there is a wide range of external factors which contribute or hinder integration success, such as economic growth, unemployment levels, experience with settling refugees, the manner in which the settlement of UN refugees is organized locally, the personal network and eligibility of the local refugee consultant etc. This may affect both individuals and groups of UN refugees.
- Filling the knowledge gap of the critical factors for integration success in local municipalities will ensure that the resettlement and placement policy will be based on empirical experience and not assumptions about individuals or groups of UN refugees.
- There is also a knowledge gap regarding the integration careers of UN refugees from the viewpoint of their individual resources. For example, how have those viewed to have had high integration potential fared? How have those viewed to have had low integration potential fared? This question is also interesting from a group perspective; how have groups who were once "popular" or "unpopular" with local municipalities fared?
- The chapter also includes the views of UDI's partner in resettlement, the directorate of Diversity and Integration (IMDi) – which is in direct contact with the local municipalities where the UN refugees are placed. IMDi is most concerned about the quality of information received about the refugees before their arrival. To illustrate their point, IMDi says that they "can resettle any refugee" as long as they get the right information about the refugee before they arrive so that the needed arrangements and preparations can be made.
- UDI's response is that they need further specification from IMDi on what sort of information they require.
- To the researcher, this is a sign that the cooperation and dialogue between UDI and IMDi still needs to be further developed. The quality of information is dependent on the level of cooperation between IMDi and UDI in general and how "placement experience and competency" is channeled into the selection process in particular.

5 Challenges and further issues

In this chapter we will address the question of challenges and issues that need further clarification or research.

The following figure will provide a useful guideline for our discussion.

Figure 3
From policy objectives to societal outcomes



5.1 From policy objectives to societal outcomes

Policy objectives

For Norway, the *policy objectives* for the resettlement of UN refugees have remained stable. They are ranked in the following order:

- Firstly, there is an *external objective*: resettlement is an instrument to promote international protection as a durable solution for refugees. It is also a way of contributing towards international solidarity and burden sharing. The need for international protection is the selection criterion which is connected to this policy objective.
- Secondly, there is an *internal objective*: it is important that UN refugees settle well, not only for their own sakes but also to better aid political action domestically and abroad. Focus on the integration potential - of both individuals and groups - is connected to this policy objective.

The first objective of international protection is fundamental in Norwegian policy. Put differently, UN refugees with high integration potential are not selected on that basis alone; they also need to demonstrate a need for international protection and resettlement in a third country.

The implementation of resettlement policy includes **inputs** and **outputs**.

Inputs in this case are the two selection criteria - international protection and integration potential – which reflect the two main policy objectives for Norwegian resettlement of UN refugees.

Input includes *how* selection criteria are practiced.

This report has focused on the practice of integration potential as a selection criterion *over time*.

Input in this case includes also the *composition* of selection mission teams, their *total experience*, their *interview training*, the *conditions for their work*, *what they are expected to do*.

Input also includes the *personal resources of UN refugees*, as individuals and as groups, in terms of integration.

Output is the immediate result of the selection process: the selected refugees themselves.

The implementation of resettlement policy can be evaluated for its **cost effectiveness and efficiency**.

- Evaluation of cost effectiveness is not included in the scope of this report.
- The recommendations in this report can contribute towards greater efficiency in resettlement policy regarding integration potential.

Outcome

Following the double policy objectives, the outcome in resettlement policy can be both external and internal.

- The *external outcome* is how well Norway is able to contribute towards resettlement as an instrument to promote international protection and to contribute towards international solidarity and burden sharing.
- The *internal outcome* is how well UN refugees settle and to what extent they integrate successfully in Norway. This is the outcome which is in focus in this report.

Both outcomes are dependent not only on the practical implementation of Norwegian policy but also on *external influences*. An example of an external factor which may influence how well UN refugees resettle is the Introductory programme which became mandatory in 2004. Another example of an external factor is the decision to settle UN refugees in larger, more centrally located municipalities.

5.2 A central dilemma

The key question for all resettlement countries, given that global resettlement needs are currently larger than resettlement capacity, is who to resettle?

For the Norwegian authorities, the double policy objective of international protection and integration success has an inherent contradiction that results in the following dilemma:

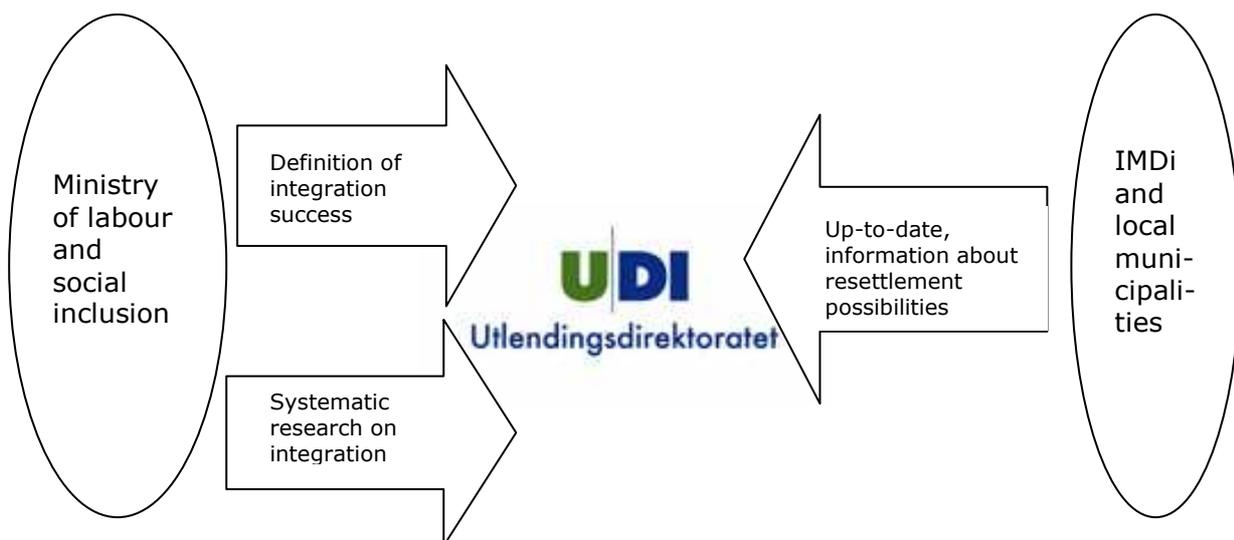
- The assessment of integration potential – of both individuals and groups - may result in “putting the lives of vulnerable refugees at risk when no other solutions are available.”^{143r}

By ranking international protection higher than integration potential, the Norwegian authorities are in a position to address this dilemma.

However, there are other challenges in resettlement policy implementation.

5.3 Challenges and choices in resettlement policy implementation

5.3.1 UDI is dependent on other actors



This figure sums up UDI’s dilemma. UDI is in charge of the selection of UN refugees. This report has touched on some problematic issues in UDI’s current system for assessing integration potential of both individuals and groups. UDI can deal with some of them on its own (see 3.3.4).

However, UDI is also dependent on other external actors.

On one hand, UDI needs clearer definitions of integration success from the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion. Systematic research on integration processes - of individuals and of groups - taking such measurable definitions of integration success is also needed¹⁴⁴. On the other hand, UDI needs up-to-date information about specific settlement possibilities in local municipalities. Such information must be channelled into the selection process more effectively than today.

143 Progress Report on Resettlement, Executive Committee of June 6, 2006, UNHCR.

144 Responsibility for research is gradually being handed over from the Ministry to UDI. This transition period should be over by 2009.

5.3.2 Comments on the latest guidelines for the selection of UN refugees from the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion (AID)

AID has recently (27 March 2007) sent new guidelines for the selection of UN refugees to UDI¹⁴⁵. We shall therefore also comment on these briefly here in this report.

The new guidelines from AID close the discussion on some issues e.g. integration potential at the individual level will no longer continue to be a selection criterion. No reason is given for this change in the new guidelines.

However, the guidelines also raise many new questions.

1. The guidelines state that more systematic emphasis will be put on the capacity of local municipalities to adjust their services to special needs of groups of refugees when deciding the composition of the quota. In addition, weight will be put on how the local municipalities evaluate the results from their settlement and integration efforts vis-à-vis various groups of UN refugees. Senior officials from AID explain that it is a misunderstanding to say that integration potential as a selection criterion at group level has been retained in the new guidelines. According to the Ministry, it is more correct to say that the group approach is a consideration when sub-groups in the following year's national quota are to be decided; it is in this sense, according to the Ministry, that integration potential will still be considered in the future.

2. The question is: what are the practical consequences of "considering" the integration results of groups of refugees in the composition of the following year's quota? This is not defined in the new guidelines. In practice, does this not mean that groups who are considered by local municipalities to be integrating well will continue to figure on the list? Does this not mean that integration potential at group level will be a de facto selection criterion (not when prospective UN refugees are being interviewed face-to-face, but in the composition of the national quota)? It is generally positive that local municipalities will be consulted; however, giving the local municipalities a larger say, in practical terms, also implies that integration potential at group level will be a de facto selection criterion.

3. The new shift raises other questions e.g. does this mean that Norway now no longer expects the UNHCR to present cases with high integration potential?

4. This shift in resettlement policy is not unproblematic for further reasons. For example, statistics from Statistics Norway show that Vietnamese refugees have become more independent economically over time; the Vietnamese were once a group which Norwegian authorities were "worried" about. This underlines the fact that length of residence is an important element in the integration process, probably more so than cultural background. Refugees who are "unpopular" with the local municipalities today could be "popular" tomorrow. The preferences of local municipalities for one group of UN refugees instead of another could be influenced by factors other than long-term integration success. For example, groups who remain for a long time at asylum transit centers might be "unpopular" with local municipalities for one reason or another. The new guidelines do not acknowledge that the preferences of local municipalities are not unproblematic.

5. The "flexibility" of UDI in meeting the annual quota in the three-year period is now specified and detailed; UDI's flexibility has therefore been reduced. When we study the Norwegian quota and the final numbers accepted for resettlement since 1992 (see table 1). In some three year periods, more refugees were accepted. In others, less. Partly, this can be explained by varying capacities in the UNHCR to present resettlement cases and in the local municipalities to accept UN refugees. As shown in table 1, between 1992-

¹⁴⁵ <https://www.udiregelverk.no/default.aspx?path={DBE5D169-7CBF-4AB1-8C8E-6B510046D1CE}>

2007, there has been a “deficit” between the number of places in the Norwegian quota and the number of UN refugees who were selected by 513. Even if we include the number of places which have been “converted” since 1992, ie. more than 195 places, we find that fewer UN refugees¹⁴⁶ have been selected by Norwegian authorities than there have been provisions for in the Norwegian quota. To a large degree, this can be explained by factors external to UDI. In the view of the researcher, the “flexibility” of UDI should therefore be increased, not reduced. The guidelines do not state the reason for reducing UDI’s flexibility.

6. Among the selection criteria for individual UN refugees mentioned is the “women’s perspective”. The guidelines state that at least 55 % of the total number of UN refugees must be female. As families are preferred by local municipalities (because of housing possibilities) to single persons, does this mean that Norway will now favor families with more daughters than sons? Such a conclusion sounds unreasonable; however it is unclear to the researcher what the practical consequences of this guideline will be.

7. When the local municipalities are to have a larger say in the composition of sub-groups in the national quota, this could leave some vulnerable refugee groups with fewer chances to resettle in Norway. The new guidelines delegate weighing the needs of the UNCHR and the wishes of the local municipalities to UDI and IMDi.

8. The assessment of integration potential is not an exact science regardless of a group and/or individual approach to integration potential. This is the case whether we are referring to the selection of UN refugees, or, as the new guidelines now specify, in the composition of the national quota. However, the new guidelines do not mention how its assessment can be improved. This report suggests that the assessment of integration potential of groups can be improved by the Ministry providing following steps:

- by providing a clear, measurable definition of integration success.
- by empirical knowledge about the integration process over time.

In addition, up-to-date information about specific settlement possibilities in local municipalities from IMDi must be channelled into the selection process more effectively. For its own part, UDI can train all new officials in selection procedures (courses in interview technique, cultural sensitivity etc), ensure better continuity of officials (for both dossier and selection missions) and make sure that there is more transparency regarding the selection process.

9. Interviews with local municipalities after the introduction of the guidelines reveal that IMDi’s task to suggest groups of refugees for consideration will not be easy e.g. refugees from X might be “popular” in Oslo, but not in another part of the country. Settlement and integration is a complex process and is dependent on many factors e.g. personal network, level of trauma, personal resources, the skills and experience of the local refugee consultant, the manner in which settlement is organised by the local municipality etc. Some of these factors are external to the refugee groups. The new guidelines reduce this complexity. The risk that Norwegian policy will continue to be based on popular assumptions and not empirical knowledge is high.

10. The new guidelines do not suggest any changes in the current partnership between UDI and IMDi in the selection process. This report has not focussed specially on the partnership between UDI and IMDi. From the limited data the project has collected in this area, the researcher is of the view that improving the partnership is critical to the final goal of “expeditious and good” placement in local municipalities and the successful integration of UN refugees. Resettlement policy and settlement policy are closely linked;

146 Over the 15 year period., the figure is 317 places.

the success of one affects the success of the other. This is an area where more detailed guidelines would have been useful. For example, selection missions abroad are popular internal tasks and therefore, not tasks which will be "given up" by choice. It is unfortunate that the latest guidelines are silent here.

11. IMDi's role is as a partner in the selection process is limited to its area of expertise and network (integration and contact with local municipalities). However, the scale of IMDi's role is not specified in the guidelines. As mentioned previously, in 2007, IMDi participated in two of four selection missions. Varying combinations of UDI/IMDi participation in the selection process also imply that the information different cohorts of UN refugees receive vary accordingly. The same applies to the information collected about the UN refugees which will be sent to the local municipalities prior to their arrival. The researcher is of the view that IMDi needs to participate in all selection missions, not only one or two per year. There is no doubt that as long as integration potential remains an issue – also when it is limited to groups and to the composition of the national quota ie. pre-selection – the partnership between UDI and IMDi needs to be defined more closely.

12. Resettlement from abroad and settlement in local municipalities are two processes which are closely linked. Research that is needed for better resettlement and settlement might have elements of both the selection process (which UDI is responsible for) and the integration process (which IMDi is responsible for). When allocating scarce resources for research and development, UDI might be unwilling to fund research which has elements of the integration process and IMDi might be unwilling to fund research which has elements of the selection process. The partnership between UDI and IMDi – also in the area of research and development - is an area where more detailed guidelines would have been useful.

13. In 2007, a total of 1362 refugees were presented by the UNHCR to Norway's selection missions. Of these, 229 were rejected after pre-screening and a further 97 were rejected after interviews. The selection mission reports do not differentiate between the reasons for rejections after pre-screening and after the interviews. However, interviews with experienced officials in UDI confirm that there are more refugees who are rejected because of UDI's estimation of the need for international protection after pre-screening than after the interviews. In other words, very few are rejected after the interview because of the lack of the need for international protection; they are rejected then because of the lack of integration potential.

Table 7
Refugees presented by UNHCR to Norway in 2007, rejections and reasons¹⁴⁷.

| First country asylum | Presented by UNHCR | Rejected after pre-screening | Rejected after interview | Reason for rejection after pre-screening and after interview |
|----------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Thailand | 562 | 134 | 23 | Not available |
| Zambia | 353 | 37 | 47 | Mostly lack of integration potential |
| Malaysia | 267 | 36 | 3 | " |
| India | 180 | 22 | 24 | " |

More refugees rejected because of the **lack of need for international protection** after pre-screening.

More refugees rejected because of the **lack of integration potential** after interview.

147 This table has been compiled by the researcher from reports by UDI following selection missions in 2007.

14. When integration potential at the individual level is no longer to be a selection criterion, questions can be raised if interviews with UN refugees are still necessary; the need for international protection of the large majority of UN refugees has earlier been examined effectively by Norwegian authorities at the pre-screening phase. To the researcher, this opens up the possibility of IMDi using the interviews to collect the information they need – and which they have been concerned about – for placement and settlement in local municipalities. This could be an improvement compared to past practice. However, since the guidelines leave this matter to UDI and IMDi, it is not certain that this will be the outcome of future selection missions abroad.

15. In short, the challenges which have been mentioned in this report refer to both an individual and a group approach to integration potential; they are still valid even when integration potential as a selection criterion at the individual level is removed and when the group approach is limited only to the composition of sub-groups in the national quota. In order to do a good job, UDI and IMDi still need a definition of integration success from the Ministry and both directorates still need research regarding integration processes of groups of UN refugees if Norwegian resettlement policy is to build on empirical knowledge and not popular assumptions. In addition, UDI and IMDi need to develop a new division of labour so that Norwegian resettlement and settlement policy will be more effective in the future.

5.4 Research: Moving forward

5.4.1 Challenges in research design

- We have seen how it is difficult to pinpoint exactly when integration potential as a selection criterion was introduced in Norway. This has implications for how UDI can effectively frame questions regarding the selection of UN refugees.
- For as long as the individual and group approach to integration potential has been part of refugee selection, the “profile” of any cohort of UN refugees has included refugees with both high and low integration potential. This presents challenges for the design of research seeking to improve understanding about how resettlement policy affects integration success.
- The organisation of refugee selection has changed over time. The main responsibility for refugee selection shifted between the Legal Division and the Integration Division of UDI over a period of many years. This has led to a difference in emphasis in the two selection criteria. This has implications for research which seeks to understand how selection policy affects integration success. Consequently, it will also affect research design.
- Team composition and total team experience has varied over time. Continuity in the selection process is also affected by the lack of written guidelines regarding integration potential and the lack of mandatory interview training of new team members. Again, variations in policy input affects how research questions can be formulated regarding refugee selection.
- Research has demonstrated how critical the time dimension is in the integration process. For example, according to Statistics Norway, refugees in Norway need about ten-fifteen years to reach the same level of employment as immigrants. Research on integration of refugees therefore needs to factor in the time dimension.

5.4.2 Suggestions for further research

- Since the time taken by UN refugees to become economically independent is lengthy, research on the critical factors which contribute or hinder their integration can factor in the time dimension by framing the research both back and forward in time. For example, taking the year of arrival as our point of departure, we could ask how the integration process has been for refugees who arrived twenty, fifteen, ten and five years ago. Since the organisation of UN refugee selection has alternated between the Legal Division and the Integration Division having the main responsibility, and since this might have influenced the selection of UN refugees, this needs to be taken into account in research design.
- Another interesting angle of research is a study of “successful” and “unsuccessful” UN refugees. What have been the contributing factors – both individual and external? Studying “successful” and “unsuccessful” refugees, irrespective of their country of origin, will probably give Norwegian authorities more useful insights than focusing country of origin as the point of departure.
- We could also track the integration process of refugees arriving today in the coming years. Selection missions could start collecting names of the ten refugees with the “highest” integration potential and the ten with the “lowest” integration potential after each selection exercise. Qualitative and quantitative studies could be done after 5, 10, 15 and 20 years. Such longitudinal studies could shed light

not only on the integration process over time, but also on the value of employing integration potential as a selection criterion.

- Differences between “dossier refugees” and refugees selected by missions abroad could also be charted in this manner. Have e.g “dossier refugees” integrated better than refugees selected by missions abroad or vice versa?
- Asylum seekers, on the other hand, are examined by UDI only in terms of their protection need, not in terms of their integration potential. This means that we have two groups of refugees in Norway; those who have been granted asylum after seeking asylum in Norway whose integration potential has not been assessed and those who have been resettled through the resettlement program and whose integration potential has been assessed. A longitudinal comparison of the integration of these two groups can shed light on the integration process over time in general, and the value of employing integration potential as a selection criterion in particular¹⁴⁸.
 - If both these categories from the same countries come to Norway at the same time, we could also control for these aspects ie date of arrival and country of origin.
- What are the external influences which are most critical for the integration process? Examples of external influences such as the strengths and challenges of local municipalities, pressure on local municipalities to settle not only UN refugees but also refugees in general, overall unemployment rate, overall economic growth, the implementation of a mandatory Introductory programme, the strategy to resettle UN refugees only in the larger and more centrally located municipalities (other than Oslo), etc.

148 From the recent study by Statistics Norway, we know that it has taken about 15 years for resettled Vietnamese and Iranian refugees to reach the same level of labour market participation (60%) as the other immigrants in Norway. However, as long as UN refugees cannot be identified as having been assessed as having “high” or “low” integration potential at the time of their selection, a certain amount of guesswork would still be involved.

Sammendrag (Summary in Norwegian)

Utlendingsdirektoratet (UDI) har bestilt en helhetlig vurdering av det norske programmet for uttak av overføringsflyktninger med vekt på integreringspotensial som uttakskriterium.

Hovedprosjektet startet den 1.9.2007 og ble avsluttet den 1.5.2008¹⁴⁹. Det tar utgangspunkt i data innsamlet i dette tidsrommet.

Denne rapporten har vi forsøkt å besvare følgende spørsmål:

- 1) Hvordan har integreringspotensial blitt brukt som uttakskriterium i uttaket av overføringsflyktninger til Norge?
- 2) Hvordan har organisasjonsendringer påvirket praksis og rutiner rundt uttakskriterier for overføringsflyktninger?
- 3) Er det noen problematiske utfordringer knyttet til integreringspotensial som uttakskriterium?
- 4) Hva er dilemmaer og problemstillinger som krever videre forskning?

1. Hvordan har integreringspotensial blitt brukt som uttakskriterium ved uttak av overføringsflyktninger til Norge?

Arbeids- og inkluderingsdepartementet har ansvaret for å fastsette kriterier for uttak av overføringsflyktninger.

Det har ikke vært mulig å spore opp skriftlige retningslinjer for vurderingen av integreringspotensial. Det er derfor vanskelig å datofeste når integreringspotensial ble innført som uttakskriterium.

Integreringspotensial nevnes for første gang i "kvotebrevet" fra departementet til UDI i 2003. Men flere dokumenter viser at integreringspotensial har vært praktisert som et uttakskriterium tidligere. Intervjuer med erfarne saksbehandlere bekrefter at flyktninger har fått avslag pga manglende integreringspotensial så tidlig som på 1980-tallet. Det er sannsynlig at integreringspotensial har vært et uttakskriterium helt siden Norge startet sitt program for overføringsflyktninger.

Når vi ikke kan datofeste innføringen av integreringspotensial som uttakskriterium, får dette konsekvenser for forskningsopplegg som ønsker å finne ut mer om hvordan "profilen" til overføringsflyktninger eventuelt har endret seg etter innføringen.

Hovedregelen i norsk uttaksprosess er at beslutninger tas i fellesskap av teamet som vurderer overføringsflyktningene. Dette reduserer individuell subjektivitet i uttaksprosessen. Uttakskriterier kan være objektive (eks. alder) eller subjektive (eks. motivasjon), men den endelige beslutningen er basert på skjønn (innenfor gjeldende lover, forskrifter, instruksjoner og retningslinjer). Skjønn, og ikke en kodifisert praksis, er grunnlaget ved uttak av overføringsflyktninger.

149 Et forprosjekt fra 1.6.2007-1.9.2007 resulterte i et notat til UDI med tittelen: "A comparative study of integration potential as an additional selection criterion for the resettlement of refugees", 1 September 2007, UDI.

Integreringspotensial som uttakskriterium i uttaksprosessen koker ned til nøkkelspørsmålet: Hvor sannsynlig er det at flyktningen skal klare å integrere seg i Norge?

Skjønnsvurderinger åpner for utfordringer som for eksempel ulik behandling og manglende åpenhet. Slike utfordringer kan begrenses ved skriftlige retningslinjer som er kjent for saksbehandlere og offentligheten.

Egnethet blir vurdert ved rekruttering av personer til uttakskommisjoner. De får likevel ingen obligatorisk opplæring før de settes i arbeid med uttak av overføringsflyktninger, for eksempel ved å få kurs i intervjueteknikk eller kulturforståelse. De lærer ved å arbeide med uttaket. Enkelte leser seg opp om landet, kulturen og lignende før de drar på en uttaksreise, andre ikke.

Den samlede erfaring og kompetanse i hver enkelt uttakskommisjon kan derfor variere. Sammensetting av team endrer seg fra gang til gang. Disse faktorer kan påvirke hvordan en kommisjon velger ut "sine" overføringsflyktninger.

Uttakskommisjoner intervjuer tre eller fire flyktninger (sammen med deres familier) per dag. Intervjuene varer ca én til to timer. Hvis nødvendig, kan mer tid bli brukt. Under intervjuene blir informasjon fra UNHCR bekreftet, ny informasjon samlet inn og integreringspotensial vurdert. UNHCR presenterer som regel ca 20 % flere flyktninger enn det er plass til i kvoten. Uttakskommisjoners arbeid varer ofte et par uker.

Informasjon samlet inn ved en kommisjonsreise er også saksforberedende for bosettingsarbeidet. "Bosettingskompetansen" til uttakskommisjoner varierer med hvordan kommisjoner er sammensatt. Dette henger sammen med organisering (mellom juridisk avdeling og integreringsavdeling/UDI og IMDi) av uttaksprosessen.

2. Hvordan har organisasjonsendringer påvirket praksis og rutiner rundt uttakskriterier for overføringsflyktninger?

Beskyttelsesbehov er det viktigste uttakskriterium. Integreringspotensial er også et viktig uttakskriterium. Men *metoden* for praktisering av uttakskriteriene har endret seg over tid. Endringene i vektlegging mellom de to kriteriene har falt sammen med organisasjonsendringer: Ansvar for å velge ut flyktninger har vekslet mellom juridisk avdeling og integreringsavdelingen i Utlendingsdirektoratet¹⁵⁰.

Litt forenklet kan man si at når juridisk avdeling har hatt hovedansvaret, har integreringseksperisen blitt innkalt i saker når det har vært tvil om integreringspotensialet.

Det motsatte har vært tilfelle når integreringsavdelingen har hatt hovedansvaret: Da blir juridisk ekspertise innkalt i saker der det har vært tvil om beskyttelsesbehovet.

Slike organisasjonsendringer kan også påvirke "profilen" til overføringsflyktninger, og dermed ha konsekvenser for forskningsopplegg.

Norske myndigheter bruker både en individuell og en gruppevis tilnærming til integreringspotensial. Dette fører til resultater der den endelige listen av overføringsflyktninger i én "gruppe" er sammensatt av både flyktninger som individuelt sett har høyt integreringspotensial og flyktninger som individuelt sett har lavt integreringspotensial.

¹⁵⁰ Siden 1.1.2006, har UDI hatt hovedansvaret. IMDi blir trukket inn når det er behov for integreringseksperise.

“Profilene” til overføringsflyktingene er derfor ikke ensartede. Dette har igjen konsekvenser for forskningsopplegg.

Utfordringer knyttet til integreringspotensial som uttakskriterium på både individ- og gruppenivå er diskutert i denne rapporten.

3. Er det noen problematiske utfordringer knyttet til integreringspotensial som uttakskriterium?

Begrepet “integreringspotensial” forutsetter en definisjon av integreringssuksess – uansett om man bruker en individuell eller gruppevis tilnærming til integreringspotensial. I rapporten ser vi derfor nærmere på hvordan norske myndigheter definerer og måler integreringssuksess.

Norsk integreringspolitikk har 17 inkluderingsmål. I de siste tre år har statusrapporter om indikatorer for disse mål blitt publisert som vedlegg til statsbudsjettet. Dette er et godt utgangspunkt for operasjonalisering av integreringspotensial som uttakskriterium.

Selve utvalget av inkluderingsmål, og måten disse er formulert på, reiser imidlertid noen spørsmål. For eksempel:

- Hva er de avgjørende barrierer for inkludering på de ulike politiske områder? Dette er nyttig å vite for kontinuerlig oppfølging av feltet.
- Integrering er en prosess med mange fasetter. Enkelte mål tar lengre tid å oppnå enn andre. Hva er tidsdimensjonen for de ulike inkluderingsmål?
- Det er ikke tydelig om nivået for mål av innvandrernes inkludering på ulike politiske områder er det samme som for befolkningen forøvrig.
- Integrering tar lang tid; den tar gjerne flere generasjoner. Inkluderingsmål for én generasjon vil ikke passe som mål for en annen generasjon. Dette er uklart i inkluderingsmålene.

Norske inkluderingsmål fokuserer først og fremst på samfunnsdeltakelse og inkludering. Et eksempel fra New Zealand viser hvordan “social cohesion” som mål omfatter mye mer enn innvandrernes bosetting; det dekker også vertssamfunnet og betingelsene for “social cohesion” i samfunnet som helhet. Den underliggende idé i modellen fra New Zealand er tanken om at integrering er en toveis prosess, og at innvandring som fenomen forandrer samfunn. I tillegg til samfunnsdeltakelse og inkludering omfatter New Zealands politikk også tilhørighet, anerkjennelse og legitimitet.

Denne rapporten gjennomgår også hva vi vet om integreringsprosessen for overføringsflyktinger i Norge. Det er lite forskning på dette tema. Forskning som er tilgjengelig, har som regel sett på overføringsflyktinger noen få år etter ankomst; noen år for “tidlig” hvis vi skal legge til grunn SSBs funn om tiden overføringsflyktinger trenger for å delta i arbeidsmarkedet. Ellers er overføringsflyktinger ikke blitt trukket ut som gruppe, men som regel inkludert i forskning om flyktinger generelt eller innvandrerbefolkningen som helhet. Blant annet vet vi at:

- Botid i Norge er den viktigste faktor som øker flyktingenes sjanser for yrkesdeltakelse. Etter 10-15 år har flyktinger samme nivå for yrkesdeltakelse som innvandrere (60%).

- Hos ti innvandrergupper som er blitt undersøkt, øker yrkesdeltakelsen fra 48 % til 59 % etter 4-6 års botid i landet. Etter 11-15 år, går yrkesdeltakelsen opp igjen noen hakk for såkalte ikke-vestlige innvandrere. Mange av disse er flyktninger.

- Disse funn tilsvarer lignende funn fra utlandet.

Begrensede intervjuer med kommuner gir oss litt innsikt i kommunenes holdning til bosettingsarbeidet og til problemstillingene som de er opptatt av.

- Når de blir spurt om avgjørende suksesskriterier for integrering, er de mindre opptatt av flyktingenes integreringspotensial enn av praktiske problemstillinger som tilgjengelige boliger, tid som kreves for å få godkjent utenlandske diplomer, relasjoner til arbeidsgivere i både privat og offentlig sektor, som kan gi flyktingene deres første jobberfaring, etc.

- Slik kommunene ser det, gir introduksjonsprogrammet (obligatorisk siden 2004) en kjærkommen struktur for flyktingenes første to år i Norge.

- Kommunene viser til en rekke eksterne faktorer som bidrar til, eller hindrer, integrering f. eks. økonomisk vekst, arbeidsledighet, erfaring med bosettingsarbeid etc.

Integrering innebærer en kombinasjon av mange faktorer; flyktingenes individuelle ressurser eller flyktinggruppens kulturelle/språklige/religiøse bakgrunn er én av disse. Enkelte forslag gis på slutten av rapporten mht følgende utfordringer:

- Hvordan norske myndigheter best kan bruke den korte tiden de har til rådighet til intervju med overføringsflyktingene.

- Gitt at vurdering av integreringspotensial ikke er en eksakt vitenskap, hvordan kan norske myndigheter forbedre vurderingsprosessen?

4. Hva er dilemmaer og problemstillinger som krever videre forskning?

Det er viktig å fylle kunnskapshull om avgjørende faktorer for integreringssuksess i kommunene. Dette vil bidra til at norsk uttakspraksis i økende grad vil basere seg på empirisk kunnskap og mindre på antagelser om integrering – om individer eller grupper av overføringsflyktinger.

Rapporten kommer med noen forslag til temaer for videre forskning. For eksempel er det kunnskapshull om "integreringskarrierene" til den enkelte flykting, sett ut fra deres individuelle ressurser. For eksempel, hvordan går det/har det gått med flyktinger med høyt integreringspotensial? Og hvordan går det/har det gått med flyktinger med lavt integreringspotensial? Spørsmålet er også interessant fra et gruppeperspektiv: hvordan har det gått med grupper som en gang var oppfattet som "populære" eller "upopulære" av kommunene?

Kunnskap om "vellykkede flyktinger" og "mislykkede flyktinger" er også viktig for myndighetene. Hva er kjennetegn ved deres individuelle ressurser og bo- og familiesituasjoner i kommunene? Det er antakelig mer interessant for myndighetene å studere "vellykkede flyktinger" og "mislykkede flyktinger" uavhengig av

land/kulturbakgrunn, enn å begrense forståelsen av integreringsprosessen til land/kulturbakgrunn¹⁵¹.

“Rask og god bosetting” i kommunene er et mål for norske myndigheter. Det er på denne måten overføringsflyktningene kan leve et aktivt liv i trygge omgivelser. Utfordringen for norske myndigheter er å sikre et best mulig treff – fra et integreringsperspektiv- mellom overføringsflyktningene og kommunene.

UDIs partner i bosettingsarbeid er Integrerings- og Mangfoldsdirektoratet (IMDi). IMDi er i direkte kontakt med bosettingskommunene. IMDi er mest opptatt av kvaliteten på innsamlet informasjon om flyktningene før deres ankomst. Dette brukes i bosettingsforberedelsene.

UDIs respons er å etterspørre detaljer som savnes omkring informasjonen. Det kan synes som om samarbeid og dialog mellom UDI og IMDi kan videreutvikles.

- o Kvaliteten av informasjon er avhengig av samarbeidet mellom IMDi og UDI generelt, og hvor godt “bosettingskompetansen” er kanalisert inn i uttaksprosessen spesifikt.

Det norske programmet for overføringsflyktninger har to mål: Å bidra til internasjonal beskyttelse, og å øke mulighetene for integreringssuksess for de flyktninger som kommer til Norge. Dette dobbelte målet kan være motsetningsfullt fordi integreringspotensial som uttakskriterium kan, i siste instans, innebære at livet til enkelte flyktninger eller grupper av flyktninger blir enda mer vanskelig når ingen andre løsninger finnes.

Kort oppsummert er en stor del av UDIs muligheter til å forbedre uttaket av overføringsflyktninger med vekt på integreringspotensial – på både individ- og gruppenivå – avhengig av samspillet med andre aktører. På den ene siden er UDI avhengig av en klar definisjon på integreringssuksess og forskning om integreringsprosesser. På den andre siden er UDI avhengig av informasjon om kommunenes tilbud og erfaringer med bosetting- og integreringsarbeid. UDI kan imidlertid sørge for bedre kontinuitet av uttaksteamene, bedre obligatorisk opplæring og mer åpenhet om retningslinjene.

5. Nye retningslinjer for overføringsarbeid: noen kommentarer

Departementet (AID) har nylig (27.03.2008) sendt ut nye retningslinjer om uttakskriterier til direktoratet. Vi har derfor også valgt å komme med noen få kommentarer om dette her.

De nye retningslinjene gir svar på enkelte spørsmål, f eks fastslås det at integreringspotensial ikke lenger skal være et uttakskriterium på *individnivå*. Det gis ingen begrunnelse for denne endringen. Men de nye retningslinjene reiser også flere spørsmål.

1. Det fastslås at det skal legges større vekt på kommunenes kapasitet til å tilpasse tjenestene til *flyktninggruppernes* særlige behov, og kommunenes vurdering av resultatet for bosettings- og integreringsarbeidet med ulike *flyktninggrupper*¹⁵². Erfarne saksbehandlere fra AID forklarer at å si at integreringspotensial på gruppenivå skal forbli et uttakskriterium er å gå for langt. I følge AID legger de nye retningslinjene opp til at “evaluering av bosettingserfaringer mer systematisk skal bygges inn i prosessen som

152 <https://www.udiregelverk.no/default.aspx?path={DBE5D169-7CBF-4AB1-8C8E-6B510046D1CE}>

leder frem til beslutningen om kvotens sammensetning". Det er derfor mer riktig å si, i følge AID, at *kriterier på gruppenivå* er noe man skal *ta hensyn til* når man avgjør om det skal gis underkvoter til bestemte flyktning-/nasjonsgrupper, f eks når man året i forveien avgjør om man skal sette av underkvoter til flyktninger fra "X" eller "Y".

2. Spørsmålet er: hva blir de praktiske konsekvensene av "å ta hensyn" til integreringsresultatene til flyktninggruppene når neste års flyktningkvote skal settes sammen? Dette defineres ikke i de nye retningslinjene. Betyr ikke det at gruppene som anses som bedre integrert vil bli foreslått å stå også på neste års kvote? Betyr ikke dette at integreringspotensial på gruppenivå vil være et de facto uttakskriterium (riktignok ikke under intervjuene, men i sammensettingen av nasjonalkvoten)? Generelt er det positivt at kommunene vil bli hørt i større grad, men dette innebærer også at integreringspotensial på gruppenivå vil være et de facto uttakskriterium.

3. Den nye endringen reiser andre spørsmål, f eks betyr dette at Norge skal slutte å be UNHCR å presentere saker med høyt integreringspotensial?

4. Også av andre grunner er endringen problematisk. For eksempel, tall fra SSB viser at vietnamesere er blitt mer økonomisk selvstendige over tid; vietnamesere var en gruppe myndighetene en gang var "bekymret" for. Dette understreker at botid, mer enn kulturbakgrunn, er en viktig integreringsfremmende faktor; flyktninger som er "upopulære" hos kommunene i dag, kan bli "populære" senere. Kommunenes preferanser kan bli preget av *andre* forhold enn langsiktige integreringsresultater, f eks hvilke grupper som blir "sittende" på mottak. De nye retningslinjene erkjenner ikke at kommunenes preferanser ikke er uproblematisk.

5. I de nye retningslinjene er UDIs fleksibilitet med hensyn til den tre-årige flyktningkvoten nå spesifisert og detaljert. UDIs fleksibilitet kan derfor sies til å ha blitt redusert. Når vi ser nærmere på den norske kvoten og de endelige tall på overføringsflyktninger som er blitt tatt ut siden 1992 (se tabell 1), ser vi at i noen tre-års perioder er flere flyktninger blitt tatt ut enn kvoten tilsier, mens i andre perioder er færre blitt tatt ut. Delvis kan dette forklares gjennom ulik kapasitet hos UNHCR og/eller hos kommunene. Med andre ord, i stor grad kan vi finne eksterne forklaringer for dette. Slik vi ser det, burde UDIs fleksibilitet økes, ikke reduseres. De nye retningslinjene gir ingen begrunnelse for å redusere UDIs fleksibilitet.

6. Blant de individuelle uttakskriterier som nevnes er "kvinneperspektivet". De nye retningslinjene fastslår at minst 55 % av flyktningene som blir tatt ut må være kvinner. Som kjent pleier kommunene å foretrekke familier fremfor enslige (bl a på grunn av tilgjengelig boligmasse). Betyr de nye reglene at Norge nå vil favorisere familier med døtre fremfor sønner? En slik konklusjon virker urimelig, men det er uklart hvordan de nye retningslinjene skal tolkes i praksis.

7. Når kommunene skal ha mer å si i sammensettingen av sub-kvoter i den nasjonale kvoten, kan dette føre til at enkelte sårbare flyktninggrupper vil få færre sjanser til gjenbosetting i Norge. De nye retningslinjene delegerer avveiningen mellom UNHCRs behov og kommunenes preferanser til UDI og IMDi.

8. Målingen av integreringspotensial er ingen eksakt vitenskap, uansett om man anvender et gruppe- eller individperspektiv – som uttakskriterium eller som "hensyn" som skal tas med i sammensettingen av nye kvoter. De nye retningslinjene sier ingen ting om hvordan denne vurderingen kan forbedres. Denne rapport foreslår at vurderingen kan forbedres gjennom en klar, målbar definisjon av integreringssuksess fra departementet. I tillegg trenges det empirisk kunnskap om integreringsprosessen over tid. Oppdatert informasjon fra IMDi om bosettingsmuligheter i kommunene må også kanaliseres inn i uttaksprosessen på en systematisk og effektiv måte. UDI, på sin side, kan sørge for obligatorisk opplæring (i f eks intervjuteknikk, kulturforståelse etc) av alle

saksbehandlere (for både dossier- og kommisjonssaker), bedre kontinuitet blant saksbehandlere, og mer åpenhet med hensyn til uttaksprosessen.

9. Intervjuer med kommuner etter introduksjon av de nye retningslinjene viser at IMDi oppgave med å foreslå flyktninggrupper som det skal "tas hensyn til" i sammensettingen av kvoten ikke kommer til å være uproblematisk. Mens flyktninger fra X kan være lette å integrere i én kommune, kan en annen kommune slite med den samme gruppen. Bosetting og integrering er en kompleks prosess som er avhengig av mange faktorer, f.eks. personlige nettverk, traumer, personlige ressurser, flyktningkonsulentens kompetanse og erfaring, måten flyktningarbeidet organiseres på i kommunen etc. De nye retningslinjene reduserer denne kompleksiteten. Risikoen for at norsk politikk vil være basert på antakelser, og ikke empirisk kunnskap, er fortsatt stor.

10. De nye retningslinjene forslår ingen endringer i samarbeidet mellom UDI og IMDi i uttaksprosessen. Denne rapport har ikke satt søkelys spesielt på forholdet mellom UDI og IMDi. Fra prosjektets begrensede data på dette feltet mener vi å kunne anta at en forbedring av samarbeidet er en viktig nøkkel til det endelige målet om "rask og god" bosetting i kommunene og flyktningenes integrering. Dette er et område hvor mer detaljerte retningslinjer fra departementet ville vært nyttige, bl.a. fordi arbeid i uttakskommisjoner er en ettertraktet oppgave som folk ikke vil gi fra seg uten videre. Det er derfor synd at de nye retningslinjene er tause her.

11. IMDi's rolle som partner i uttaksprosessen i de nye retningslinjene er begrenset til integrering og kontakt med kommunene; omfanget av IMDi's rolle er ikke videre spesifisert. Som nevnt tidligere, deltok IMDi i to av fire uttakskommisjoner i 2007. Ulike kombinasjoner av UDI/IMDi deltakelse i uttaksprosessen har konsekvenser for informasjon om Norge som ulike grupper av overføringsflyktninger får. Det samme gjelder informasjon som er samlet inn om overføringsflyktninger og som er videresendt til kommunene før ankomst. Vi mener at det vil være en fordel om IMDi deltok på alle uttakskommisjoner, ikke bare en eller to per år. Det er ingen tvil om at så lenge integreringspotensial er et relevant tema – også når dette begrenses til grupper og til sammensettingen av nasjonalkvoten – må forholdet mellom UDI og IMDi berøres og konkretiseres.

12. For eksempel, gjenbosetting fra utlandet og bosetting i kommunene er to prosesser som henger sammen. Forskning som er viktig for bedre gjenbosetting og bosetting kan ha elementer av både uttaksprosessen (som UDI er ansvarlig for) og integreringsprosessen (som IMDi er ansvarlig for). I fordelingen av begrensede forskningsmidler kan f.eks. UDI være uvillig til å finansiere forskning som har elementer av integrering og IMDi kan være uvillig til å finansiere forskning som har elementer av uttaksprosessen. Forholdet mellom UDI og IMDi er derfor et område hvor mer detaljerte retningslinjer vil være nyttige.

13. I 2007 ble 1362 flyktninger presentert av UNHCR til norske uttakskommisjoner. Av disse ble 229 avslått etter pre-screening og enn videre 97 avslått etter intervjuene. Intervjuer med erfarne saksbehandlere i UDI bekrefter at flere er avslått på grunn av mangel på beskyttelsesbehov etter pre-screening enn etter intervjuene. Sagt på en annen måte, veldig få flyktninger får avslag etter intervjuene på grunn av mangel på beskyttelsesbehov. De blir avslått da på grunn av mangel på integreringspotensial.

Flyktninger presentert av UNHCR til Norge i 2007, avslag og begrunnelser.

| Første asylland | Presentert av UNHCR | Avslått etter pre-screening | Avslått etter intervju | Begrunnelse for de fleste avslag i følge kommisjonsrapportene |
|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|---|
| Thailand | 562 | 134 | 23 | Ikke tilgjengelig |
| Zambia | 353 | 37 | 47 | Stort sett på grunn av mangel på integreringspotensial |
| Malaysia | 267 | 36 | 3 | " |
| India | 180 | 22 | 24 | " |

De fleste flyktninger avslått etter pre-screening på grunn av **mangel på beskyttelsesbehov.**

De fleste flyktninger avslått etter intervju på grunn av **mangel på integreringspotensial.**

14. Når integreringspotensial på individnivå ikke lenger skal være et uttakskriterium, er spørsmålet om intervju med flyktninger fortsatt er nødvendig. Vurdering av beskyttelsesbehov for de aller fleste flyktninger har tidligere blitt effektivt håndtert av norske myndigheter i pre-screeningsfasen. Slik vi ser det, åpner denne situasjonen mulighet for IMDi til å bruke intervjuer til å samle inn informasjon som de trenger – og som de har reist spørsmål ved – for bosetting i kommunene. Dette kan være en forbedring fra tidligere praksis. Men siden de nye retningslinjene overlater slike spørsmål til UDI og IMDi, er det ikke sikkert at dette vil være modellen for fremtidige uttakskommisjoner.

15. Kort sagt, utfordringene som er blitt behandlet i denne rapporten refererer til både en individuell og gruppetilnærming til integreringspotensial; de er fortsatt gyldige selv om integreringspotensial som uttakskriterium på individnivå er avsluttet og gruppetilnærmingen begrenses til å være et hensyn i sammensettingen av flyktningekvoten. For å gjøre en god jobb trenger UDI og IMDi en definisjon av integreringssuksess fra departementet. I tillegg trenger begge direktoratene forskning om integreringsprosessene til grupper av overføringsflyktninger. På denne måten kan norsk politikk overfor overføringsflyktninger bygge på empirisk kunnskap og ikke ubegrunnede antakelser. I tillegg trenger UDI og IMDi å utvikle en annen arbeidsfordeling for at norsk gjenbosetting og bosettingspolitikk skal være mer effektiv i fremtiden.

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1. From the Canadian Manual for Overseas Selection and Processing of Convention Refugees Abroad Class and Members of the Humanitarian-protected Persons Abroad Classes (OP5)¹⁵³

13.12 Assessing ability to successfully establish - General guidelines

When reviewing the applicant's ability to establish, the officer is assessing the applicant and the applicant's family unit, including the family and the *de facto* members, as a whole. The factors to consider relate to the family as a unit and not just to an individual. The factors themselves are also not to be taken individually. A lack in one area is not enough to warrant a negative determination.

Example: There may be real reasons to believe a person will be unable to learn to communicate in English or French. If the person has demonstrated, however, that knowledge of language will not prevent general integration and successful establishment, the assessment of language skills will not play the determining role in the decision. On the other hand, it will be difficult to determine if the person will be able to provide for themselves within a reasonable time period (three to five years) if the person:

Example: has no work experience;

Example: has shown little ability to learn another language; and

Example: is unlikely to be residing with others who can communicate.

When making a decision about whether a person's experiences, skills, education and connections to Canada are substantial enough to warrant a positive determination on ability to establish, officers will ask themselves several questions and will review the statements made at the interview on the IMM 0008 and any documents submitted by the applicant.

13.13. Guidelines for assessing factors

Assessing qualities that assist in integration

When assessing refugees, any personal characteristics that point to a person's ability to adapt to Canada are taken into consideration. Officers may look at how applicants have managed to maintain themselves or the family during the period of time they have been in a refugee-like situation. How a person has been able to manage may demonstrate initiative, resourcefulness, ingenuity, perseverance or other characteristics that would all assist in integration. Elements to consider include:

- applicant has maintained family's cohesiveness during several years in a refugee camp context;
- applicant has been able to mentor younger family members while in a refugee context;
- applicant has adapted to life in the country of refuge or in a camp;
- applicant demonstrates continuous learning skills through knowledge of the country of refuge; and
- applicant has used previous skills to help themselves or others while displaced.

On the other hand, it may become obvious through an interview that a person is unlikely to be able to adapt to a new country. This inability may be apparent where a young person in their 20s or 30s has neither tried to acquire any new skills nor shown any motivation to better their own conditions or those of the persons around them.

¹⁵³ <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/manuals/op/op05e.pdf>

Assessing the presence of relatives or a sponsor in the community of resettlement

There are considerable benefits derived through the presence and support of cousins, siblings, aunts and uncles to one's personal well-being, which in turn facilitate successful establishment.

These beneficial relationships may be the only means for an older person, whose only potential for establishment is based on other family members' ability to establish, to be considered for a visa. Please refer to the definition of family member in Section 6.22. The notion of relatives is meant to be fairly broad but not so broad as to include relatives of acquaintance such as a close friend of the family called "Uncle." It is meant to convey the notion of "blood relationship" of the principal applicant or the blood relations of the spouse or commonlaw partner. It is not enough that a person has relatives in Canada. The relations must be in the expected community of resettlement since it is the physical presence of family that will assist in integrating. Relatives include the applicant's own relatives or a spouse or common-law partner's relatives, such as:

- parents;
- siblings;
- aunts;
- uncles;
- cousins.

Refugees may not have documentation to prove the presence of family. Questioning the refugee may help the officer determine whether the family connection is substantial enough to actually be beneficial to the applicant's integration. Some elements to consider include:

- What does the applicant know about their family in Canada?
- What kind of assistance does the applicant expect from their family in Canada?
- Have the relatives in Canada been in contact with the refugee?

An inability to respond to simple questions about family members' or relatives' whereabouts, ages, events such as deaths, marriages or birth of sibling, parents, grandchildren may raise questions about credibility or may mean the relationships with family are so distant as to be of little value in assisting the applicant with integration.

Assessing the ability to learn to communicate in English or French

It is not necessary that an applicant speak English or French in order to qualify for resettlement in Canada. The ability to communicate in either French or English does, however, point to qualities that will assist in integration, since language skills are directly tied to a person's potential for employment in Canada. Although there are no objective tools an officer can use to measure linguistic ability in a short interview, there are some basic factors that can point to linguistic ability. These factors include:

- applicant is literate in their own language;
- applicant has taught a language in the past or is teaching children in the community about their native language (teaching literacy skills);
- applicant has some knowledge of one of the official languages of Canada;
- applicant is fluent in more than one language;
- applicant has acquired a working knowledge of the language used in the refugee camp or country of refuge;
- applicant has acted or acts as interpreter for others;
- applicant will be residing with school-age children;
- applicant will be residing with persons who do speak or who have the ability to learn to speak English or French.

Assessing the potential for employment based on education, work experience and skills

The officer cannot expect all refugees to have the same qualifications as independent applicants, although some will. Neither is it necessary for an applicant to have a certain level of education or work experience. Persons with manual skills and low education can and do find employment and adapt to life in Canada, in some instances, more readily

than applicants who have higher education who may have difficulty getting their professional qualifications recognized. Applicants need not prove that they can work in their former occupations. In fact, if they belong to a profession or trade that is regulated provincially or federally, it is virtually impossible for them to prove they will be able to continue in their previous occupation before arrival in Canada.

When assessing the applicant's flexibility in finding employment, the officer should consider the type of employment that they are most likely to find. The officer must determine whether the type of employment the applicant is likely to find, when combined with other family members' contributions, will provide the financial means necessary to support the family. It is also important to consider the amount of debt with which the family will begin life in Canada. For example, a large family may arrive in Canada with a transportation loan that is several thousand dollars. The amount of the transportation loan needed by the family could have a significant bearing on whether the family will be able to repay the loan. Challenges with repaying a large loan could have an impact on the applicant's ability to successfully establish themselves. Consideration can be given to requesting a contribution in extreme situations where it appears that the family will not be able to repay the loan (restricted to Joint Assistance Sponsorship cases). For more detailed procedures about repaying loans, please refer to OP 17, Section 13, Procedure: Transportation Loan. Some factors to consider when assessing potential for employment include:

- applicant has work experience, formal or informal, that points to adaptability; applicant has undertaken to provide a service to camp members such as sewing, cooking, hairdressing, building furniture or structures, child care, cleaning, nursing or other types of services in return for other goods and services;
- applicant is currently a student or is working in the country of refuge (or source country);
- applicant worked or attended an educational institution in the past, before the refugee-like situation occurred;
- applicant has acquired new skills while in a camp context such as organizing ad hoc events, committees or groups that better the conditions of camp members that point to adaptability;
- applicant has undertaken to teach others a new skill;
- applicant is young enough to attend school as a matter of course in Canada for a few years (i.e., under 16);
- applicant has several family members, some of whom are still of school age or who are young adults, who will be able to contribute in the long term to the family's economic well-being; and
- applicant continued to practice previous skills while in a refugee camp (for example, doctor providing medical care; hairdresser providing hair cuts and styling; mason providing masonry services).

Appendix 2. UNHCR's framework for planning refugee integration programs¹⁵⁴

| Conditions in refugee producing countries | Conditions characterising experiences in countries of origin and refuge | Possible emotional consequences | Possible personal and social consequences |
|--|---|---|--|
| <p>Economic/structural</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • economic, social service and essential physical infrastructure broken down • inequitable distribution of Resources • poor economic growth/structural poverty | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • deprivation of food, shelter, employment, health care • unsanitary/ harsh conditions • loss of livelihood • no/disrupted education. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • depression • helplessness • future orientation impaired • identity/ sense of meaning and purpose undermined | <p>social and economic dependency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • loss of control • poor health • education/ employment skills impaired. |
| <p>Political</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • poorly developed systems for maintenance of governance, civil order and rule of law • fragile political systems; often characterised by corruption • abuse of political processes, infrastructure and government authority • lack of transparency and fairness in political processes. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • violence, human rights violations • climate of fear and chronic insecurity • loss of freedom of speech, movement or association • separation from/loss of family members • detention and torture • breakdown of political process • loss of state protection. | <p>fear, anxiety, grief, depression, guilt and shame</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • basic assumptions of human existence shattered • capacity for intimacy impaired | <p>lack/loss of family support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • changed family relationships • loss of trust • personal boundaries invaded • lack of privacy • impaired attachments/ relationships. |
| <p>Socio-cultural</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ethnic, racial, cultural, clan, gender or religious tensions • poor social cohesion • systematic oppression and discrimination • undermining/destruction of cultural and religious | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • social exclusion • disrupted attachments to community, cultural, religious and social and economic institutions and systems • undermining of religious, racial and cultural integrity | <p>identity undermined</p> | <p>loss of a sense of place and belonging</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cultural, racial or religious integrity undermined • lack/loss of social and community support and connections. |

¹⁵⁴ Refugee Resettlement: An International Handbook to Guide Reception and Integration, September 2002

| | | | |
|---------------------------|--|--|--|
| systems and institutions. | and identification • forced displacement. | | |
|---------------------------|--|--|--|

Appendix 3 UNHCR: The experience of integration¹⁵⁵

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Potential sources of stress in the integration environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ongoing danger in country-of-origin • continuing separation from family members • lack of understanding/hostility on the part of government officials • injustices • minority status in a dominant culture • limited community support networks • prejudice and hostility on grounds of ethnicity, race, religion • limited access to cultural and religious institutions • poor social status • gender role and status adjustment • intergenerational adjustment • unemployment • underemployment • difficulties in accessing education and health care • insecure housing • new and unfamiliar environment • lack of proficiency in the language of the receiving society | <p>Possible personal and emotional consequences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fear and anxiety • loss of trust • grief • lack of family support • guilt • loss of a sense of belonging • cultural, racial or religious integrity undermined • identity undermined • lack/loss of social support • family conflict and tension • fear about the future and of not coping • altered capacity to plan the future • social and economic dependency • poor health |
|---|---|

¹⁵⁵ <http://www.unhcr.org/protect/PROTECTION/3d985c8d6.pdf>

Appendix 4. The new guidelines from AID

The Norwegian Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion

The Directorate of Immigration
P.b.8108 Dep.
0032 Oslo

The Directorate of Integration and Diversity
P.b.8059 Dep.
0031 Oslo

Date
March 27, 2008

Guidelines related to the resettlement of refugees in Norway.

According to the Immigration Act, section 22 the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI) makes decisions concerning resettlement of refugees according to guidelines laid down by authority. The Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion (AID) is the author of these guidelines. These guidelines also pertain to the wider activities related to resettlement of refugees, such as allocation of the annual quotas in cooperation with other government authorities, with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and other organizations. It is presumed that professional advice is sought from the Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi) and that IMDi partake where circumstances make that relevant.

1) General point

Norway's offer of resettlement for refugees is a declaration of goodwill and an expression of solidarity in an effort to meet the needs of refugees who face insecure and very difficult living conditions (or circumstances or situations, but not life conditions) where they are. Norway has a considerable degree of leeway when it comes to the scope of this work and how it is to be structured.

Norway's refugee resettlement activities shall take due account of the recommendations in UNHCR's handbook for resettlement. Resettlement of witnesses at international criminal courts is regulated by separate agreements. These cases are, on the whole, processed similarly to those of resettlement refugees.

2) The sharing of roles and responsibility

AID manages activities relating to the resettlement of refugees in Norway through recommendations to Parliament (Stortinget) about the size of the quota and its composition and through determining the criteria for selecting the individual refugee. AID also decides the procedure for determining the composition of the quota.

After having received advice from IMDi and others, UDI shall submit its recommendation on the composition of the quotas to AID. This recommendation shall take into account UNHCR's assessment concerning which groups are in need of resettlement in Norway and the capacity of local municipalities to offer satisfactory conditions. UDI and IMDi decide how these considerations can best be met.

It is UDI's responsibility to decide on the entry and the status of those who are offered resettlement in Norway in accordance with the Immigration Act and its provisions and in accordance with the Ministry's guidelines. UDI also assesses whether the cases provide sufficient information and documentation for making a decision. This includes assessments of the needs for case interviews by Norwegian officials.

It is IMDi's responsibility to place resettled refugees in Norwegian municipalities within the parameters of the general refugee settlement programme. It is also IMDi's responsibility to see to it that the refugees and the local municipalities receive appropriate information before the refugees come to Norway.

3) The size of the quota

Parliament decides on the size of the annual quotas on the basis of the Government's budget proposal. The quota indicates how many places for resettlement refugees will be available.

The number of places in the quota can be handled flexibly within a three-year period. Within this period, following year's quota can be used in advance or unused places from one year can be carried over to the following year.

The conditions under which this flexibility can be exercised are:

- a) Variations in the need for resettlement places in Norway.
- b) Variation in UNHCR's capacity for processing these cases.
- c) Variations in the local municipalities' ability to settle resettlement refugees.

For the first two years of this flexible three-year period, UDI is free to use +/- 5% of the places allotted to those two years. If there is a need for more places or if fewer places are needed, then UDI must, in writing, bring this to the prior notice of the Ministry. UDI must make its case with reference to one or more of the three points above.

For the last year of the flexible three-year period, UDI must, as far as possible, even out any variations in the previous two years' intake so that the total number of places for the three-year period is filled. The total number of places allotted over a three-year period, seen as a whole, must not exceed the number of places allowed for in the national budgets, agreed to by Parliament.

Selections of refugee groups which one year is allotted their own sub quota, can vary in size within +/- 15% in relation to the size of the sub quota, but within the total annual quota, cf. above description.

4) The process of deciding on the composition of the quota.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion (AID) decides on the composition of the quota based on, among other things, information, assessments and proposals submitted by UDI in cooperation with IMDi.

The process, which leads to decisions concerning the composition of the quota, starts early in the year previous to the one in which the quotas will apply. The timeline for this process is described below. This timeline will allow for minor deviations, but AID will require written notification if it is seriously disrupted.

March:

Before the end of March, UDI and IMDi prepare a summary and an evaluation of the previous year's selection and resettlement work. This will, among other things, include: an evaluation of the cooperation with the relevant UNHCR offices, an evaluation of how successful the resettlement and integration efforts among last year's arrivals have been (Where the resettlement programme has been going on for years, experience from previous groups is to be included.).

a recommendation as to whether the groups concerned should in future be offered resettlement in Norway and whether this program should be scaled up or be reduced or kept at its present level. This is especially relevant for groups which, at the time in question, are allotted sub quotas.

The main points in this summing up, evaluation and recommendation are to be submitted to AID in writing.

March/April:

UDI and IMDi obtain information concerning the opinions of relevant NGOs and expert personnel regarding whom Norway should offer resettlement. UDI and IMDi, for their part, should inform about the current year's selection. The NGOs are asked for comments and possible proposals for the resettlement of new refugee groups. The main opinions are to be submitted to AID in writing.

May:

AID requests the views and advice of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (UD) concerning which groups Norway ought to offer resettlement and how resettlement can be part of a comprehensive Norwegian refugee policy.

May/June:

AID obtains the views of UNHCR. This can either be in writing or at a separate meeting. Such a meeting may focus on Norway's resettlement records and UNHCR's assessment of the need for resettlement. (This can, for instance, take place in connection with the annual Bilateral Protection meeting between UNHCR and Norway.)

June:

Based on contributions from UDI, IMDi, UD, and UNHCR, the AID administration will present a proposal for guidelines for which indications Norway may give UNHCR for the allocation of the following year's quota. The Minister considers this and gives a preliminary mandate.

June/July:

AID gives indications about the allocation of following year's quota at the indications meeting with UNHCR and other resettlement countries in connection with ATC meeting (Annual Tripartite Consultations). After the ATC meeting AID sends a letter to UDI and IMDi with guidelines for the continued work planning next year's selection of resettlement refugees.

October:

After consulting with IMDi, UDI submits a proposal for a specified allocation of the quota taking into account the Government's proposed total quota in its state budget proposal, cf St.prp.nr1.

November:

AID decides, pending Parliament's approval of the size, the composition of the quota and informs UDI of this, with a copy for IMDi. UDI immediately passes this information on to UNHCR.

5) Composition of quota/sub quotas

The quota is made up of sub quotas for specifically designated groups and categories of refugees. To achieve flexibility, some places may be kept open in order to be able to meet new needs that may develop during the year. It will also make it possible to meet the needs of separate individuals who may fall outside the categories or groups specified in the overall plan.

UDI is to implement the selection in accordance with the determined allocation. Sub quotas for groups of refugees and not-yet-allotted sub quotas can be exceeded by up to

15%, but this must not exceed the number specified for selections in a given year. If need arise for a considerable overrun, the Ministry must be consulted, cf. point 3 in this letter.

Below are guidelines for categories for which sub quotas may be allotted:

Emergency cases: UDI should have procedures in place that enable decisions within 48 hours on the basis of presented documentation. If the case is not sufficiently elucidated or if there are indications that the Ministry ought to consider the case, then this deadline cannot be met.

Medical cases: AID seeks clarification on the proposal for sub quotas with the Ministry of Health and Care Services.

Convertible places: Funds corresponding to a given number of quota places are allotted in the National Budget to the running of IMDi, to budget line 690.73 Resettlement of refugees – support measures. The latter funds are administered by UDI and managed in consultation with the Ministry. At the behest of the Ministry, UDI will suggest support measures that can strengthen the resettlement work. Funds that are not used for support measures, are to be used for resettlement of refugees to Norway.

6) Factors that are to be given consideration when the composition of quotas is to be decided

According to the above process description (cf. point 4), UDI and IMDi are to provide input into the evaluation of the quota's composition based on, among other things, a summary and evaluation of the previous year's resettlement work. This work ought to take as its starting point factors d), e) and f) below.

In October UDI and IMDi are to submit the final proposal for the composition of the quota. This should build on a carefully balanced evaluation of the points below.

The refugee group's need for protection and a durable solution. Prominence should be given to UNHCRs evaluation as expressed in the annual Projected Global Resettlement Needs and supplementary materials.

Opportunities for a multinational coordinated effort to solve protracted refugee situation. Opportunities for strategic dividends in the form of a solution or improved conditions for refugees who are not offered resettlement.

Experience with operative cooperation with UNHCR field offices.

The local municipalities' capacity for servicing the refugees already settled with them and the communities' capacity for serving the special needs of refugee groups. This point could favour the selection of groups for which a suitable programme is already in place.

The local municipality's evaluation of the results of the resettlement programme and its success at integration.

7) Criteria for selection

Decisions concerning selection of separate individuals should be based on an evaluation of:

Need for international protection. Relevant points are the refugee's reason for leaving his/her native country, the risks a return entails and security in the country of first asylum. UNHCRs evaluation should form the basis for these considerations. At the same time, the protection consideration of cases submitted for resettlement should equal the protection consideration for spontaneously arrived asylum seekers. This is also the case for credibility assessments.

Need for resettlement. The possibilities for finding other durable solutions should be considered in the short term as well as in a longer perspective.

The gender issue. In the selection process special attention should be given to the needs of women. At least 55% of the total number of persons resettled under the quota system should be women, and at least 15% should belong to the category "women at risk".

Exclusion. Persons that come under the exclusion clauses of the Refugee Convention shall, as a rule, not be offered resettlement in Norway.

Behaviour. Persons of known criminal behaviour or heavy drug users are, as a rule, not to be offered resettlement in Norway.

For further information, please consult Circular AI-21/2007 Instructions concerning handling of cases according to the Immigration Act section 22, which gives rules for when and how UDI should submit individual cases concerning resettlement for consideration and possible instruction.

Reference is also made to UDIs agreement with The Norwegian Police Security Service (PST) for considerations relating to national security.

8) Procedures for selection

With reference to point 2 above, UDI is liable for making adequate and safe decisions concerning the selection of resettlement refugees. UDI considers whether this requires interviews by own officers. .

Experiences from different types of selection procedures should be included in the evaluation the UDI and IMDi are to undertake and submit to the Ministry, cf. point 4.

9) The right to submit cases for resettlement

Cases submitted by UNHCR are to given priority. If the priorities of the Ministry allow for it, UDI may additionally process cases submitted by:

Other international governmental organizations.

The Norwegian foreign service

International criminal courts that Norway has witness resettlement agreements with. Norwegian PEN. This applies only to persons who come under the Cities of Refuge Programme.

Norwegian NGOs with presence in areas where UNHCR is not present.

Decisions in cases submitted by organizations mentioned in d) and e) above, are to be limited to 15% of available non-pre-allocated places.

Yours sincerely,

Thor Arne Aass
Director General

Barbro A. Bakken
Director General

Appendix 5. The new guidelines in Norwegian

AID-2008-03-27

27. mars 2008

Saksnummer: 200705347-



Til:

Integrerings- og mangfoldsdirektoratet

Retningslinjer for arbeidet med overføringsflyktninger

Etter utlendingslovens § 22 skal Utlendingsdirektoratet fatte vedtak om overføring av flyktning etter de retningslinjer som er fastsatt av overordnet myndighet. Arbeids- og inkluderingsdepartementet gir her slike retningslinjer. Retningslinjene gjelder også for andre forhold knyttet til arbeidet med overføringsflyktninger, så som fordelingen av de årlige kvotene og samarbeid med andre myndigheter, med FNs høykommissær for flyktninger (UNHCR) og andre organisasjoner. Det legges til grunn at faglige synspunkter innhentes fra Integrerings- og mangfoldsdirektoratet (IMDi) og at IMDi deltar i de sammenhenger det er relevant.

1) Generelt

Norges tilbud om gjenbosetting av flyktninger er uttrykk for vilje til solidarisk å bidra til å løse situasjonen til flyktninger som lever under utrygge og eller svært vanskelige forhold der de er. Norge har stor frihetsgrad med hensyn til valg av omfang og utforming for dette arbeidet.

For Norges arbeid med overføringsflyktninger skal det legges vekt på anbefalingene i UNHCRs håndbok for gjenbosetting. Overføring av vitner ved internasjonale straffedomstoler er regulert i egne avtaler, Disse sakene behandles i hovedsak på samme måte som saker om overføringsflyktninger.

2) Rolle- og ansvarsdeling

AID styrer arbeidet med overføringsflyktninger gjennom forslag til Stortinget om kvotens størrelse, gjennom fastsettelse av kvotens sammensetning og gjennom fastsettelse av kriterier for uttak av den enkelte flyktning. AID fastsetter også prosessen for fastsettelsen av kvotens sammensetning.

UDI skal, etter å ha fått innspill fra IMDi og andre, foreslå sammensetning av kvoten. Det skal i forslaget tas hensyn til UNHCRs vurderinger av hvilke grupper som har behov for gjenbosetting i Norge og til kommunenes kapasitet til å gi egnede tilbud. UDI og IMDi avgjør hvordan disse hensynene best avveies.

UDI har ansvar for å fatte vedtak om innreise og status for personer som tilbys gjenbosetting i Norge i henhold til utlendingsloven med forskrift, og innenfor rammene som er gitt ved departementets retningslinjer. UDI vurderer også behovet for nødvendig informasjon og dokumentasjon for at beslutning om uttak skal kunne fattes, herunder om personer som fremmes for overføring skal intervjues av norske tjenestemenn.

IMDi har ansvaret for å bosette de som blir overført innenfor gjeldende bosettingsordning. IMDi er også ansvarlig for at flyktningene og aktuelle bosettingskommuner får relevant informasjon før flyktningene kommer til Norge.

3) Kvotens størrelse

Stortinget fastsetter størrelsen på de årlige kvotene på grunnlag av regjeringens forslag til statsbudsjett. Kvoten angir hvor mange plasser for overføringsflyktninger som kan nyttes.

Kvoteplassene kan anvendes fleksibelt innenfor treårige rammer. Innenfor disse rammene kan etterfølgende års kvoteplasser forskutteres og ubrukte plasser overføres til etterfølgende år.

Adgangen til å anvende denne fleksibiliteten må relateres til:

a) Varierende gjenbosettingsbehov.

b) Variasjoner i UNHCRs kapasitet til å fremme saker om overføring.

c) Variasjoner i kommunenes kapasitet til å ta imot overføringsflyktninger.

For de to første årene i de fleksible treårsperiodene står UDI fritt til å anvende +/- 5 % av plassene på de gjeldende års kvote. Dersom det er behov for å anvende flere eller færre plasser enn dette, skal UDI ta dette opp skriftlig med departementet på forhånd. UDI bør da kunne vise til ett eller flere av hensynene nevnt over.

For det siste året i de fleksible treårsperiodene skal UDI så langt mulig utlikke variasjonene de to forrige årene slik at de samlede plassene i treårsperiodene er best mulig utnyttet. Det samlede uttaket for treårsperioden sett under ett skal ikke overstige det antallet som budsjettvedtakene i Stortinget gir rom for.

Uttak av flyktninggrupper som et år er tildelt egne underkvoter, kan i omfang variere med +/- 15 % i forhold til underkvotenes størrelse, men innenfor den årlige rammen totalt sett, jf. omtale ovenfor.

4) Prosessen for fastsettelse av kvotens sammensetning

Arbeids- og inkluderingsdepartementet fastsetter kvotens sammensetning, bl.a. basert på informasjon, vurderinger og forslag utarbeidet av UDI etter samråd med IMDi. Prosessen som leder fram til vedtak om kvotens sammensetning, starter tidlig året før det aktuelle kvoteåret. Tidsskjema for denne prosessen er beskrevet nedenfor. De angitte tidspunktene kan avvikes noe. Dersom avviket blir betydelig, skal AID varsles skriftlig.

Mars: UDI og IMDi foretar innen utløpet av mars en oppsummering og evaluering av uttaks- og bosettingsarbeid året før. Dette skal bl.a. inkludere:

en evaluering av samarbeidet med de aktuelle UNHCR-kontorene,

en evaluering av hvor vellykket bosettings- og introduksjonsarbeidet har vært for de mottatte flyktninggruppene (der bosetting av gruppene har pågått over flere år, trekkes også erfaringene fra tidligere kull inn.)

en anbefaling av om de aktuelle gruppene fortsatt bør tilbys gjenbosetting i Norge, og om dette bør gjøres i samme, i større eller i mindre omfang. Dette er mest aktuelt for gruppene som på det tidspunktet fortsatt er tildelt underkvoter.

Hovedpunktene i oppsummeringen, evalueringen og anbefalingen skal meddeles AID skriftlig.

Mars/april: UDI og IMDi innhenter synspunkter om hvilke flyktninggrupper Norge bør tilby gjenbosetting fra relevante frivillige organisasjoner og eventuelle eksperter/ressurspersoner. Fra UDI og IMDi's side bør det redegjøres for gruppene som tas ut inneværende år. Organisasjonene bes kommentere dette og eventuelt foreslå nye flyktninggrupper. Hovedpunktene meddeles AID skriftlig.

Mai: AID innhenter synspunkter fra Utenriksdepartementet på hvilke flyktninggrupper Norge bør tilby gjenbosetting og på hvordan gjenbosettingen kan inngå i en bred norsk flyktningpolitisk strategi.

Mai/juni: AID innhenter synspunkter fra UNHCR. Dette kan enten skje skriftlig, eller i et eget møte om norske erfaringer med uttak av overføringsflyktninger, og UNHCRs vurdering av behov for fremtidig gjenbosetting. (Dette kan eventuelt avholdes i tilknytning til det årlige beskyttelsesmøtet mellom UNHCR og Norge.)

Juni: Basert på innspill fra UDI, IMDI, UD og UNHCR legger administrasjonen i AID frem forslag til retningslinjer for fordeling av kvoten for neste år, og forslag til hva man fra norsk side kan indikere overfor UNHCR. Statsråden vurderer dette, og gir et foreløpig mandat for det videre arbeidet.

Juni/juli: AID indikerer fordelingen av etterfølgende års kvote på indikasjonsmøtet med UNHCR og de andre gjenbosettingslandene i tilknytning til ATC (Annual Tripartite Consultations). AID sender etter ATC-møtet brev til UDI og IMDi med retningslinjer for det videre arbeidet med planleggingen av neste års uttak av overføringsflyktninger.

Oktober: UDI foreslår etter samråd med IMDi en spesifisert fordeling av kvoten på grunnlag av Regjeringens forslag til kvoten totale størrelse i St.prp. nr. 1.

November: AID fastsetter, med forbehold om Stortingets godkjenning, kvotens sammensetning og meddeler denne til UDI, med kopi til IMDi. UDI melder dette omgående til UNHCR.

5) Kvotens sammensetning/underkvoter

Kvoten settes sammen av underkvoter for nærmere angitte flyktninggrupper og - kategorier. Noen plasser kan holdes åpne for å gi fleksibilitet til å kunne fange opp nye behov som kan oppstå i løpet av året, og mulighet til å gi tilbud til enkeltflyktninger som ikke faller inn under de fastsatte gruppene og kategoriene.

UDI skal foreta uttak i tråd med fastsatt fordeling. Underkvotene for flyktninggrupper og ikke-fordelt underkvote kan overskrides med inntil 15 %, dog innenfor angitte rammer for samlet uttak det enkelte år. Behov eller ønske om større overskridelser skal tas opp med departementet, jf. pkt. 3 i dette brevet.

Under gis retningslinjer for kategoriene det er aktuelt å gi underkvoter for:

a) Hastesaker: UDI skal ha en prosedyre som gjør det mulig å fatte vedtak på grunnlag av forelagte dokumenter innen 48 timer. Dersom saken ikke er tilstrekkelig opplyst eller dersom det er indikasjoner på at saken bør forelegges departementet, kan ikke denne tidsfristen holdes.

b) Medisinske saker: AID avklarer forslag til underkvote med Helse- og omsorgsdepartementet.

c) Konvertible plasser: Midler tilsvarende et gitt antall kvoteplasser fordeles i statsbudsjettet til henholdsvis IMDi's drift og til post 690, post 73 Gjenbosetting av flyktninger - støttetiltak. Sistnevnte post administreres av UDI og disponeres i samråd med departementet. Etter nærmere oppdrag fra departementet foreslår UDI støttetiltak som kan fremme gjenbosettingsarbeidet. Midler som ikke blir brukt til støttetiltak, skal brukes til overføring av flyktninger til Norge.

6) Momenter det skal tas hensyn til ved fastsettelse av kvotens sammensetning Etter prosessbeskrivelsen over (jf. pkt. 4), skal UDI og IMDi gi innspill til vurderingen av kvotens sammensetning på grunnlag av blant annet en oppsummering og evaluering av foregående års gjenbosettingsarbeid. Dette innspillet bør bl.a. ta utgangspunkt i momentene d), e) og f) under.

I oktober skal UDI og IMDi gi et endelig forslag til kvotens sammensetning. Dette skal bygge på en avveining av alle momentene under.

a) Flyktninggruppers behov for beskyttelse og en varig løsning. Her skal det legges vekt på UNHCRs vurderinger, slik disse kommer til uttrykk i den årlige Projected Global Resettlement Need og i supplerende oppdateringer.

b) Mulighetene for en flernasjonal koordinert innsats for å løse en fastlåst og langvarig flyktningssituasjon.

c) Mulighetene for en strategisk gevinst i form av en løsning eller bedre forhold for flyktninger som selv ikke tilbys gjenbosetting.

d) Erfaringer med det operative samarbeidet med UNHCR ved aktuelle uttakssteder.

e) Kapasiteten på tjenestetilbudet for bosatte flyktninger i kommunene og kommunenes kapasitet til å tilpasse tjenestene til flyktninggruppenes særlige behov. Dette momentet kan tilsi fortsatt uttak av grupper det allerede er funnet tilpassete opplegg for.

f) Kommunenes vurdering av resultatet for bosettings- og integreringsarbeidet.

7) Kriterier for uttak

Vedtak om uttak av enkeltpersoner skal bygge på vurderinger av:

a) Behov for internasjonal beskyttelse. Det skal her både ses hen til flyktningens grunn til å forlate hjemlandet, risikoen ved retur og sikkerheten i oppholdslandet. Utgangspunkt tas i UNHCRs vurdering. Samtidig skal beskyttelsesvurderingen i saker om overføring ligge på tilnærmet samme nivå som i asylsaker. Dette gjelder også troverdighetsvurderingen.

- b) Behov for gjenbosetting. Det skal ses hen til utsiktene til å oppnå andre varige løsninger på kort og mellomlang sikt.
 - c) Kvinneperspektiv. Ved uttak skal det ses særlig hen til kvinners behov. Minst 55 % av det totale antall personer som overføres innenfor kvoteordningen, skal være kvinner, og minst 15 % skal være i kategorien "utsatte kvinner".
 - d) Utelukkelse. Personer som omfattes av flyktningkonvensjonens regler om utelukkelse, skal som utgangspunkt ikke tilbys gjenbosetting i Norge.
 - e) Atferd. Eksempelvis personer som har hatt en kjent kriminell atferd eller tungt rusmisbruk, skal som utgangspunkt ikke tilbys gjenbosetting i Norge.
- Vi viser for øvrig til rundskriv AI-21/2007 Instruks om behandling av saker etter utlendingslovens § 38 tredje ledd og utlendingsloven § 22 som gir regler for når og hvordan UDI skal forelegge enkeltsaker om overføring for vurdering av eventuell instruks.
- Vi viser også til UDIs avtale med PST for vurdering av hensynet til rikets sikkerhet.

8) Framgangsmåte ved uttak

Vi viser til pkt. 2 ovenfor. UDI har ansvar for at beslutning om uttak som overføringsflyktning tas på en betryggende måte, herunder om det er behov for intervju av den enkelte flyktning.

Erfaringene med ulike uttaksformer skal inngå i den oppsummeringen og evalueringen UDI og IMDi skal foreta og innberette til departementet, jf. pkt. 4.

9) Adgang til å fremme saker om overføring

Saker som UNHCR forelegger skal ha prioritet. Dersom det passer etter de prioriteringer departementet gir, kan UDI i tillegg behandle saker forelagt av:

- a) Andre mellomstatlige organisasjoner,
- b) Norsk utenriksstasjon,
- c) Internasjonale straffedomstoler Norge har inngått vitnegjenbosettingsavtale med,
- d) Norske PEN. Det gjelder bare for personer omfattet av fribyordningen,
- e) Norske frivillige organisasjoner med tilstedeværelse i områder der UNHCR ikke har det.

Vedtak i saker fremmet av organisasjoner som nevnt i d) og e) over skal i antall begrenses til 15 % av tilgjengelige ikke-forhåndsfordelte plasser.

Med hilsen
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