



COUNTRY FACTSHEET: NORWAY 2012

EUROPEAN MIGRATION NETWORK

1. Introduction

This EMN Country Factsheet provides a factual overview of the main policy developments in migration and international protection in Norway during 2012, including latest statistics. It has been prepared in conjunction with the European Commission's 4th Annual Report on Migration and Asylum (2012).

2. Legal Migration and Mobility

2.1. PROMOTING LEGAL MIGRATION CHANNELS

The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI) established a new system through which Norwegian employers get a primary contact person in UDI for all questions concerning the employment of third country nationals (e.g. application procedures). This new service has proved popular with both companies and relocation firms.

2.2. ECONOMIC MIGRATION

Norway has so far not been significantly affected by the economic crisis. The unemployment rate has remained low. Also during 2012, there was a significant inflow of workers from both EU Member States and third countries, which has helped to fill vacancies in the labour market. In addition, one of the **main priorities** of the **Norwegian Integration Policy** is to **increase the labour market participation of immigrants**, particularly of immigrant women which, in general, remains significantly lower than the national average. In order to address such matters, the government has introduced a four-million euro program called "The Job Chance" to be implemented during 2013. The project draws on experience from a pilot project "Second Chance" which succeeded in helping unemployed immigrants, including women, to improve their skills and to find employment.

The **White Paper** on Integration also announced the **preparation of an Action Plan to make better use of immigrants' skills; the Plan will be prepared in**

2013. Furthermore, a database of approved higher education programmes, administered by the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT), should be completed in 2013 to improve the assessment of foreign qualifications and the application process for recognition of qualifications.

New administrative sanctions in cases of violation of the terms of the Au Pair Scheme, or against persons found guilty of offences committed against their au pair, was under consideration in 2012 and introduced in 2013.

2.3. FAMILY REUNIFICATION

Family immigration rules were amended in July 2012. The **new amendments** now allow for more **flexibility of the income requirement in order to preserve family unity**. The new provisions mainly target those cases where a family have lived together abroad before arriving in Norway, or when the family included children who held Norwegian citizenship. They also apply to cohabiting couples who have lived together for a significant amount of time. Technical amendments were also made regarding the calculation of the income requirement level. A proposal for an **increased income requirement** for family establishment cases (as opposed to reunification of pre-existing families) was also submitted for public consultation in October 2012. The consultation welcomed views on how to prevent the proposed changes to impact differently on women and men.

2.4. INTEGRATION

The **White Paper on Integration** also announced several measures regarding the integration of legal immigrants. For example, a **National Strategy to target specific health challenges** of the immigrant population is envisaged for 2013. Several amendments to the Introduction Programme are under consideration, including the **improvement of introduction programmes** to better suit the needs of persons with low levels of education. Moreover, in

2012, the Norwegian and social orientation classes (required to qualify for permanent residence and citizenship) raised its number of hours from 300 to 600 hours. **Additional funding** to strengthen the ability of local municipalities' **to provide language training and an Introduction programme** of high quality to immigrants was also announced in the White Paper.

Pilot projects are being carried out in some parts of Oslo, in addition to two other cities, to provide free core hours in kindergartens, for immigrant children to learn Norwegian faster. The rules of the "cash-for-care" benefit were changed, reducing the upper qualification age limit of the child from three to two years. The aim of the change was twofold: To encourage parents to enrol their children in kindergarten and thus to acquire better Norwegian language skills and to make it easier for women to enter the labour market.

In terms of legislation, a **Citizenship Regulation amendment** entered into force in 2012. The latter allows some persons born in Norway, or who immigrated at a young age, **to obtain Norwegian citizenship**. The amendment applies when citizenship was previously denied because of insufficient proof or documentation regarding their identity.

2.5 MANAGING MIGRATION AND MOBILITY¹

Norway has rolled out the Visa Information System (VIS) in three regions, i.e. 1) Algeria, Egypt, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia; 2) Israel, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria, and 3) Afghanistan, Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE and Yemen.

3. International Protection and Asylum

The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI), together with the Directorate of Health, has introduced a number of **initiatives to improve the reception conditions for vulnerable groups** and/or persons with special needs. The initiatives are based on the recommendations provided by the research funded by the European Refugee Fund (ERF) and UDI for the report on "Vulnerable Asylum seekers in Norway and the EU – Identification, organisation and handling". Also, during 2012 **new procedural guidelines for the treatment of vulnerable asylum seekers** were introduced. These focus on gender sensitivity and on those asylum seekers who were persecuted on the basis of their sexual orientation.

During 2012, **Norway relocated 31 refugees** from Malta as a response to an appeal from the EU in relation to the Libya crisis. The refugees were counted in the ordinary 2012 resettlement quota, which was

set at 1200 persons of whom approximately 60% should be women.

Norway has been **negotiating an Arrangement on participation in the EASO**. Cooperation with the agency is on-going. For example, through the Norwegian Country of Origin Information Centre (Landinfo) and the Task force on COI. Norway has also cooperated on the **establishment of the EASO Centre for Information, Documentation and Analysis**. Furthermore, UDI has provided information and advice regarding an EASO manual on age determination and on interview techniques.

European Economic Area (EEA) grants have been used to assist reducing social and economic disparities in the EEA area and to strengthen bilateral relations between the EU Member States and EEA States. Under this scheme, 21 million euro was allocated to strengthening the Asylum and Migration Sector in Greece.

4. Unaccompanied Minors and other Vulnerable Groups

During 2012 there has been an on-going **debate on the interpretation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child** (Article 3, best interest of the child) as well as on the need for controlled immigration. In November 2012 the **White paper on children seeking protection was endorsed by Stortinget (the Parliament)**. Among other things, the paper aimed to clarify existing residence regulations and practices based on the child's links to Norway. Regarding *the best interest of the child*, the Supreme Court in 2012, in two relevant cases, found that this matter had been adequately considered by the Immigration Appeals Board and that the need for controlled immigration may be a decisive factor when considering an application for protection and legal stay in Norway.

Two new legislative measures were adopted in 2012: a new Act on Trusteeship and; a **new law on guardianship for unaccompanied minors looking for asylum**. The latter aims to strengthen the legal position of unaccompanied minors, by clarifying the tasks of their representatives and ensuring a more consistent practice for recruiting, training and supervising such representatives.

5. Actions against Trafficking in Human Beings

In 2012 Norway established a three-year **Action Plan against Human Trafficking (2011-2014)**. The plan includes measures to identify, protect and assist victims of human trafficking, as well as on-going efforts to enhance prevention and increase prosecution of those guilty of human trafficking. The improvement of coordination activities amongst the different actors and the development of research-based knowledge on

¹ "Managing migration and mobility" refers to the following themes: visa policy, Schengen governance and border monitoring.

trafficking are also part of the measures provided within the Action Plan. The research is expected to mainly focus on unaccompanied minor victims of human trafficking. Funding has also been envisaged to provide tailored services for children victims.

Following the introduction of **new regulations** in 2012, the local **Child Protection Services** now have the **right to intervene** with force when minors, who are potential victims of trafficking, resist protection and monitoring. The Coordination Unit for Victims of Human Trafficking (KOM) has operated under a permanent mandate since 2011.

6. External Dimension of EU Migration Policy

During 2012, activities targeting migration and development policy were organised, for example: a conference on Migration and Development in Oslo, which brought together the main Norwegian stakeholders on migration and development policy areas as well as international speakers; and a full day to discuss migration and development policy was also organised involving several European Migration Network (EMN) National Contact representatives.

The Norwegian Development Aid Agency (Norad) has also continued to mainstream experiences from successful development projects which integrate the work of diaspora groups/organisations with traditional development organisations and non-governmental organisations.

7. Irregular Migration

New Schengen residence cards containing biometric data were introduced in May 2012 in order to improve the legal stay documentation. A national database containing all fingerprints collected from Schengen residence cards and visas is under consideration by the Ministry of Justice and Public Security.

Norway is currently developing national infrastructure to implement automated border control (ABC) gates in Oslo Airport, Gardermoen and at Storskog land border crossing point with Russia. This work is

foreseen to be completed by 2015. **EUROSUR is also under development** and it has involved the cooperation and coordination of relevant authorities e.g. Norwegian Police, the Armed Forces, Coastal Administration, Customs, the Maritime Authorities and the Directorate of Fisheries. Furthermore, together with the operational cooperation of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Turkish Ministry of the Interior, Norway has co-financed a project aimed to manage the Turkish migration flows.

During 2012 Norway has continued to support the **Frontex operations** Poseidon and Attica in Greece. In addition, Norway has participated in eight joint return operations and the Norwegian Police has also organised four charter flights.

Norway **aims to align its return policy to the EU approach** by entering into return agreements with countries that have an EU readmission agreement. For example, in 2012 Norway entered into a readmission agreement with Ethiopia which include provisions for both voluntary and forced return as well as reintegration support.

The Norwegian – Russian Agreement on local border traffic entered into force on 23 May 2012.

8. Provision and Exchange of Information to support Policy Development

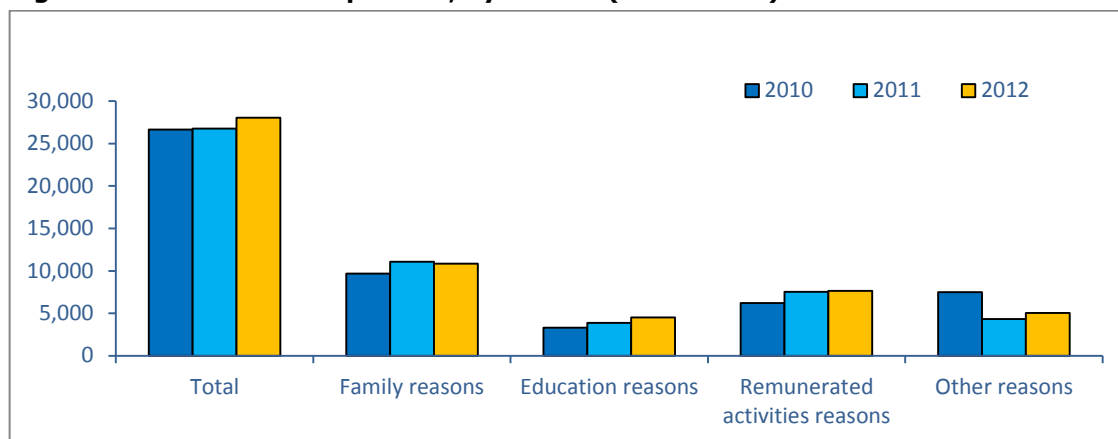
Norway uses and participates in a range of different international fora to exchange information, such as: the EMN, General Directors' Immigration Services Conference (GDISC), IGC, the European Platform of Reception Agencies (EPRA) and others.

STATISTICAL ANNEX

The Statistical Annex provides an overview of the available statistics for Norway on aspects of the regulation of migration and asylum, covering 2010-2012, including statistics on residence permits, asylum, unaccompanied minors, irregular migration, return and visas. Where statistics are *not yet* available, this is indicated in the Annex as "N/A".

Statistical Annex: Immigration and Asylum in Norway (2010-2012)

Figure 1: First residence permits, by reason (2010-2012)



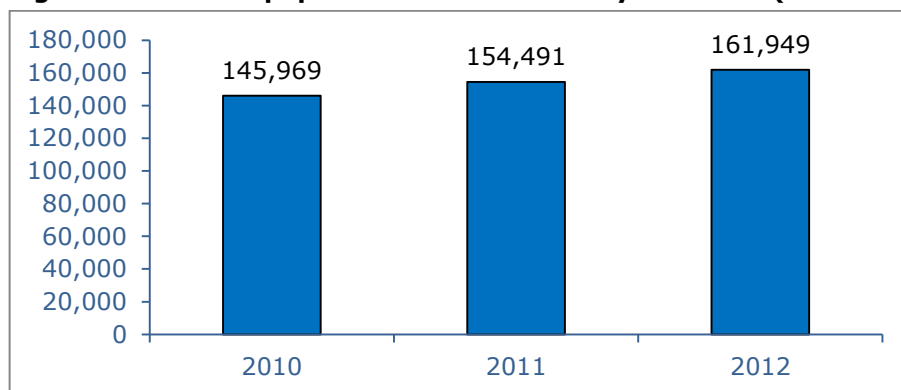
Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_resfirst)

Table 1: First residence permits: Top 5 nationalities (2010-2011)

2010	2011	2012
1. Philippines – 2,390	1. Qatar – 2,827	1. Philippines – 2,966
2. Eritrea – 2,290	2. Somalia – 2,036	2. Somalia – 2,730
3. Somalia – 2,218	3. Eritrea – 1,597	3. India – 2,087
4. Afghanistan – 2,064	4. Indonesia – 1,579	4. Eritrea – 1,652
5. Russia – 1,318	5. Uruguay – 1,373	5. USA – 1,411

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_resfirst)

Figure 2: Resident population of third-country nationals (2010-2012)



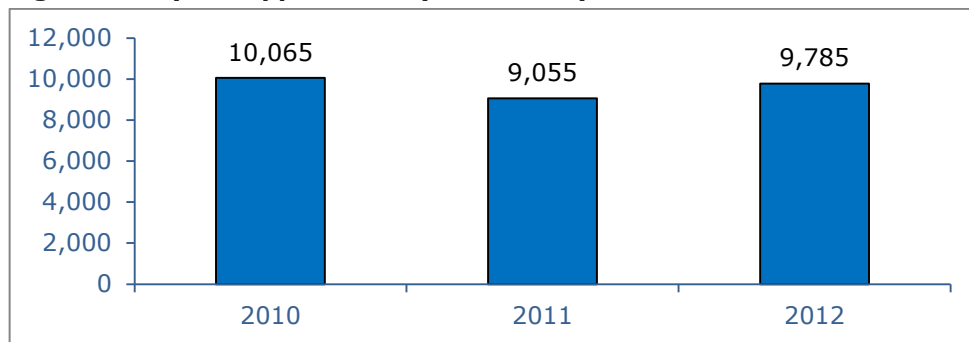
Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_pop1ctz)

Table 2: Resident population: Top 5 nationalities (2010-2012)

2010	2011	2012
1. Poland – 46,281	1. Poland – 55,008	1. Poland – 66,525
2. Sweden – 35,742	2. Sweden – 39,057	2. Sweden – 42,009
3. Germany – 20,739	3. Germany – 22,377	3. Lithuania – 24,050
4. Denmark – 20,635	4. Denmark – 20,905	4. Germany – 23,672
5. UK – 13,192	5. Lithuania – 16,327	5. Denmark – 21,309

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_pop1ctz)

Figure 3: Asylum applications (2010-2012)



Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asyappctza)

Table 3: Asylum applications: Top 5 nationalities (2010-2012)

2010	2011	2012
1. Eritrea – 1,710	1. Somalia – 2,215	1. Somalia – 2,180
2. Somalia – 1,395	2. Eritrea – 1,255	2. Eritrea – 1,185
3. Afghanistan – 980	3. Afghanistan – 980	3. Afghanistan – 985
4. Russia – 630	4. Russia – 365	4. Sudan – 470
5. Ethiopia – 505	5. Iran – 355	5. Iran – 440

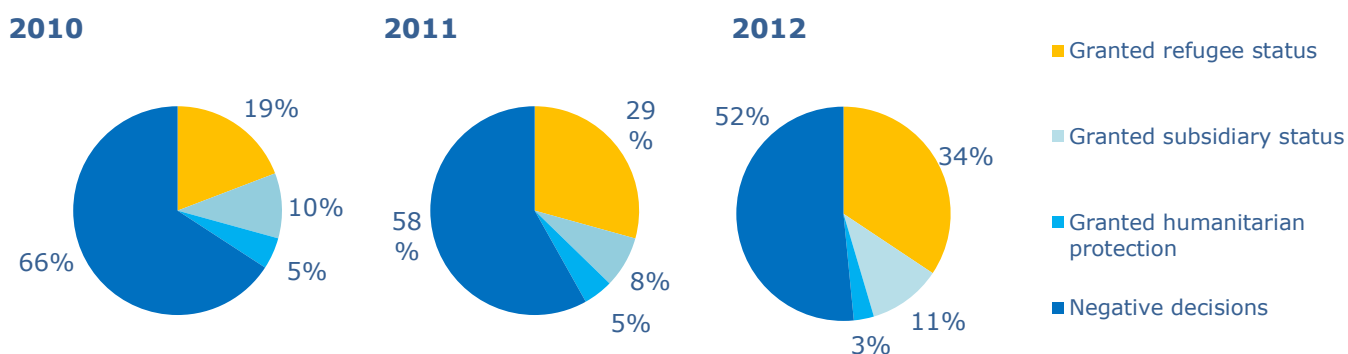
Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asyappctza)

Table 4: Asylum applications - First instance decisions by outcome (2010-2012)

	Total decisions	Positive decisions	Of which:			Negative decisions
			Refugee status	Subsidiary protection	Humanitarian reasons	
2010	15,505	5,300	2,975	1,565	760	10,205
2011	9,590	4,015	2,810	765	440	5,575
2012	10,695	5,180	3,675	1,185	325	5,515

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asydcfsta)

Figures 4-6: Asylum applications - First instance decisions by outcome (2010-2012)



Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asydcfsta)

Table 5: Third-country nationals relocated and resettled (2010-2012)

	2010	2011	2012
Third-country nationals relocated	N/A	0	31
Third-country nationals resettled	1,095	1,270	1,230

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asyresa) and National contributions to EMN Annual Policy Report

Table 6: Unaccompanied minors (2011-2012)

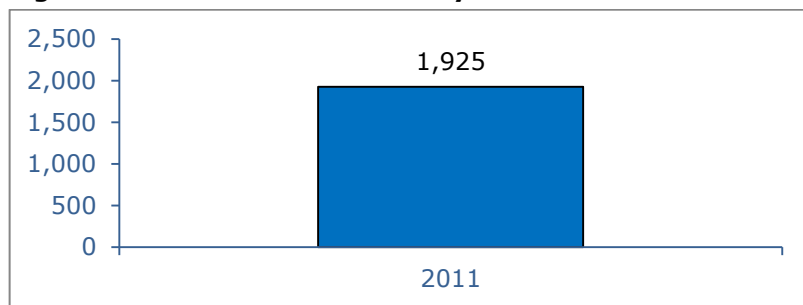
	2010	2011	2012
Unaccompanied minors (total)	N/A	N/A	986
Unaccompanied minors not applying for asylum	N/A	N/A	N/A
Unaccompanied minor asylum applicants	N/A	720	105

Source: National contributions to EMN Annual Policy Report

Table 7: Number of third-country nationals refused entry at external borders (2010-2011)

	2010	2011	2012
Third-country nationals refused entry at external borders	140	150	N/A

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_eirfs)

Figure 7: Number of third-country nationals found to be illegally present (2011)

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_eipre)

Table 8: Third-country nationals returned (2011-2012)

	Third-country nationals ordered to leave	Returned as part of forced return measures	Returned voluntarily	Returned through an Assisted Voluntary Return Programme
2010	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2011	15,855	3,330	N/A	1,570
2012	N/A	1,397	N/A	1,750

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_eiord) and National contributions to EMN Annual Policy Report

Table 9: Number of visas issued by type (2010-2012)

	2010	2011	2012
Total visas	N/A	N/A	118,572
Schengen visa (short-stay visas)*	118,966	138,507	118,748
National visa	N/A	N/A	158

Source: Commission Staff Working Documents on the Annual Report on Immigration and Asylum; *DG HOME Statistics on Visa Policy website: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/visa-policy/index_en.htm