

Norway at a glance

- **Population:** 4,985,870
- **GDP (Per capita):** 186 PPS (available for 2011 only)
PPS=Purchasing Power Standard, based on the EU 27 average of 100
- **Asylum applications total:** 9 685
- **Total decisions reached in 2012:** 10 610
- **Positive decisions (including refugee status, subsidiary protection and humanitarian reasons):** 5 180

2012 data, published by Eurostat in May 2013

The Norwegian resettlement programme at a glance

Resettlement quota and actors

Start of annual quota: early 1980s⁵⁶

Current quota: approximately 1,200 per year (as of 2013). A flexible three-year quota allows unused places to be carried forward into subsequent years within a three-year period. The current flexible quota period is 2013-2015.

Main national actors: Ministry of Justice and Emergency Planning, Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI), Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion, Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi), municipalities, Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), Norwegian Refugee Council, Norwegian Organisation for Asylum Seekers, Norwegian PEN.

Resettlement numbers

YEAR	ACCEPTED	ARRIVALS	NATIONALITY ⇄ COUNTRY OF ASYLUM OF LARGEST GROUPS
2013 <i>anticipated</i>	1120		Afghans ⇄ Iran Somalis ⇄ Kenya Refugees ⇄ Turkey Eritreans ⇄ Eastern Sudan Congolese (DRC) ⇄ Uganda

⁵⁶ Ad-hoc resettlement from 1945

YEAR	ACCEPTED	ARRIVALS	NATIONALITY↔COUNTRY OF ASYLUM OF LARGEST GROUPS
2012	1110	1 300	Eritreans↔Eastern Sudan Afghans↔Iran Somalis↔Kenya Iranians↔Turkey Burmese↔Malaysia
2011	1370	1289	Various (ex-Libya)↔Tunisia Eritreans↔Eastern Sudan Somalis↔Kenya Burmese↔Malaysia Bhutanese↔Nepal Afghans↔Iran Iranians↔Turkey
2010	1130	1116	Eritreans↔Eastern Sudan Iraqi and ex-Iraqi Palestinians↔Syria Burmese↔Malaysia Afghans↔Iran Iranians↔Turkey
2009	1162	1420	Eritreans↔Eastern Sudan Afghans↔Iran Bhutanese↔Nepal Iraqi and ex-Iraqi Palestinians↔Syria Burmese↔Malaysia

UNHCR submission categories considered for resettlement

- Legal and physical protection needs
- Survivors of violence and torture
- Medical needs - *20 cases (within the Twenty-or-More programme for refugees with medical needs)*
- Women and girls at risk - *priority given to WAR cases, and 60 % of the total quota is reserved for women and girls.*
- Family reunification
- Children and adolescents at risk
- Lack of foreseeable alternative solutions
- Other: *80 places per year are allocated for 'alternative use' - under which Norway provides costs for resettlement places in countries outside of Europe, such as Argentina.*



UNHCR Priority levels accepted (with sub-quota where applicable)

- ☑ **Emergency** *max. 7 days between submission and resettlement -75 cases*
- ☑ **Urgent** *within 6 weeks between submission and resettlement*
- ☑ **Normal** *within 12 months between submission and resettlement*

Norway's Resettlement Programme

Legal Basis

There is no specific legal basis for refugee resettlement in Norway. The **Norway Immigration Act 2008** (No.35) provides general criteria for the recognition of refugees, and effectively serves as the legal basis for resettlement.

Resettlement Criteria

Basic criteria

- A refugee must be recognised as such according to the 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees.

Supplementary Criteria

- Norway allocates 60 per cent of the resettlement quota to women and girls, and prioritises '**Women and Girls at Risk**' (WAR) cases.
- Norway's participation in broader strategic resettlement programmes may be considered within the

resettlement selection process.⁵⁷

- Exceptionally, applicants may be considered solely on the basis of **strong humanitarian considerations**, for example where a refugee has an accompanying family member of a different nationality and without protection needs.
- When selecting refugees for resettlement, UDI and IMDI also consider the **capacity for municipalities to offer appropriate facilities and services** for the refugee(s) in question. For example, capacity to settle refugees with reduced mobility - such as wheelchair users and the elderly - is currently limited. Where refugees require specialist treatment, such as that related to previous experiences of torture, the availability of these services is considered as part of the selection decision-making process. UDI can request, via UNHCR, that specific refugees undergo medical examinations before a decision is taken on their resettlement. Cases will normally be rejected if appropriate treatment is not available in Norway.

⁵⁷ Norway is a member of the Iran Contact Group chaired by Sweden, and also resettles Eritreans from eastern Sudan as part of a strategic resettlement initiative.

Identification and Selection

Each year, the Norwegian Parliament approves the number of refugees that will be resettled and the nationalities and regions from which they will be selected. The Ministry of Justice and Emergency Planning proposes how the quota will be allocated, through consultations with the Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The allocation is based on information and suggestions made by the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI) after consultation with the Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi). Norway is the only country in Europe where NGOs are encouraged to give advice to the government, through various meetings, when planning the yearly allocation of the quota and the selection process.

UDI is responsible for final resettlement decisions, refugee status determination procedures and issuing entry visas. Norway prioritises submissions from UNHCR, but UDI may also process cases referred by Norwegian embassies, other international organisations, criminal courts - with which Norway has witness resettlement agreements -, and Norwegian NGOs in areas where UNHCR is not present (including PEN and the Norwegian Helsinki Committee).

Norway selects approximately 870 refugees a year via **selection missions**

carried out by UDI and IMDi, and approximately 250 refugees based on **dossier submissions** from UNHCR. Municipality representatives recently began participating in some selection missions as observers.

The average processing time from decision to arrival for refugees selected via selection missions is **4 1/2 months**. UDI aims to make decisions on emergency cases within 48 hours of submission, with departure arranged as soon as possible, and IMDi aims to find a receiving municipality for these cases within 48 hours from UDI's decision. Norway does not distinguish between urgent and normal priority submissions for the purposes of processing time.

Refugee Status, Permanent Residency & Citizenship

For dossier cases, refugee status determination is conducted on arrival in Norway. For refugees selected via selection missions, refugee status determination is completed prior to departure in the country of asylum. All resettled refugees receive a **temporary residence permit** valid for 3 years, issued prior to departure for selection mission cases and on arrival for dossier cases.

Resettled refugees can apply for a **permanent residence** permit after three years of legal residency in Norway,



and must evidence completion of the Norwegian 'introduction course' (see 'Integration services & support' below). Permanent residents are able to reside outside of Norway for a period of up to two years without jeopardising Norwegian residency rights.

Resettled refugees may apply for **citizenship** after a total of seven years legal residency in the country. Citizenship applicants must demonstrate proficiency in either Norwegian or the Sami language and - if successful - renounce any former citizenship.

Family reunification

Resettled refugees may apply for close family members - meaning a spouse, cohabiting partners or other family members who have lived together for at least two years and children under 18 years of age - to join them in Norway. Other family members may exceptionally be granted a permit to reside in Norway, and these types of applications are dealt with on a case-by-case basis. If refugees apply for family reunification within one year of arriving into Norway, then the general requirement to demonstrate income sufficient to meet the needs of family members is not applied.

Resettlement in Practice

Linking Phases

How is information transferred between selection and reception of refugees in order to prepare for their arrival?

- ☑ Briefing stakeholders after selection through missions or dossiers
- ☑ Forwarding pertinent information from Refugee Referral Form (RRF) to integration actors
- ☑ Sharing of information gathered during Cultural Orientation (CO)

How is information transferred for specific needs (medical or other)?

- UDI extracts information on family composition, language skills and educational background from the RRF and communicates this to IMDi. IMDi uses this information to select a municipality that offers the best integration perspectives for specific refugees.
- Where UDI has requested that pre-departure medical examinations are carried out for specific refugees, the outcomes of these will be shared with local actors as appropriate.
- UDI has established a consultancy contract with the Oslo University Teaching Hospital. Doctors analyse the medical information received from IOM for individual refugees and produce recommendations for services that would need to be

available for refugees in receiving municipalities. UDI uses this information to select an appropriate municipality for specific refugees. This system particularly facilitates service provision for dossier arrivals, which account for the majority of medical cases, and generally enables municipalities to better accommodate refugees' physical and psychological healthcare needs.

Pre-departure

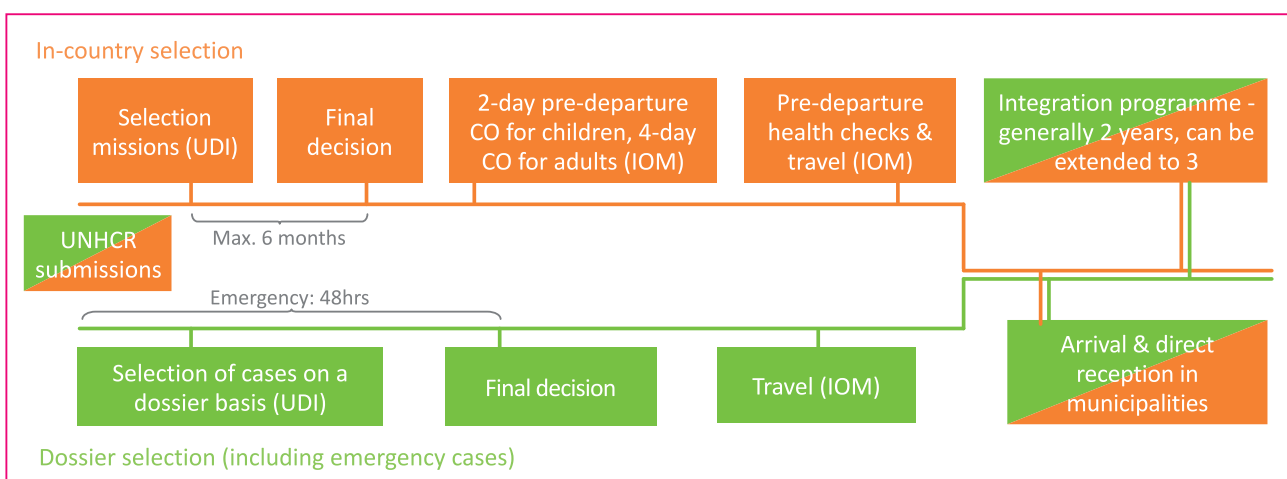
☑ **Cultural Orientation (CO):** Since 2003, the Norwegian government has contracted IOM to develop and implement the Norwegian Cultural Orientation programme (NORCO). This pre-departure programme provides a four-day CO programme for adults (16 years and older) and a two-day programme for children (8-15 years). The training sessions are learner-centred and emphasise direct participation of refugees in activities including role-plays, case

studies, problem-solving, games and debates. Video clips and presentations are used to elaborate specific CO topics, and participants are each provided with reference handbooks.

The NORCO programme is delivered by a bicultural trainer, from the same or similar background of the refugee group, who speaks the language of the cultural orientation participants and who has lived in Norway for some time. The use of a bicultural trainer means an interpreter is not required and communication is thus more direct. The trainer can also represent a role model for refugees, as he or she has learned Norwegian and managed to professionally establish him/herself in Norway.

☑ **Medical Exam:** IOM

☑ **Travel arrangements:** IOM





Integration in Practice

Reception

When **municipalities** agree to host refugees, it becomes their responsibility to receive the refugees on arrival into the Norway. It is mandatory to settle refugees within 6 months after refugees have been accepted on quota basis or granted asylum. Upon arrival, refugees are accompanied to private pre-arranged housing in host communities.

Placement policies

The Directorate for Integration and Diversity (IMDi) is responsible for placing refugees in municipalities. Municipality participation in receiving refugees is **voluntary**. Each year, municipalities receive requests from IMDi to receive refugees, and those that agree to do so provide IMD with information on the number of places it can provide and its capacity to meet specific needs that refugees may have. Six regional IMDi offices currently coordinate placement of refugees in 300 of the 429 Norwegian municipalities.

IMDi often places refugees from the same or similar ethnic or minority groups in the same municipality or neighbouring municipalities, so as to promote the development of social networks, reduce isolation and assist

municipalities to provide better integration experiences for the refugees they receive. Unaccompanied Minors (UAMs) are resettled to a few specific municipalities that have developed expertise in working with this group.

Local authorities receive a government subsidy to meet the cost of refugees' introduction benefits for a five-year period, amounting to €77,405 per adult and €74,895 per child received. Municipalities also receive integration grants of varying amounts to cover additional expenses incurred in settling and integrating refugees during four years after arrival.

Integration services & support

Length: up to 3 years

Municipalities are obliged to offer integration services to migrants and refugees they receive. IMDi provides guidance to support the work of municipalities in this regard, and the **Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities** (KS) provides a platform for municipalities to exchange best practices in resettlement.

Integration services include healthcare, children's education, appropriate housing, vocational training and employment support. Some elements of these services are delivered in the framework of **individualised**

‘introductory programmes’, which all refugees aged between 18 and 55 years must follow and which municipalities must provide within three months after refugees arrive. The federal government has developed quality standards that introductory programmes must meet, and which specify that programmes include:

- Norwegian language tuition.
- Measures to attain skills for labour market entry.
- Career guidance.
- Measures to continue education.
- Social studies in the immigrant’s native language (where feasible).

Individualised programmes are developed based on the needs and attributes of refugees, with the ultimate aim of equipping adult refugees with basic Norwegian language skills, an insight into Norwegian society and support and training sufficient to enter the labour market or access education.

The normal duration period for introductory programme is 2 years, although municipalities can extend to 3 years if considered beneficial for a particular refugee. To acquire permanent residence in Norway refugees must complete the programme within 3 years, encompassing 550 hours of **language training** and 50 hours of **social and cultural studies**. Where refugees require additional language support,

municipalities can offer up to 2,400 additional hours of language tuition.

Refugees receive financial support while following an introductory programme, conditional on their ongoing participation.

Although integration programmes are largely coordinated and implemented by municipalities, NGOs offer integration services and activities through specific projects and initiatives. The **Norwegian Red Cross**, for example, collaborates with municipalities on projects to enhance social integration such as ‘Refugee Guide’, in which Norwegian volunteers act as ‘guides’ providing information and social contact with the Norwegian population.

HIGHLIGHT: ‘Til Topps’ (To the top)

The ‘Til Topps’ (‘To the top’) project is an annual event at which refugees and migrants residents and Norwegian volunteers meet each other to go hiking. The aim of the project is to provide a joint activity that encourages and establishes links between local residents of both a refugee/migrant and Norwegian background, so as to facilitate better integration. The event is organised by the Norwegian Red Cross in collaboration with IMDi, KS and the Norwegian Trekking Association (DNT). The sixth event was held in



2013, and a total of 6,000 people - the majority resettled refugees - have taken part since the project began.

Evaluations

To date, **no overall evaluation** of the Norwegian resettlement programme has been carried out. An annual evaluation seminar is held to assess the NORCO programme, organised by IOM Oslo and attended by bicultural CO trainers, resettled refugees, municipalities, UDI and IMDi. Seminar outcomes are used to plan improvements in the NORCO programme for the year ahead.

Immigration Services of the Nordic countries meet with representatives from UNHCR twice a year to exchange experiences and discuss topics common to their national resettlement programmes.

Strengths and Challenges

Strengths

- The Norwegian resettlement programme is **one of the largest quota programmes in Europe** and - to date - the quota has been filled every year. The quota targets a varied caseload, including medical and emergency cases and high numbers

of Women At Risk (WAR), and benefits from short decision-making and processing times.

- Placement in municipalities is characterised by **strong cooperation** between central and local governmental authorities. The placement system is particularly effective in terms of ensuring appropriate services for refugees with specific medical needs, and in enabling the development of local expertise in working with groups such as UAMs in specific municipalities.

Challenges

- Municipalities are experiencing increasing challenges in finding **housing** for single persons.
- Norwegian municipalities have received many resettled refugees with serious medical and social needs. While this aspect of the Norwegian programme has operated successfully, receiving refugees with these profiles has created a large call on local specialist services that has in some cases impacted negatively on the **capacity of local services**.

New Developments

- Norway is increasingly active in strategic resettlement, most recently with a focus on the protracted Eritrean refugee situation in Sudan and with respect to burden-sharing of medical cases from the Afghan refugee population in Iran. For 2013, Norway has re-engaged in the resettlement of Congolese refugees, conducting a selection mission to Nakivale Refugee Camp in Uganda has been conducted this year, including interviewing on site, and committed to receiving 75 Colombian refugees from Ecuador.
- In response to the UNHCR's 2011 Global Resettlement Solidarity Initiative for North Africa, Norway created 250 places in addition to the annual quota and made 60 places available from within the regular quota. Norway also expedited the resettlement of 45 UAMs from Shousha.