

Annual Report 2004

The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration

ENGLISH



UDI

Norwegian Directorate
of Immigration

UDI events calendar 2004

January

- Introduction of the 48-hour procedure for asylum seekers with assumed groundless applications
- Report to the Norwegian Storting (Parliament) no. 21 (2003-2004) Styringsforhold på utlendingsfeltet [Control instruments in the immigration field]
- Provision of accommodation is withdrawn. Persons who have received a final rejection of their asylum application are no longer entitled to a place at a reception centre
- Opening of BAZAR, a multi-lingual website developed by Deichmanske bibliotek (Oslo Public Library)

February

- Proposal to establish an equal rights and discrimination ombudsman
- Launch of the electronic search engine Bosettingshjelperen (the Settlement Assistant), which will make it easier for refugees to settle in a municipality based on their own wishes and plans, and on what the municipality has to offer

March

- On assignment from the UDI, FAFO (the Institute for Labour and Social Research) publishes a report on human trafficking of women
- Duration of seasonal work permits is extended from three to six months



April

- The UDI publishes a service declaration
- The UDI's spring conference "Between Two Countries of Origin - What Forces Control the Integration Process?"



May

- EU/EEA is expanded by ten new countries. Norway introduces transitional rules for workers from eight of these countries
- The UDI launches a teaching package for lower secondary schools in municipalities that have settled refugees from Liberia about prejudice, being a refugee and solidarity
- Decision to close down around 30 asylum reception centres during 2004



June

- Introduction of the requirement for travel and sickness insurance to obtain a visa
- Increase of fees for applying for residence and citizenship to NOK 800 and NOK 2000, respectively
- Our website, www.udi.no, is among the top three in a competition for state website of the year
- Utrop (Calling out), Norway's first multicultural newspaper, is published on 15 June
- World Refugee Day, 20 June



July

- 1 July: Case processing fee is introduced for everyone who applies for a visa to Norway • Faf-rapporten "Hvordan gikk det etterpå?" viser at flyktninger som er med i introduksjonsprogram, kjem raskere i ordinært arbeid enn andre flyktninger
- The FAFO report "Hvordan gikk det etterpå?" [How did it go afterwards?] shows that refugees who participate in introductory programmes find employment more quickly than other refugees

August

- The Government decides to expand the resettlement refugee quota for 2005 from 750 to 1000
- The consultants PLS Ramboll Management submit a report containing proposals for alternative organisation models to ensure a dedicated focus on long-term efforts aimed
- The UDI participates in the multicultural event Mela at Rådhusplassen in Oslo



September

- The introductory programme becomes compulsory for all municipalities as of 1 September
- The UDI's Information Service for Applicants extends its opening hours
- The immigration portal for children and young persons, www.bip.no, is launched
- The Government's action plan to combat human trafficking in women and children (2003-2005)
- The National Conference for Immigrant Organisations, "Good Practices in Organisation Network Building"



October

- Report to the Norwegian Storting no. 49 (2003-2004) Mangfold gjennom inkludering og deltakelse [Diversity through Inclusion and Participation] is submitted
- 19 October: the Immigration Act Commission submits its proposal for a new Immigration Act, NOU 2004:20, to the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development
- The UDI arranges a number of seminars for settlement municipalities on the integration of refugees from Burma/Myanmar



Foto: Elmer Laahne

- The UDI's conference on interpreting in public services: "How to Comply with the Information and Guidance Obligation in Communications with Minority Language Speakers"
- "Immigrants in Norway - Who Are They and How Are They Faring?" - two reports from Statistics Norway on immigrant demography and living conditions are published

November

- The UDI, KS (the Norwegian Association of Local Authorities) and the Norwegian State Housing Bank carry out a joint settlement campaign from 15 August to 15 November. This leads to the settlement of 953 single refugees in a municipality in a short period of time
- A number of fact sheets with information about rules and application procedures are launched in 19 languages. The fact sheets are available at www.udi.no
- Information about rights for women who apply for reunification with family members resident in Norway is made available at the embassies
- The EU summit meeting adopts a multi-year programme to strengthen freedom, security and justice (the Hague programme), where greater cooperation on asylum and immigration policy is an important part
- The UDI's conference on unaccompanied minor asylum seekers and refugees
- Establishment of expert teams to put an end to forced marriages, with representatives from the UDI, the police and the Norwegian Red Cross



December

- Erna Solberg, Minister of Local Government and Regional Development, announces the recommendation to establish a new Directorate: the Directorate of Integration and Diversity
- Parliament agrees to the Government's proposal to make instruction in the Norwegian language and social studies compulsory for immigrants. This scheme will enter into force on 1 September 2005
- The Government obtains a majority in favour of discontinuing the right and obligation to take the introductory programme for family members of persons granted residence on humanitarian grounds
- The Government decides that all relevant asylum seekers must sign a declaration informing them about the prohibition on sexual mutilation and forced marriages
- Parliament decides to establish a separate entity, the Country of Origin Information Centre, from 1 January 2005
- 1 January 2005: an expanded information and guidance programme replaces free legal aid for asylum seekers in the initial phase
- Information activities related to the tsunami disaster in South-East Asia



Foto: CF-Wesenberg

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The Directorate of Immigration's main objectives

The UDI shall process all cases and tasks within an acceptable period of time

The UDI shall provide satisfactory user service

The UDI shall develop a flexible organisation

The Directorate of Immigration's core values

Dignity

Human rights, the UN refugee convention and other conventions Norway has acceded to are international expressions of an attitude to human dignity that governs the UDI in all its activities. As a value, dignity clearly expresses the fact that the Directorate's work involves individuals. The Directorate bears a heavy responsibility because so many of the decisions it makes affect individuals. The Directorate's focus on good communication and user service also reflects the fact that human dignity is a core value for the UDI. The priority given to dignity also applies to our internal processes, thus ensuring that it is applied to our employees as well as to external parties

Professionalism

The emphasis on professionalism underlines the fact that the UDI is part of the public administration and must carry out its duties in compliance with laws and regulations. In many cases the rules allow for individual judgement, and it is an important aim for the UDI to exercise this judgement correctly. The Directorate wishes to be seen as a professional administrative body in which professional expertise and competence form the basis for objective and impartial decision-making. A professional attitude also means that the Directorate's employees must be professionally skilled and have the required expertise.

Comprehensive approach

A comprehensive approach underlines the interaction between the UDI's various tasks, a shared understanding of objectives, methods and values, and focus on the tension between regulated/controlled immigration on the one hand and the facilitation of integration on the other. A comprehensive approach also requires conscious prioritisation to achieve a balance between quality and quantity in the performance of our duties. This approach also means contributing to the social debate to promote impartiality and balance in the presentation of the immigration field. The UDI wishes to contribute to a debate that takes account of the fact that, in this era of globalisation, Norway is moving from a unilateral focus on border control to a more comprehensive management of migration.

Values – a guiding tool

These values are binding and demanding. They place a responsibility on each Directorate employee, and on management in particular, to give that little bit extra when performing their duties. Together, the values constitute a tool that guides the Directorate in its implementation of and contribution to a humane immigration, integration and refugee policy

KEY FIGURES

- The UDI administered a total budget of around NOK 5 168 million, whereof around NOK 463.7 million was spent on the Directorate's operations
- The UDI processed 12 500 applications for asylum
- The UDI processed 59 700 other work and residence cases
- The UDI processed 8800 applications for citizenship
- The reception centres had an average of 14 300 residents throughout the year
- 4200 refugees were granted asylum, protection or residence on humanitarian grounds (including the quota of resettlement refugees)
- 5500 refugees and family members reunited with refugees were settled in a municipality
- 12 800 persons were granted family immigration
- 33 000 were granted work permits (4900 of them were granted permits for seasonal work for up to six months)

A NORMAL WEEK AT THE UDI

- 1500 new cases
- Progress in 1500 other cases
- 7000 incoming calls
- 170 000 hits on the Internet
- 625 personal inquiries at the reception desk
- 4000 inquiries to the Information Service for Applicants
- 55 press inquiries



“Our commitment to getting the whole migration management picture across appears to be bearing fruit.”

After we presented the UDI's annual statistics for 2004 at the turn of the year, Aftenposten (a leading Norwegian national daily newspaper) wrote in a leader: “[...] the UDI has presented very exciting figures for the 2004 migration year.” Aftenposten pointed out that immigration is much more than asylum. The newspaper drew particular attention to the fact that family reunification involving Norwegian nationals deserves more attention than has been the case until now. Other major media also commented on the connections between various types of migration.

This means that our commitment to getting the whole migration management picture across appears to be bearing fruit. We see that an increasing number of people are contacting the UDI to learn more about migration. The figures and the connections that caught the interest of the newspapers are dealt with in detail in this annual report and in the accompanying document providing facts and figures.

On the production side, 2004 represented a new trend: The number of asylum cases for processing was reduced by 50 per cent. The number of residence cases for processing was reduced by 40 per cent. This gave us the opportunity to improve our contact with and service to our users. Feedback from business and industry

organisations shows that they are satisfied with the UDI's service and information relating to recruiting labour from abroad.

New approaches to integration were introduced in 2004. The statutory introductory schemes were made compulsory for all the local authorities. Here too, feedback indicates that the programme content, which is the result of many years of preparations and development by the UDI, is functioning well.

2004 was the year when the Government decided to organise integration efforts separately under a new Directorate as of 1 January 2006. Employees and managers at the UDI wholeheartedly support this reform, and we shall do our utmost to give the new Directorate of Integration and Diversity an optimal start. For the UDI, which will continue its work on regulatory duties, the challenge will be to maintain our focus on how regulatory activities must also assume some of the responsibility for ensuring integration and cultural diversity.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Trygve G. Nordby'.

Trygve G. Nordby
Director General

International obligations and cooperation

International conventions such as the UN Refugee Convention, the European Convention on Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child have an influence on Norwegian policy and practice in the UDI's field of work. Norway cooperates closely with the EU through the Schengen Treaty and the Dublin Convention. Important international partners for the UDI include the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM).

The sector responsibility principle

An important principle in Norwegian public administration is that a sector authority is responsible for providing equal and fair services in its sector. This can be illustrated by a municipality which has a reception centre. The local education authorities in this municipality are responsible for providing an adequate education programme for the children in the reception centre, while the local health authorities are responsible for providing adequate health services for the residents in the reception centre. The local authority receives state funding for this. On the state level, the Ministry of Education and Research and the Ministry of Health and Social Care, and their subordinate agencies, are responsible for following up local implementation of the tasks and activities in their sectors. The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development and the UDI play an important role in this work as prime movers vis-à-vis the public authorities.

The Directorate of Immigration (UDI) is the central administrative body dealing with immigration into Norway. The UDI's overriding aim is to contribute to the implementation and development of a humane immigration, integration and refugee policy, with a solid basis in political decisions and human rights, and which earns the trust of the users and the public at large. To succeed in this aim, the UDI depends on good cooperation and an open dialogue with the rest of the immigration administration, other public agencies, NGOs and, not least, the immigrant population's own organisations.

The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development (KRD)

KRD has the overriding responsibility for refugee, immigration and integration policy. The Ministry directs the UDI and UNE (the Immigration Appeals Board) through legislation, regulations, budgetary appropriations and allocation letters. The Ministry also determines the framework for the integration activities of the local authorities through the Introductory Programme Act and by stipulating the amount of integration subsidies allocated to the local authorities for settling refugees.

The Immigration Appeals Board (UNE)

The UNE is an autonomous administrative body similar to a court of law which considers appeals of UDI decisions pursuant to the Immigration Act and the Immigration Regulations. The board is administratively subordinate to the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development. The Immigration Appeals Board is the UDI's superior body when it comes to interpreting legislation, and the board's practice sets precedents for the UDI's practice.

Country of Origin Information Centre

This office is tasked with collecting and analysing information about social conditions and human rights in countries which the UDI, UNE and KRD need to know about. It replaces corresponding offices at the UDI and UNE. This is an independent office, and is only administratively connected to the UDI.

The police

The police are responsible for a number of tasks in the immigration field, both in asylum and other cases. Important tasks include receiving and processing certain residence cases, registration and identity control in asylum cases, border control and activities related to illegal immigration and illegal residence, and escorting rejected asylum seekers out of Norway, in addition to other foreign nationals residing illegally in the

country. The police are subordinate to the Ministry of Justice and the Police (JD).

The Contact Committee for Immigrants and the Authorities (KIM)

KIM is a government-appointed advisory body which provides advice to the authorities in cases relating to immigrants, and conducts dialogues between immigrants and the authorities. KIM consists of all the members of Innvandererforum (the Immigrant Forum), as well as representatives of the central authorities, the political parties represented in Parliament and the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities.

The foreign service

Norway's foreign service missions play an important role as the first-line service for immigrants wishing to visit or move to Norway. The duties of the foreign service missions include providing information about regulations and procedures, processing applications for visitor visas and receiving and preparing applications for visas and residence to be processed by the UDI. The foreign service missions in countries from where asylum seekers come also report to Country Info about human rights conditions. When necessary, they verify specific information in asylum cases on behalf of the UDI and UNE.

The municipal sector

The local authorities have an important role to play when it comes to facilitating integration and cultural diversity at the local level. The local authorities settle refugees in cooperation with the UDI and the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities. From 1 September 2004, the integration activities undertaken by the local authorities were regulated by law for the first time, through the Introductory Programme Act. The local authorities must also ensure that general municipal services are adapted to a multicultural population.

The Directorate of Immigration (UDI)

The UDI's core duties include ensuring that refugees receive protection by assessing their applications for asylum, ensuring that asylum seekers are offered accommodation, and ensuring that refugees who are granted residence are settled in a municipality. The UDI also helps to ensure that immigration is regulated by processing applications for various residence and work permits. The UDI helps to ensure equal opportunities for everyone through its overriding responsibility for integrating immigrants and refugees into Norwegian society and by helping to combat racism and discrimination. As the central administrative body for immigration, the UDI is responsible for following up the other administrative bodies to ensure that the system as a whole functions well.

The Asylum Department

This department's primary task is to process applications for asylum with the aim of providing protection to those who qualify for it. The department also helps to develop the regulations in the asylum field. At the end of 2004 the department had 150 permanent and 77 temporary staff.

The Residence Department

This department's primary task is to process cases related to work permits, family immigration, visas, study permits, citizenship and expulsion. The department also helps to develop the regulations in the residence field. At the end of 2004 the department had 128 permanent and 70 temporary staff.

The Integration Department

This department has the main responsibility for the UDI's activities centred on providing asylum seekers with accommodation while their applications are being processed (asylum reception centres), settling refugees in a municipality and for their integration into Norwegian society. At the end of 2004 the department had 140 permanent and 32 temporary staff. Of

these, 95 permanent and 20 temporary staff worked at the UDI's six regional offices.

The Department for Strategy and Coordination

This department is responsible for developing the regulations in the immigration field and for coordinating the UDI's participation in international cooperation. The department is also responsible for the Directorate's statistics and analysis work. At the end of 2004 the department had 45 permanent and three temporary staff.

The Administration Department

This department is responsible for finances, human resources, information systems, security, crisis and contingency planning, office services and management of buildings. At the end of 2004 the department had 104 permanent and ten temporary staff.

The Communications and Service Department

The work of this department consists of general communications and service activities, focusing on society at large, the media and the UDI's users, as well as the coordination of overriding information issues, the development of communication strategies, service and in-house information. At the end of 2004 the then information office had eight permanent and nine temporary staff. On 1 March 2005, the Communications and Service Department was established to take over the first-line service, including the information service for applicants, the switchboard and reception desk functions.

The Director General's Staff

The director general's staff assists the director general in his management of the Directorate and works on organisational development, managerial development and specific development and reporting functions, in addition to running the director general's outer office. At the end of 2004 the staff had five permanent positions.

The UDI's regional organisation

The UDI's six regional offices perform a number of the directorate's tasks and duties, ranging from asylum reception centres to long-term integration into the local community. The regional offices work closely with the directorate's partners and have developed solid competence on local conditions.

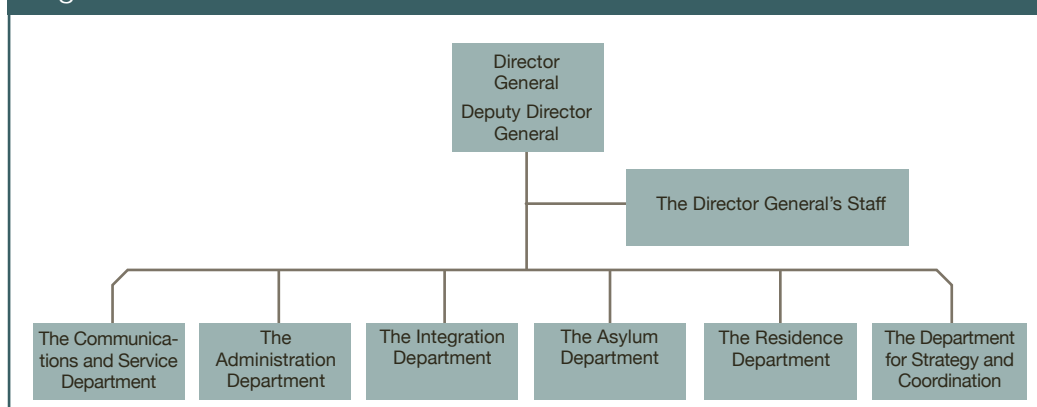
The regional offices shall establish and supervise the operation of the state reception centres for asylum seekers in their regions, and cooperate with the reception centres and municipalities on the settlement of refugees. They shall also work to achieve equality between immigrants and the majority population, provide information on repatriation and return, process applications for return grants and carry out information campaigns targeting Norwegians and refugees.

Important challenges in 2005

Through the allocation letter from the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development (KRD), the UDI has been assigned responsibility for a number of duties:

- Preparations and restructuring in connection with the establishment of a new Directorate of Integration and Diversity as of 1 January 2006
- Improving the service to our applicants
- Improving programmes for asylum seekers with mental-health problems and special care requirements
- Illegal immigration and the withdrawal of the offer of housing
- Introduction of the scheme giving immigrants a right and obligation to attend Norwegian language and social studies courses.

Organisation chart



The Directorate of Immigration had good attainment of goals in important areas in 2004. For the UDI's users it was particularly positive that the number of unprocessed cases was dramatically reduced. This resulted in shorter case processing times in many cases.

The Government's four main goals for its immigration, refugee and integration policy:

1. Regulated immigration
2. Protection of refugees
3. Equal opportunities for participation
4. Efficient and user-oriented administration

The allocation letter's four priority areas for the UDI in 2004:

1. Reduce case processing times
2. Protect the institution of asylum
3. Improve the service provided to applicants and other users
4. Follow up the introductory programme and prepare for the right and obligation to instruction in the Norwegian language

The central governing documents for the activities and priorities of the Directorate of Immigration are the Government budget and the accompanying allocation letter from the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development. The Government budget defines the financial framework for the UDI's activities and formulates the Government's general objectives in this policy field. The allocation letter specifies the goals and the accompanying performance requirements for the UDI's activities. The Government also uses the allocation letter to define the areas it wants the UDI to pay particular attention to each year.

Attainment of goals in the priority areas in 2004

Among the many performance requirements the UDI was given in the allocation letter for 2004, we have chosen to focus on those related to the four main priority areas. In the first two priority areas it is relatively easy to measure performance, as this involves production that can be measured by the number of cases processed. Performance in the other two priority areas is not so easy to quantify, therefore the reporting for these areas is more qualitative.

Priority area 1: Reduce case processing times

Residence cases

At the end of 2003 the UDI had 21 100 residence cases for processing (including applications for family immigration, work permits and citizenship). The allocation letter therefore paid special attention to reducing the case processing queue and the case processing time

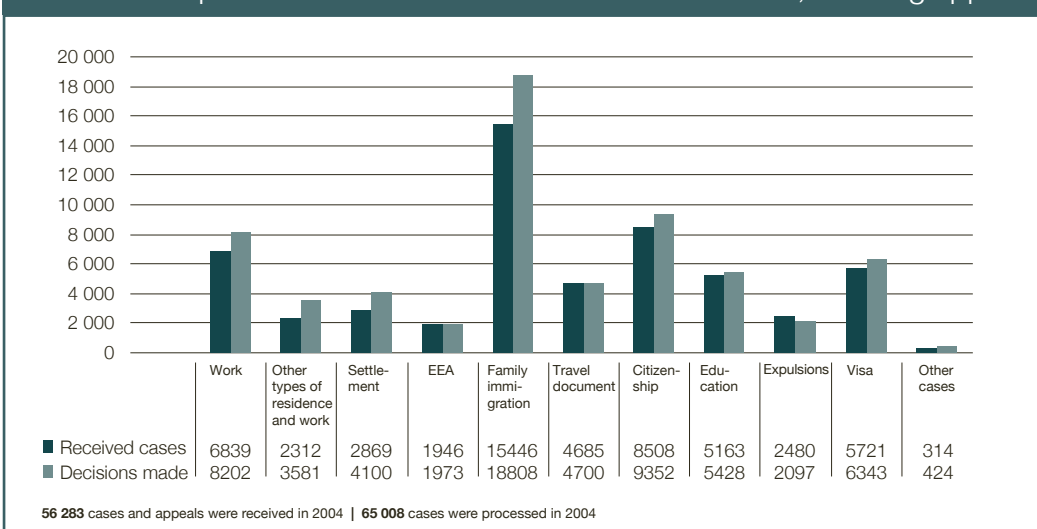
for residence cases. The performance requirement was that the UDI should not have more than 11 000 unprocessed residence cases by the end of 2004.

A number of measures were implemented during the course of the year to meet this goal. Organisational changes in the Residence Department, new procedures for speedier processing of uncomplicated cases and assistance from the Asylum Department helped the UDI to process 65 000 applications in 2004, compared with 52 000 in 2003. At the end of the year the number of unprocessed residence cases had been reduced to 12 500. The goal of 11 000 cases was thus not fully met. Endeavours to reduce the case processing times in residence cases continue in 2005, with a substantially better starting point than in the previous year.

Asylum cases

After several years with a high influx of asylum seekers, asylum case processing has had high priority throughout the immigration administration. In 2003 the UDI processed 17 500 asylum applications. The forecast for the influx in 2004 was 10 000, and the case processing goal was set at 14 000 cases. The result was that the UDI managed to process 12 500 cases, 1500 less than the performance requirement. However, there were 2000 fewer asylum seekers than forecast. This means that at the end of 2004 the Directorate had fewer unprocessed asylum cases than the stipulated case processing goal.

Received and processed residence cases in the UDI in 2004, including appeals



Priority area 2: Protect the institution of asylum

An important performance requirement under this priority area was the implementation of a rapid procedure model (the 48-hour procedure) for asylum seekers with assumed groundless applications to help reduce the number of asylum seekers without any need for protection. The rapid procedure was introduced on 1 January 2004. The 200 cases that were processed according to this procedure were completed in less than 48 hours, as intended.

In accordance with the requirements set out in the allocation letter, a scheme was also introduced whereby persons whose asylum applications have been rejected no longer receive an offer of accommodation in a reception centre. The intention is to show that persons residing illegally in Norway after receiving a rejection will not at the same time receive free board and lodging from the Norwegian state. Families with children and some others are exempted from this scheme. In 2004, 600 persons were notified that they were no longer allowed to live in a reception centre. At the end of the year around 75 per cent of them had either left the reception centres or were granted exemption from the scheme for various reasons.

Priority area 3: Improve service to applicants and other users

Due to such problems as long case processing queues the UDI has long faced major challenges in the service area. In accordance with the performance requirements in the allocation letter the following measures were implemented in 2004:

- New procedures have been drawn up for sending and updating information to applicants about expected case processing times
- A service declaration for applicants has been adopted
- A service strategy and accompanying action plans for measures have been drawn up, and the implementation of the measures in the action plans has begun under the leadership of a newly appointed service manager

Priority area 4: Follow up the introductory programme

On 1 September it became compulsory for all the municipalities in Norway settling refugees to offer individual introductory programmes for newly arrived refugees. Prior to this the UDI implemented a number of measures to assist the local authorities with this work. All the regions organised training seminars for the municipal sector. A number of information measures were implemented to assist the local authorities, other public authorities, employers and various organisations in their preparations. The Directorate also put a great deal of emphasis on presenting information to the general public through the media about this major escalation of the integration efforts at the local authority level.

Residence permit

Permission to reside in Norway for more than three months. Such a permit does not confer a right to work, with the exception of EU/EEA citizens.

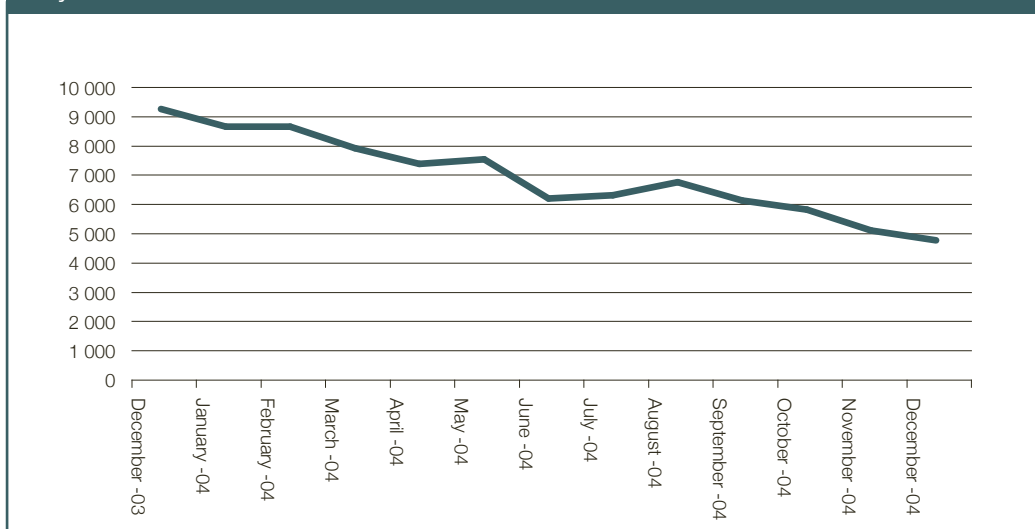
Work permit

Permission to take employment in Norway. Work permits can be granted to persons over 15 years of age who satisfy the conditions laid down in the Immigration Act.

Asylum

A place of refuge for persons who have a well-founded fear of being persecuted on the grounds of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion. Asylum includes, for example, protection against being sent back to the area where the person in question has reason to fear persecution. Asylum also confers certain rights during the stay in the country of asylum. Foreign nationals who are granted asylum in Norway are granted refugee status

Asylum cases in the UDI without a decision



The Norwegian debate on migration-related issues has generally focused on asylum and immigration policy.

In 2004 it has therefore been important for the UDI to promote a more comprehensive understanding of, and debate on, migration.

There are many reasons why people come to Norway. The UDI plays a part for many of them.



An important measure to this end was the Directorate's spring conference in April, where the spotlight was on migration under the title "Mellom to hjemland" [Between Two Home Countries]. The UDI has also used other events, lectures, feature articles and media input to start a debate on the understanding of migration in Norwegian society. We have therefore decided to include a chapter on migration in this annual report to contribute to a holistic understanding of this field.

Broad concepts, broad challenges

The term migration covers both immigration and emigration, voluntary and forced, legal and illegal movement of people. Steadily increasing globalisation and the accompanying rise in travel, the internationalisation of the education system and growing international trade mean that more and more people have the opportunity or need to stay in a foreign country for varying lengths of time. Other important reasons for migration are conflicts and poverty, which compel millions of people to flee their homelands or seek a better life for themselves and their families.

To meet the challenges that result from all these different forms of migration, we must view all relevant aspects of migration as a

whole. This applies to the role migration already plays and should continue to play in the future, in terms of demography, culture, employment, education, social policy, foreign policy, foreign aid, refugee protection and integration, and the role migration plays in the regulatory and control systems.

Our understanding and handling of migration are important for Norway's ability to participate actively in a globalised world, where development occurs at the intersection between different cultures and across national borders. The UDI's aim is to build up an administration that is based on the mutual need Norway and the global community have to stimulate and regulate migration and to meet these challenges proactively.

Important to have solid facts

Having a full picture of migration to Norway is important if we are to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of and debate on migration. Developments during the last ten years show that family immigration is the primary reason for permanent immigration into Norway, and that most of this immigration involves Norwegian nationals. If we add immigration for study and employment purposes based on personal contacts, we can safely say

The migration window

The term migration covers both immigration and emigration, voluntary and forced, legal and illegal movement of people

		Motive	
		Voluntary	Forced
Method	Illegal		
	Legal		

Examples

Refugee: The method may be legal or illegal, the motive is forced.

Work: The method may be legal or illegal, the motive may be forced or voluntary.

Victim of human trafficking: The manner is illegal, the motive is forced

Facts about migration

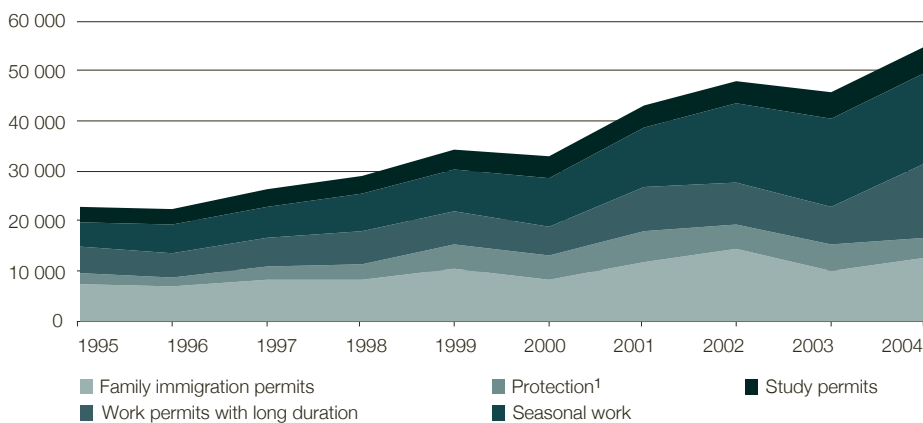
- Worldwide, 175 million people live outside their country of origin
- 289 000 persons born in another country live in Norway, and have had 60 000 children here
- Including persons with one parent born abroad, more than 500 000 persons in Norway have an immigrant background
- More than 14 000 Norwegian nationals study abroad each year, while more than 5000 foreign nationals are granted a permit to study in Norway
- The total of the remittances from immigrants to relatives in their countries of origin is larger than the total development aid given to developing countries

Source: Statistics Norway (SSB) and the International Peace Research Institute (PRIO)

that a large proportion of immigration into Norway comes as a result of the relationships many of us have forged with family, friends, colleagues or business associates abroad. Short-term employment contracts are the most important reason for increased immigration into Norway. In 2004 the expansion of the EU and the subsequent increase in opportunities

for labour immigration resulted in an increase of 40 per cent in the number of work permits granted to citizens from the new EU countries. In relation to the total number of immigrants, refugees constitute a minor proportion of total migration to Norway.

Various types of permit granted 1995-2004



¹Here, protection includes both resettlement refugees and persons who have been granted residence following an application for asylum, i.e. persons who have been granted asylum.

A total of 32 900 new work permits were granted in 2004. Overall, 25 300 work permits were granted to nationals from the new EU countries in 2004. Compared with 2003 this is an increase of around 40 per cent. The number of permits granted in accordance with the specialist rules declined by more than a third to 734.



Transitional rules

On 1 May 2004 the European Union (EU) and the European Economic Area (EEA) were expanded, taking on ten new member countries. Norway introduced a transitional scheme for nationals from eight of these countries (Cyprus and Malta the exceptions). The transitional rules mean that nationals of the countries covered by the scheme must still have a residence and work permit to hold a job with a Norwegian employer, but it is easier for persons from these countries to have their application processed than for nationals from countries outside the EU and EEA area.

In 2004, the EU/EEA expansion and the consequences this could have for labour immigration were a main focus of the debate on labour immigration at the political level, in the media and at the UDI. It was also a hot topic of debate in Norway and elsewhere in Europe. On 1 May 2004 ten new countries became members of the EU, thus also joining the EEA cooperation. Norway introduced transitional rules for eight of the ten new countries: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, the Czech Republic and Hungary. The rules stipulate that employees from the new member countries must have a work permit before commencing work, and that pay and working conditions must correspond to Norwegian pay scales or collective agreements where such exist.

In 2004, 25 100 first-issue work permits were granted, four of five pursuant to the transitional rules. The three largest countries of origin in this context were Poland (16 100), Lithuania (6100) and Latvia (1200). The permits granted in accordance with the transitional rules are mainly short-term permits for seasonal work in agriculture. The majority of the EEA permits granted to nationals from these eight new member countries are such short-term permits; the duration of 62 per cent of them was up to three months.

The conclusion so far when it comes to the transitional rules is that they have not had any moderating impact on labour immigration from the new member countries. Moreover, in the UDI's view, the simplified and rapid procedures have led many of those who might have opted to work without registration to choose instead to work legally. In connection with the EU/EEA expansion, in addition to monitoring the consequences in its field of responsibility, the Directorate was expected to obtain an overview of the effects in the areas of other important agencies/organisations affected by the expansion and transitional rules. The UDI published a special report on this towards the end of the year.

Major effort to speed up case processing

Prior to the EU expansion, the Directorate of Immigration received clear political signals that applications would have to be processed very rapidly. The Directorate's evaluation shows that case processing times have been very short, and that the restructuring of the police and the Directorate of Immigration has been very successful. Towards the end of 2004 case processing times were as follows:

- 60 per cent of the cases were completed after one day
- 70 per cent of the cases were completed after two days



Ben (40) is a senior doctor with a PhD in medicine who works at the Radiumhospitalet Comprehensive Cancer Center in Oslo as a pathologist and cancer researcher.

"I came to Norway in 1998 to work as a junior doctor, but I have later specialized as a pathologist," says Ben, who trained as a doctor in Israel, his country of origin.

"I wanted to work in a different environment and since I had acquaintances in Norway, it was natural to apply for a work permit here."

"I generally work with cancer diagnostics by studying patient biopsies (samples of tissue or organs removed from patients). In addition, I am doing research on cancer of the ovaries."

"Needless to say, working and settling in another country involves challenges. There are many cultural differences, but it helps if you have an open mind. For me it has been a good experience to work in Norway. I enjoy being here and am happy," the doctor adds.

- 80 per cent of the cases were completed after five days
- 90 per cent of the cases were completed after 14 days

When it comes to other case processing times, in 2004 the UDI has put a great deal of resources into reducing the number of unprocessed cases, and due to this effort, the number of unprocessed cases declined by 40 per cent. Together with further improvements in our service, we will continue to concentrate efforts on speedy and efficient processing of uncomplicated cases in our activities in connection with work permits and other residence cases in 2005.

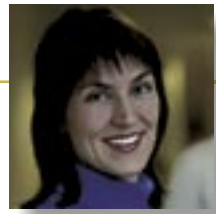
The lowest number of specialists since the quota was introduced

In 2002 the rules for specialist immigration were relaxed. For example, the requirement that there must be no available domestic labour was dropped. The aim of the change in the rules was to make it easier for Norwegian companies to recruit expert workers from abroad. In connection with the change in the rules a quota of up to 5000 persons a year was introduced for specialists.

In 2004, a report prepared by NUPI (the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs) on assignment from the UDI drew the following conclusions:

- Norway is encountering stiff competition for labour from other countries
- The Norwegian authorities are not good enough at marketing both the specialist scheme and Norway in countries that could have specialists that are of interest to Norway
- Companies must work more actively to attract foreign specialists, and inform interested parties about the relaxation of the rules related to specialists

A total of 747 persons were granted specialist permits in 2004. Since 2000 Norway has welcomed more than 4500 specialists. A specialist in this connection is a trained worker who has been offered employment in Norway. The largest group of applicants pursuant to the specialist provision consists of craftsmen: joiners, carpenters, painters and bricklayers. Other large groups are health service personnel and engineers.



Name: Anna Katarina Grova

Age: 35 years

Education: Lawyer

She has worked as a consultant for four and a half years in the Residence Department in the Employment and Education Office. She processes work permit applications from all over the world, but primarily from the EU.

"What I like best about my job is that there are always new challenges and issues to contend with. Last spring I worked on the EU expansion and the transitional rules for the new EU countries. It was really interesting to be part of a project where we had to respond to submissions and clarify many issues of principle relating to the rules. New cases keep surfacing that neither we nor the legislators had considered. This means that my workdays are very varied. One day I will work on applications that are simple and uncontroversial. That allows me to complete many cases. The next day an application might land on my desk involving issues that need to be clarified before the case can be processed. Moreover, the good working environment and pleasant colleagues make the UDI a good place to work."

Specialists

Specialists are persons who are trained in a particular field or have special qualifications needed in Norway. Their expertise must be critical for the enterprise seeking to hire them.

¹The Evaluation of the Results of the Introduction of the New Regime for Migration of Skilled Labour to Norway (Spesialistordningen). The Case of Ukraine.

Family ties are the most important reason for permanent immigration to Norway. The number of family immigrants remained high in 2004, even though fewer were granted permits for reunification with refugees after the rules were tightened in 2003.



From reunification to immigration

The term family reunification, traditionally used when speaking about family-related immigration, does not cover all residence permits granted on the basis of family relationships. More often than reunification, the aim is to establish a family life. The UDI has therefore chosen to use the term family immigration as a collective term for family reunification and family establishment. This term is also used in the new Immigration Act proposed in 2004.

One of five marriages is with a foreign national

Statistics Norway's (SSB) most recent marriage statistics (marriages entered into in 2003) show that as many as 22 per cent of marriages entered into that year were between a person living in Norway and a person resident abroad. A total of 3450 men residing in Norway married foreign women, while 1750 women married foreign men. Women from Thailand (700 women), Russia (400 women) and the Philippines (270 women) who married men with a Norwegian background constituted the largest groups in these statistics.

More permits granted in 2004

In 2004, 12 800 permits were granted to persons applying for family immigration, compared with 10 500 in 2003. A total of 57 per cent of the permits were granted to spouses, cohabitants or partners, while 40 per cent were granted to children. Only 3 per cent were granted to other family members. As in Statistics Norway's marriage statistics, the trend is that those who arrive in Norway because of family immigration are reunited with Norwegian nationals. The ten countries from which the greatest number of applicants arrived last year are largely the same as in 2003 (figures for 2003 in brackets).

Thailand	1099	(780)
Iraq	909	(940)
Russia	742	(797)
Somalia	689	(652)
Germany	563	(401)
Pakistan	496	(518)
UK	453	(330)
Philippines	437	(396)
USA	423	(322)
Tyrey	418	(445)

Shorter case processing times

A central aim for the UDI in 2004 was to reduce the case processing times for all types of residence cases, not least for applications for family immigration. The Residence Department was allocated new resources, and great effort was put into developing efficient case processing procedures. New procedures were introduced to give priority to the processing of applications from children without caregivers in their country of origin. During the course of the year we processed over 3000 more applications for family immigration than the number of new applications received. Many applications are now processed considerably more quickly than previously, but a substantial number of old and complicated cases can still take a long time to process.



“We met when we were both working in a bar in Madrid. It only took a few months for us both to realise that we perhaps wanted to be more than friends.”

“Well, I knew that right away! I tried hard to charm you for months, and I think all of Madrid noticed before it finally worked on you ... You can be a bit dense at times,” David laughs.

Following about two years together in Spain, they decided to move to Norway. They have now lived in Norway for a year, have just bought a new flat in Grünerløkka, and are looking forward to moving in. David attends a Norwegian language course and works evenings in a bar. As soon as he learns enough Norwegian he hopes to find another job, preferably in sales.

“I know learning Norwegian is important. It’s not always easy. Most Norwegians speak English so well that even if I try, we often end up speaking English anyway,” David says.

“At least you have more Norwegian now than when you came a year ago! I think you’re doing really well, and you have the sweetest English accent in the world,” says Kristine.

“Fortunately the distance to England is not so great, so we travel there quite a lot to visit family and friends. David’s parents have already been here four or five times, and enjoy being here a lot.”



From 1 December 2004 we expanded from two to three divisions processing applications for family immigration. Even though the number of persons processing applications for family immigration has not risen, we expect that increased specialization will lead to greater efficiency. We are continuously working to develop more efficient procedures that will ensure that uncomplicated cases can be processed quickly and flexibly.

Efforts to combat abuse of the rules

In addition to ensuring a quick and flexible assessment of whether a person satisfies the requirements for being granted a family immigration permit, the Directorate of Immigration must combat abuse of the rules. Balancing efficiency and thoroughness is a daily challenge for the UDI’s staff.

Abuse generally involves giving incorrect information about family relationships. Every year the immigration authorities uncover several cases where Norwegian citizens only marry a foreign national to obtain a residence permit for the person in question. As the right to family life is the foundation for the rules on family immigration, a pro forma marriage does not confer the right to a residence permit.

A forced marriage is a marriage that has been entered into against the free will of one or both parties. The challenge facing the UDI in such cases is often to distinguish between forced marriages and arranged marriages. While a forced marriage is punishable pursuant to section 222 of the Norwegian Penal Code, arranged marriages are fully legal. If a marriage has been entered into by force, an application for family immigration will be rejected.

Both pro forma marriages and forced marriages can be difficult to detect, and working with this type of case requires substantial resources



Name: Saber Baïli

Age: 42 years

Education: Cand. Philol. (Masters in languages) from the University of Oslo, Masters in French. Employed as a advisor by the UDI for four and a half years.

Works on family immigration for persons from Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, Kenya, Uganda, Iraq, Jordan, Syria, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

“My working day consists of reviewing and processing applications for family immigration, answering questions from users and discussing professional issues with my colleagues. Some of my time is also spent guiding and training new colleagues. I have great respect for my job because it involves people and the fate of individuals. Working for the UDI is exciting. The Residence Department was recently restructured to make case processing more efficient. One of the consequences was that I was given additional countries to work with, and that is interesting and challenging. I have to study these new areas while striking a balance between efficiency and quality. It is also rewarding to make active use of my knowledge in my work. I speak French and Arabic, and that is useful in case processing. I also know something about the countries I process applications from, and that often proves very useful

2004 will be remembered as a milestone year for the integration of refugees in Norway. From 1 September the introductory programme was made obligatory for all municipalities. The halving of the number of asylum seekers compared with 2003 was another important development in 2004.



Around 3450 persons were granted asylum, protection or residence on humanitarian grounds after applying for asylum in Norway in 2004. The largest nationalities were Russia (Chechens), Somalia, Iraq and Afghanistan. In addition, Norway granted residence to 750 resettlement refugees. The largest group came from Burma/Myanmar. Over the last six years the number of persons receiving protection in Norway has remained relatively stable at between 4000 and 5000 persons. The proportion granted permits in asylum cases increased from 29 per cent in 2003 to 40 per cent in 2004. The fact that this proportion is rising while the number of asylum seekers is declining, is due to the fact that the Norwegian authorities have succeeded in limiting the influx of persons with no need of protection.

European trend and measures particular to Norway

The decline in the number of asylum seekers to Norway is part of a European trend. The number of conflicts in areas adjacent to Europe has fallen. Moreover, the Eurodac fingerprint register and the Dublin Convention, which is intended to help prevent persons from travelling from country to country in Europe to apply for asylum, started to have full effect in 2004. However, the decline in Norway was much greater than in other coun-

tries, which leaves little doubt that the measures implemented by the Norwegian authorities have also contributed to reducing the number of asylum seekers arriving in Norway.

The Dublin Convention

The Dublin Convention determines which country is responsible for processing an application for asylum. In connection with this Convention, new technology and stricter procedures have now been introduced as part of the cooperation between the Schengen countries. Today, it only takes minutes to determine whether an asylum seeker has previously applied in another country. It also takes less time to return asylum seekers to the country responsible for processing their application. The proportion of asylum cases referred for processing in other countries in accordance with the Dublin Convention increased from 20 per cent in 2003 to 26 per cent in 2004.

48-hour procedure

On 1 January 2004 the 48-hour procedure came into effect for assumed groundless asylum applications. This measure caused the number of asylum seekers from countries generally considered safe to decline steeply, by around 75 per cent compared with 2003. Two

hundred asylum applications were processed pursuant to this procedure during the course of the year, all within the deadline of 48 hours.

New legal aid scheme

Taking effect from 1 January 2005, a new legal aid scheme was introduced for asylum seekers. The new scheme means that most persons who register as asylum seekers with the police will no longer be entitled to assistance from a lawyer in the initial stage of processing the asylum application. However, asylum seekers will still receive up to five hours of legal assistance from the Directorate of Immigration if their application is rejected, if they wish to appeal the decision.

Age examinations of unaccompanied minor asylum seekers

The scheme for age examinations of unaccompanied minor asylum seekers was introduced in 2003 due to the growing problem of adults applying for asylum as children to make it easier to obtain residence in Norway. From 2003 to 2004 the number of asylum seekers claiming to be under 18 years of age declined by more than 50 per cent. The results of the age examinations showed that as many as 80 per cent of those examined were more than 18 years of age. Age examinations make it easier for the UDI to distinguish adults from children. Children who arrive in Norway without caregivers must be given a different type of care than adults, and they have the right to special protection.

Withdrawal of the offer of accommodation

From 1 January 2004 persons who have received a final rejection of their asylum application lost the right to live in a reception centre. The purpose in not providing these persons with room and board is to increase respect for the institution of asylum and to underline



Florence (28) and her family come from Liberia, but have lived in a refugee camp in Sierra Leone for several years.

On 19 March 2004 they came to Norway and their new home, a semi-detached house in Stange in Hedmark county. A couple of weeks later Florence and her brother David (20) were preparing for the introductory programme. Now they are attending a health course together as part of the introductory programme. "Helsenorsk" [Norwegian Health] is one of the main topics, and already this autumn Florence had work practice in an assisted living centre in the municipality of Stange.

"Work practice is a nice way of getting out into Norwegian society," she says.

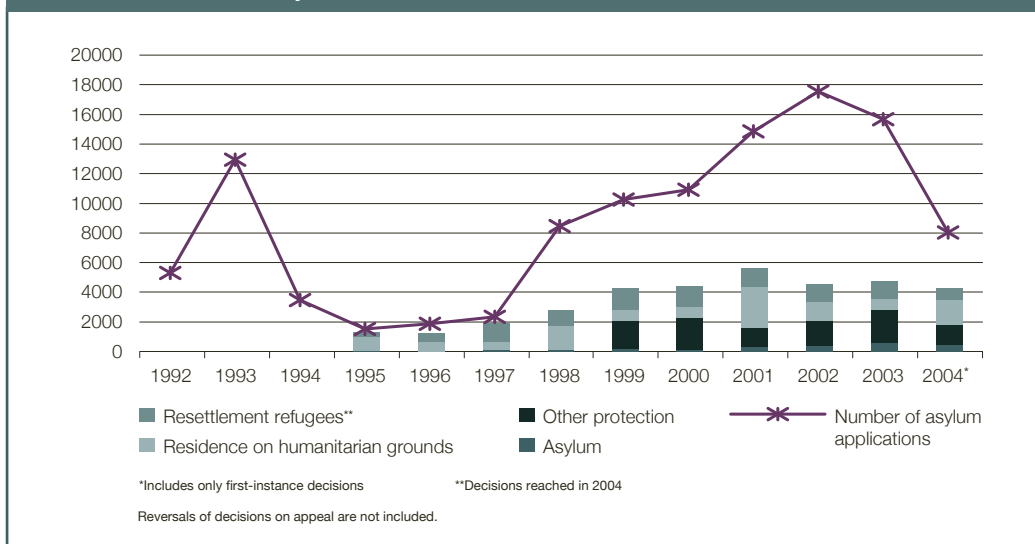
"I like attending the introductory programme, and think that it's a good opportunity to make a good start in Norway, but it's difficult. Particularly now at the start, because everything is in Norwegian," Florence tells us in English.

the obligation to leave Norway for those who have had their applications rejected. During the course of the year, 600 persons received letters informing them that they had to leave the reception centre where they were staying. Families with children and unaccompanied minors whose applications are rejected do not come under this provision, and may stay in a reception centre until they return to their country of origin.

Resettlement refugees

Norway is one of around 15 countries that each year receives a quota of resettlement refugees by arrangement with the UN's High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). These are individuals who have fled their country of origin, and who for various reasons are not safe in the country to which they have fled. In summer 2004, the Government decided to raise the quota for resettlement refugees from 750 in 2004 to 1000 in 2005.

Protection in Norway, 1999-2004



The introductory programme

While the UDI is responsible for refugees until their applications have been processed, the local authorities are responsible for them after they have been settled. From 1 September 2004 it became obligatory for the local authorities to offer introductory programmes to refugees settled after 1 September 2003. This was the culmination of many years of preparation with pilot projects in various municipalities and after a pilot year during which it was voluntary for the local authorities to offer introductory programmes. The refugees in the target group were also obliged to follow the programme they were offered. The introductory programme is linked to introductory benefits that are given on the basis of participation. The benefits correspond to twice the basic amount in the national insurance scheme. In practice, this means that the social security office is no longer the first institution refugees encounter in Norway.

The target group for the introductory programme is refugees between 18 and 55 years of age who are settled in municipalities in agreement with the UDI. They have the right and obligation to attend individual instruction in Norwegian and social studies, and to attend programmes that prepare them for working life. Family members reunited with refugees also have the right and obligation to attend the introductory programme. Moreover, the local authorities may choose to offer the introductory programme to more persons than those who come under the provisions in the Act.

An introductory programme is a full-time programme of up to two years that provides refugees with an introduction to the Norwegian language and social studies, and prepares them

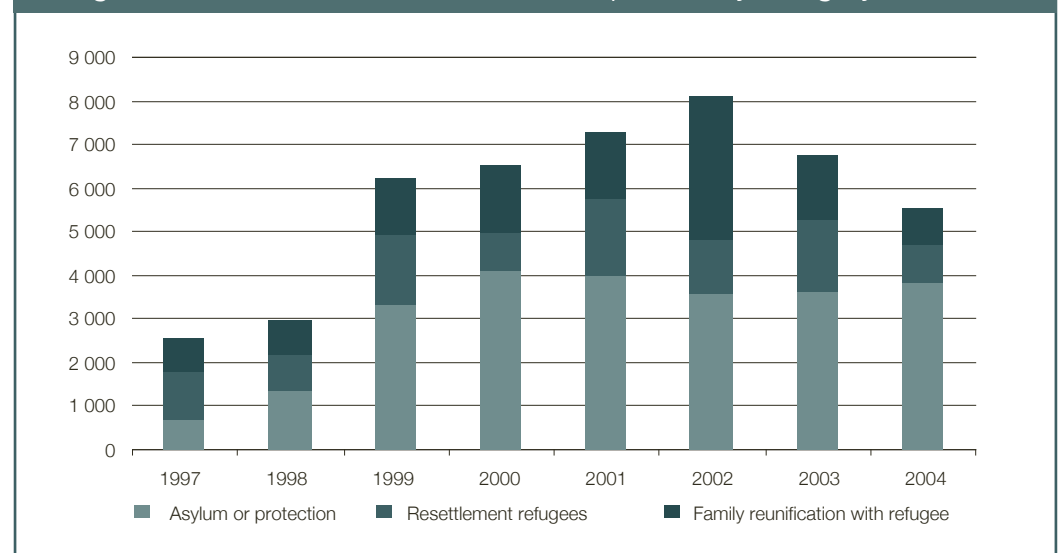
for participation in working life or ordinary education. At the end of 2004 there were around 4600 persons in the target group with the right and obligation to take the introductory programme. The aim of the programme is that newly arrived refugees should become financially independent and integrated into Norwegian society as quickly as possible. National standards ensure a better and more uniform programme throughout the country. Experiences so far indicate that everybody benefits from the introductory programme. Society will benefit more quickly from the resources represented by refugees, and refugees get to participate more quickly in Norwegian working and social life.

In 2004 the UDI used substantial resources on putting the Introductory Act into effect. For several years the UDI has been responsible for initiating and following up pilot projects in a number of municipalities. Just in the last two years before the Act became obligatory, the UDI allocated NOK 60 million to 228 municipal projects to finance the development and start-up of the introductory programme. In 2004 the UDI held training seminars in all regions and ran a major information campaign about the programme. This campaign will continue in 2005.

Settling refugees

In 2004, 4700 refugees were settled in Norwegian municipalities by agreement with the Directorate of Immigration. This is not a satisfactory number, and at the end of 2004 more than 2000 refugees were still waiting in Norwegian reception centres for settlement in a municipality. The UDI, KS and the Norwegian State Housing Bank ran a successful campaign in the second half of 2004 aimed at the settlement of single refugees, a group which has proven to take more time to

Refugees and their families settled in municipalities, by category: 1997–2004





Florence's youngest brother Robert, her son William and her niece Mahawa attend school.

"The children are happy at school, but we wish we could practise our Norwegian more outside school. We haven't got to know that many Norwegians yet," says Florence.



In 2004 around 250 Liberian refugees came to Norway as resettlement refugees. Every year, by arrangement with the UN's High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Norway receives a quota of refugees who are not safe in the countries to which they have fled. They are called resettlement refugees.



settle, and the results were good. During the campaign period 953 single refugees were settled. For the first time in years, the proportion of single individuals among refugees in reception centres ready for settlement fell below 50 per cent.

The need for settlement places in 2005 is only slightly affected by the drop in the number of asylum seekers. Based on the forecasts we have at the start of the new year, an estimated 5250 settlement places are needed. Settling refugees will also be a challenge for the UDI and the local authorities in 2005. In addition to settling 4700 refugees in the municipalities, around 800 individuals reunited with families moved to municipalities

Major effort to develop programmes for unaccompanied minor asylum seekers
"Unaccompanied minors" is the generic term for all children and young persons under 18 years of age who come to Norway without parents or who have no other adults with parental responsibilities here in the country. In 2003 and 2004, 26 projects and development programmes were launched that aim in various ways to ensure good follow-up of unaccompanied minors and increase the competence of those working with this group. The UDI has also initiated closer cooperation with the child welfare services to provide better

care for unaccompanied minors in reception centres. In 2005 special focus will be placed on tracing parents so that children can be reunited with their caregivers in their country of origin.

Information projects for good integration
In 2003 and 2004 Norway received large groups of refugees from Liberia and Burma/Myanmar for the first time. To contribute to a good integration process for these groups in Norwegian municipalities the UDI initiated two information projects in the spring and autumn of 2004. Seminars were arranged for municipal employees working with refugees, and for relevant persons from the voluntary sector in all regions where the refugees are settled. Here, knowledge about the refugees' backgrounds and tips on integration activities were presented. A major media campaign was also conducted to inform the general public about the refugees from these two countries. In the spring of 2004 we produced an educational package about refugees from Liberia for lower secondary school. This package deals with such topics as fleeing one's home, being a refugee, cultural differences and information about Liberia. Early in 2005 a similar package about refugees from Burma/Myanmar will be made available. Feedback from the local authorities has been very positive.

The FAFO report "Hvordan gikk det etterpå?" (How did it go afterwards?), published in the summer of 2004, examined whether refugees who have participated in introductory programmes later participated more in ordinary education, working life and social life than refugees who have lived in municipalities that do not offer introductory programmes. The researchers concluded that refugees who had participated in introductory programmes, both men and women, were more integrated into regular working and social life and attained financial independence more quickly.

The aim of the state's integration activities is that each and everyone, irrespective of origin and gender, shall have equal opportunities, rights and obligations to participate in society and use their resources. Integration is a reciprocal process that places demands on immigrants and Norwegian society.



The UDI employs various measures in its efforts in this area: Surveys, documentation and reports, the development of models, research and testing, training and information, dialogue with minority groups and various subsidy programmes.

Combating racism

The UDI and numerous NGOs collaborate to combat racism and discrimination through providing advice and guidance to public employees and through subsidy programmes. Surveying, documenting and reporting on immigrants' experiences of racism and discrimination in Norway forms an important basis from which to develop policies. Previously, the UDI has focused on various arenas where immigrants and minorities have felt they were subjected to racism and discrimination, including school, housing, employment and the media. The sources were immigrants who have talked about their experiences.

In 2004 the UDI implemented a fact-finding project on the relationship between the local community and residents in reception centres. Residents in reception centres, the local population, settled immigrants, reception centre employees and employees in six municipalities were interviewed. The purpose was to find

out what conflicts existed between reception centre residents and the local population, and to identify the underlying causes. Another aim was to consider what the local authorities and the reception centres are doing to prevent and/or resolve existing conflicts. The results of this project will provide important knowledge for use in future preventive efforts in connection with the establishment and operation of reception centres in the municipalities.

Adapting public services to cultural diversity

Migration means new challenges for everyone, including the public services. Users of municipal, county and state services are no longer a homogenous group with the same cultural and linguistic background. The UDI's fact-finding work aimed at cataloguing immigrants' experiences of discrimination and racism has shown that integration and cultural diversity place new demands on the public sector. If users are to feel that they are receiving equal services, the public sector employees and the services themselves must be adapted to this new situation.

Adapting to a multicultural society means, for example, raising staff competence in cross-cultural understanding and communication, and recruiting persons with minority backgrounds



They are 14 and 15 years old, play basketball, live in Oslo and are good mates. That they have roots in three different parts of the world is something they rarely think about.

“Not really. It’s always been like that. A lot of my friends come from other places.”

“It’s okay to have friends who have lived in other countries, just as I have. It means we have something in common.”



Name: Inger Axelsen

Age: 55 years

Education: Sociologist

Executive officer at the UDI for eight years, working in the Integration Department. Her duties include “a bit of everything” in the integration field: research and development, the introductory programme, forced marriages, reports and studies.

“I enjoy working at the UDI because of good colleagues and the exciting challenges involved in my job. Our duties rarely become routine, and it’s never boring to work in the Integration Department. What we actually work on varies from one year to the next. We are required to familiarise ourselves with new areas all the time. It’s also unavoidable that my work influences me personally. Meeting people from other cultures and from different backgrounds often makes you reflect on who you really are and your own beliefs, all those things we don’t normally question. In my opinion, the most positive development in the integration field in the past year was the politicians’ expressed aim of putting more effort into this work through better organisation. Of all the specific projects and measures, the launching of the Introductory Act was the major event in 2004.”

to better satisfy the needs of users with such backgrounds. This also means making correct and sufficient use of interpreters, providing information that has been translated into and adapted for more languages than the two official Norwegian languages, and practising a working environment policy that opens for a positive multicultural workplace.

More diversity – better methods

The Government’s action plan to combat racism and discrimination for 2002-2006 has put the UDI in charge of a pilot project and development programme. One objective of the programme is to summarize experiences of efforts aimed at strengthening the cultural diversity perspective in the public services. Another is to acquire new knowledge and develop methods and tools that public bodies can use to improve their multicultural competence. This will generally be accomplished by providing financial or professional support to external parties who will develop methods and tools for embedding and strengthening a multicultural perspective in the organisations and their activities. These methods and tools can later be employed by other bodies.

The UDI is the national authority on interpreting in the public sector, and it has initiated interpreter training at universities and colleges

and trains professionals and public servants in the use of interpreters. The Directorate is also responsible for the national interpreter register and for bilingual testing of potential interpreters. All in all, these measures are intended to help raise the quality of interpreting and guarantee due process for all involved parties. The measures are also intended to help us comply with the human rights convention.

Contact and dialogue with local immigrant communities

An important measure in the UDI’s work on inclusion and cultural diversity is providing support to local immigrant organisations and voluntary multicultural activities in the local community. Support is provided in the form of a funding programme administered by the county authorities. The goal is to contribute to active participation in society, cultural diversity and dialogue between ethnic groups and between the minority and majority populations in the local community. Getting these organisations involved in integration activities on their own terms is one goal, as is their involvement in shaping and carrying out measures that promote cultural diversity and inclusion.

Integration subsidies

Municipalities which settle refugees by agreement with the UDI receive a state subsidy that is set by the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development. The subsidy is intended to cover the municipality's expenditures for the integration of refugees over the first five years. In 2004 the subsidy was NOK 393 000 (per person) over a period of five years. In addition, special subsidies are paid for such groups as the elderly, the disabled and unaccompanied minors. In 2005 the subsidy has been increased to NOK 432 000 for adults and NOK 412 000 for children. At the same time, the right to the integration subsidy has been removed for persons who are reunited with family members settled on humanitarian grounds.

Settlement permit, requirements and expectations

In the same way that Norwegian society is required to make an effort to achieve a well-functioning multicultural society in Norway, each immigrant is also required to do his or her part. It is expected, for example, that immigrants settling in Norway learn the Norwegian language and acquire insight into Norwegian society. In 2004 the Norwegian Parliament

adopted the Government's proposal to introduce a requirement that immigrants must complete at least 250 periods of instruction in the Norwegian language and 50 periods in social studies to qualify for a settlement permit (permanent residence permit) and subsequent Norwegian citizenship.



Name: Alfredo Zamudio

Age: 44 years

Education: Cand. mag. (bachelor's degree) in medical subjects, currently writing his master's thesis on the socio-linguistics of violence in Columbia.

Consultant at the UDI's Eastern Region Office. Has worked for the UDI for six months. Responsible for unaccompanied minor asylum seekers at the Vårli and Vardåsen reception centres.

Work experience: Previously office manager at the Contact Committee for Immigrants and Norwegian Authorities (KIM), consultant with the Red Cross, head of the Human Rights House. Research studies at Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in the USA.

"I was hired by the UDI in September to organise an experience conference on unaccompanied minor asylum seekers and refugees. The response was overwhelming. In just over a week we received 320 registrations, and we had to reject more than one hundred applicants. I have few days that are the same, and I look forward to going to work. It's a privilege to be able to use my experience and abilities to help children and young unaccompanied asylum seekers and refugees. A good example was when, with good help from Nic Waals Institutt, we organised psychological help for children from Sri Lanka and the employees at the Vårli reception centre only three days after the tsunami disaster in South-East Asia. It is an advantage to be versatile if you want to understand a society in constant change. I see my work at the UDI as an opportunity to use my insight into human rights, social change processes, communication, conflict resolution and not least the humanitarian perspective. I also focus on my own background as a migrant and how I am part of re-defining the concept of what it means to be Norwegian."

The library

The UDI's library is a central knowledge base for various migration and integration issues. The library's collection comprises around 18 400 volumes, and it loaned out 3600 volumes in 2004. The collection deals with all aspects of immigration, primarily to Norway, but also the rest of the Western world. Asylum and refugee law, human rights, integration, racism and Norway as a multicultural society are the major subject areas, in addition to background information on countries that produce refugees.

In addition to serving the UDI's own employees, the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development and the Immigration Appeals Board, the library is available to external users. Opening hours for external users are Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays between 9 am and 2.30 pm, or by appointment.

<http://www.udi.no/bibliotek>

Establishing the Directorate of Integration and Diversity

The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development (KRD) wanted to assess various ways of strengthening integration efforts and the focus on long-term integration. A report from the consultants PLS Rambøll Management, which proposed a restructuring of the administration of immigration and integration, was submitted to the Ministry in August 2004.

In December 2004 the Government decided to establish a new directorate, the Directorate of Integration and Diversity, to begin operations on 1 January 2006. The new Directorate will be the expert body on

integration and cultural diversity and will act as a coordinating body in relation to other directorates. The Directorate will be subject to political control, and will work on strategies to develop a good multicultural society. Another important task for the Directorate will be to coordinate implementation of integration policy and the policy for inclusion and diversity at the Directorate level. The UDI shall assist both the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development and the new Directorate by providing know-how and experience during the establishment process. The new Directorate will have its own regional offices, for the most part based on the UDI's present regional structure.

Important overriding decisions and signals

A number of significant decisions were made and important signals given by the authorities in the integration field in 2004:

- Report to the Storting (Norwegian Parliament) no. 49 (2003-2004) *Mangfold gjennom inkludering og deltakelse. Ansvar og frihet*. [Diversity through inclusion and participation. Responsibility and freedom].
- Report to the Odelsting (Chamber of Parliament) no. 33 (2004-2005) *Om lov om forbud mot diskriminering på grunnlag av etnisitet, religion mv. (diskrimineringsloven)* [On the Act relating to Prohibiting Discrimination Based on Ethnicity, Religion etc. (The Discrimination Act)]. The Government's proposed new act against ethnic discrimination.
- Report to the Odelsting no. 34 (2004-2005) *Om lov om Likestillings- og diskrimineringsombudet og Likestillings- og diskrimineringsnemnda (diskrimineringsombudsloven)*. [On the Act relating to the Equal Rights and Discrimination Ombudsman and the Equal Rights and Discrimination Board (The Discrimination Ombudsman Act)] The Government's proposal for a new joint enforcement system in connection with discrimination on various grounds.
- The Government decided to strengthen public integration efforts by establishing a new Directorate of Integration and Diversity to be operating from January 2006.
- The goal of the Government's asylum policy is to provide protection to refugees. Another important goal in 2004 was to reduce the influx of asylum seekers without a need for protection.

Who works at the UDI?

A total of 783 man-years were performed in the UDI in 2004. The UDI is a competence-based undertaking, and 576 of its employees are university graduates. The majority of the UDI's employees are in the 30 to 40 age bracket, a total of 340. Around 550 employees have been with the UDI for less than five years. A total of 14.1 per cent of the employees have minority backgrounds¹. Sickness absenteeism was 7.3 per cent in 2004, down 0.8 percentage points compared with 2003

Gender equality in the UDI

With 523 female employees and 260 male employees at the UDI, women make up two thirds of the workforce. The proportion of women in management is 37.5 per cent. The senior management team operates a gender equality policy in the organisation.

	Men	Women	Total
Senior managers	5	3	8
Middle managers	14	20	34
Regional managers	8	4	12
Executive officers	192	411	603
Office employees	41	85	126
Total	260	523	783

Green perspective at the UDI

The UDI has introduced environmental management as an integral part of the organisation's management system for activity planning, and has undertaken a survey of the impact of its activities on the external environment. The survey included waste handling, the use of paper and cleaning. An environmental policy and environmental goals have been adopted. On the basis of these and the survey, the UDI has drawn up an action plan that will be pursued in 2005.

¹ Defined as persons with two parents born abroad, not including the Nordic countries.

The Directorate of Immigration's budget

The UDI's budget is adopted following the annual debate on the government budget by the Norwegian Parliament. A budget allocation letter from the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development places the budget funds at the disposal of the Directorate. In addition to the budget for the operation of the Directorate, substantial funds are allocated for the running of reception centres, settling refugees and immigrants, and funding certain subsidy schemes.

Overall, the allocation letter put around NOK 4 702 million at the Directorate's disposal in 2004. Together with transfers from 2003, supplementary allocations in the revised national budget, compensation for wage settlement and revisions of the budget, the total budget for 2004 was NOK 5 168 million. This meant a reduction in the expenses covered by the UDI's budget for the first time in several years.

The Directorate of Immigration's accounts

The Directorate of Immigration's accounts are kept in accordance with the accounting principles that apply for public bodies. This means that all expenses, regardless the type, are recognised in the accounts in the year they are incurred (cash flow accounting). This in turn means that no balance sheet is prepared for the undertaking in the normal sense.

Operating expenses

The accounts for 2004 show that NOK 470.8 million was spent on running the UDI. Payroll expenses amounted to NOK 301 million, and include a total of NOK 19.1 million which largely consists of reimbursements for maternity leave and sickness benefits.

The Directorate's operating budget was increased by NOK 3.55 million in the revised national budget due to the expansion of the EU and a greater number of applications for work permits.

To allow better control and documentation of the in-house use of resources in the Directorate, product calculations have been made to price the various external services provided.

Operating expenses for asylum reception centres

The reception centres are voluntary housing provided for asylum seekers. They are run by private or municipal operators. Contracts are awarded following a tender procedure. All operating expenses, subsistence benefits to asylum seekers and other expenses are covered through the Directorate's budget. The total

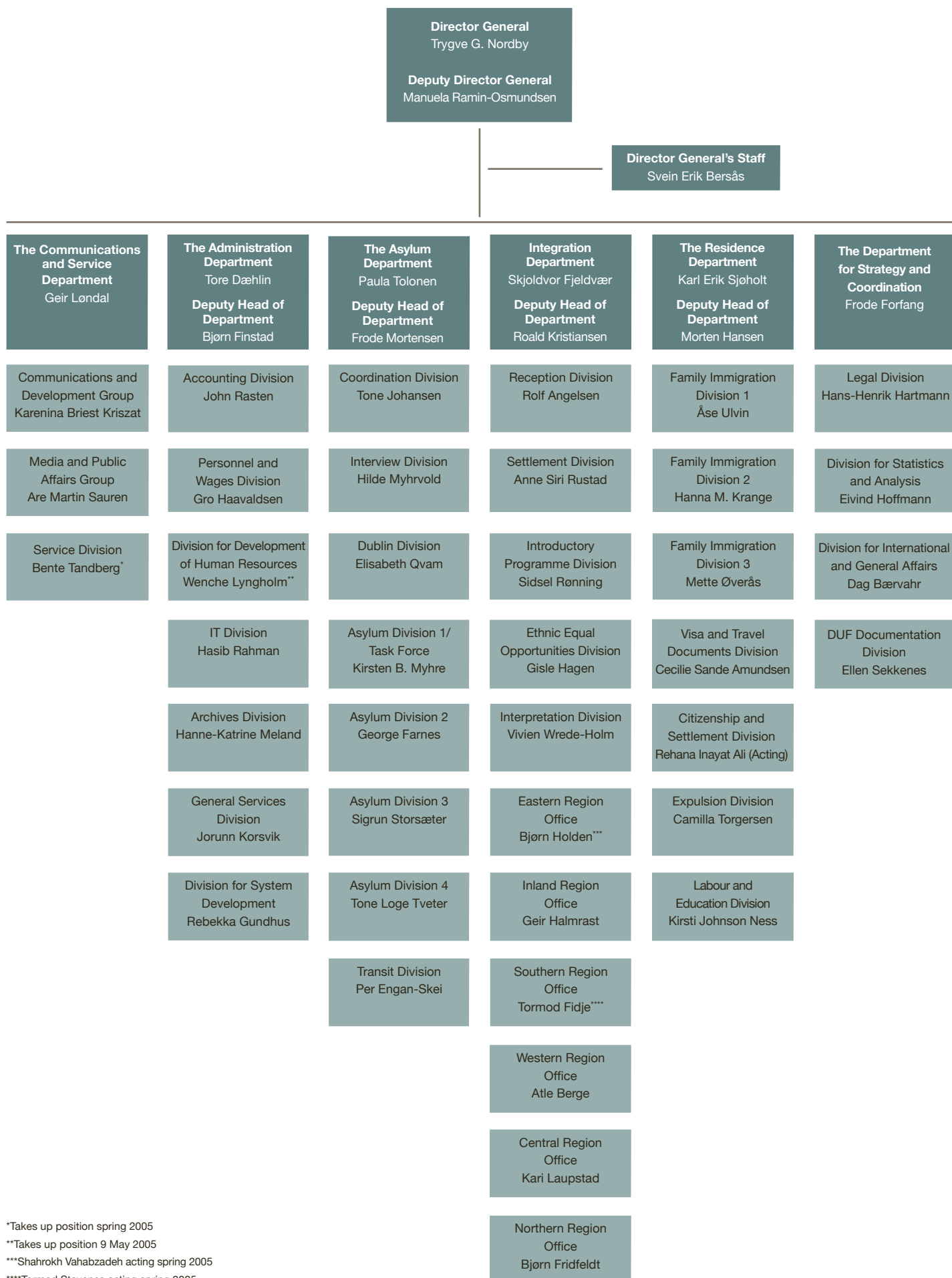
expenses under this item amounted to NOK 1 546 million, compared with NOK 1 770 million in 2003, a reduction of around 13 per cent. The number of residents in reception centres showed a declining trend throughout the year, from around 17 200 at the start of 2004 to around 12 200 at the end of the year. The price of each reception centre place has changed little on average compared with 2003, and remains slightly over NOK 100 000 per year per resident.

Settling refugees and immigrants

The integration subsidy is the financial compensation the local authorities receive from the central authorities for settling refugees and their families. The subsidy is paid over five years from the year of settlement. The rates for the subsidy increased from a total of NOK 376 000 for the five-year period in 2003 to NOK 393 000 in 2004. NOK 2 799 million has been recognised in the accounts in this connection in 2004, an increase of NOK 115 million compared with 2003.

Accounts	2002	2003	2004
Total expenses in the UDI's area of responsibility	4 794 596 744	5 215 020 120	5 095 169 551
Operating expenses UDI, reimbursements deducted	407 267 964	419 583 105	451 644 651
Whereof payroll, reimbursements deducted	247 038 026	274 097 923	281 902 388
Computer register for foreign nationals and refugees (DUF)	13 703 366	24 794 055	20 013 416
Operating expenses state reception centres	1 658 153 881	1 784 277 851	1 545 701 924
Whereof financial assistance to residents	481 557 969	525 600 380	449 654 641
Whereof operating expenses for reception centres	1 173 234 886	1 251 047 864	1 088 079 204
Whereof ordinary operating expenses	3 361 299	7 629 607	8 010 255
Special operating expenses, interpreting and translation	72 670 567	46 107 457	25 364 714
Whereof payroll and remuneration	39 832 640	31 316 878	16 547 589
Settlement of refugees and immigrants	2 427 036 769	2 738 239 369	2 873 199 482
Integration subsidy	2 400 150 779	2 684 152 714	2 798 736 834
Municipal immigration measures	11 664 346	41 346 082	42 959 000
Development of expertise	15 221 644	12 740 573	31 503 648
Subsidies to immigrant organisations and other voluntary activities	24 216 264	24 906 446	25 130 437
Whereof nationwide organisations	9 200 000	9 449 995	9 650 000
Whereof local immigrant organisations/voluntary activities	12 300 000	12 820 000	12 658 325
Whereof administration subsidies	2 716 264	2 636 451	2 822 112
Return of refugees	12 481 957	8 415 170	10 730 958
Whereof individual financial support	7 517 127	644 995	1 270 149
Whereof projects/local support	4 964 830	7 770 175	9 460 809
The state authorisation scheme for interpreters	1 500 000	100 000	100 000
Transport of refugees/travel expenses to and from abroad	19 857 082	20 822 617	10 350 240
On behalf of the Ministry of Children and Family Affairs	142 487 250	147 774 050	150 206 300
On behalf of the Ministry of Justice and the Police			2 740 844

The UDI's organisation and management



*Takes up position spring 2005

**Takes up position 9 May 2005

***Shahrokh Vahabzadeh acting spring 2005

****Tormod Stavenes acting spring 2005

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