

UDI

Migration 2012

Facts and analysis



Utlendingsdirektoratet
Norwegian Directorate
of Immigration

Facts about migration in 2012

Protection (asylum)

- A total of 9 800 persons applied for protection.
- Most applications came from and most permits were granted to nationals of Somalia, Eritrea and Afghanistan.
- A total of 5 200* persons and 1 100 resettlement refugees were granted residence.

Family immigration

- A total of 11 900 EEA nationals registered as living together with their families, and 12 500 applicants were granted family immigration permits.
- Most permits were issued to nationals of Thailand, Somalia and the Philippines.

Labour migration

- A total of 39 800 EEA nationals registered to work in Norway, and 9 600 applicants from countries outside the EEA were granted work permits.
- Most labour immigrants came from Poland, Lithuania and Romania.

Study immigration

- A total of 3 400** applicants were granted permits to study in Norway, and 4 200 EEA nationals registered as students.
- In all, more than 7 800 foreign students came to Norway. Most came from Germany, France and Spain.

* Total number of applications granted by the UDI. Applications granted by the Immigration Appeals Board (UNE) are not included.

** In addition, 1 600 applicants were granted au pair permits and 1 600 skilled workers were granted permits to attend Norwegian language courses.

Everyone who is not a Nordic national or national of an EU/EEA/EFTA country needs a residence permit to live and work in Norway. Nationals of EU/EEA/EFTA countries can live and work in Norway without applying for a residence permit, as long as they register with the police.

Who came to Norway in 2012?

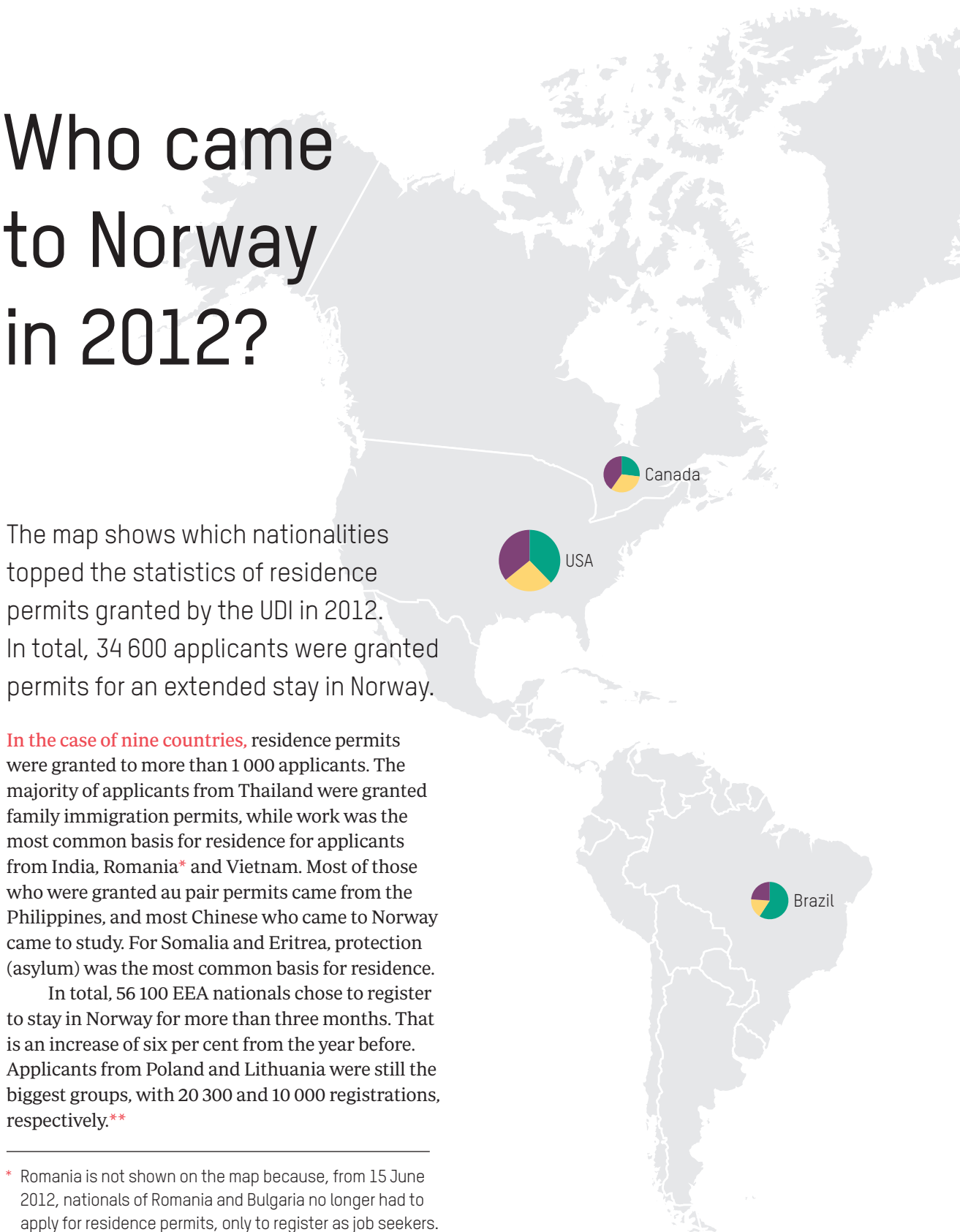
The map shows which nationalities topped the statistics of residence permits granted by the UDI in 2012. In total, 34 600 applicants were granted permits for an extended stay in Norway.

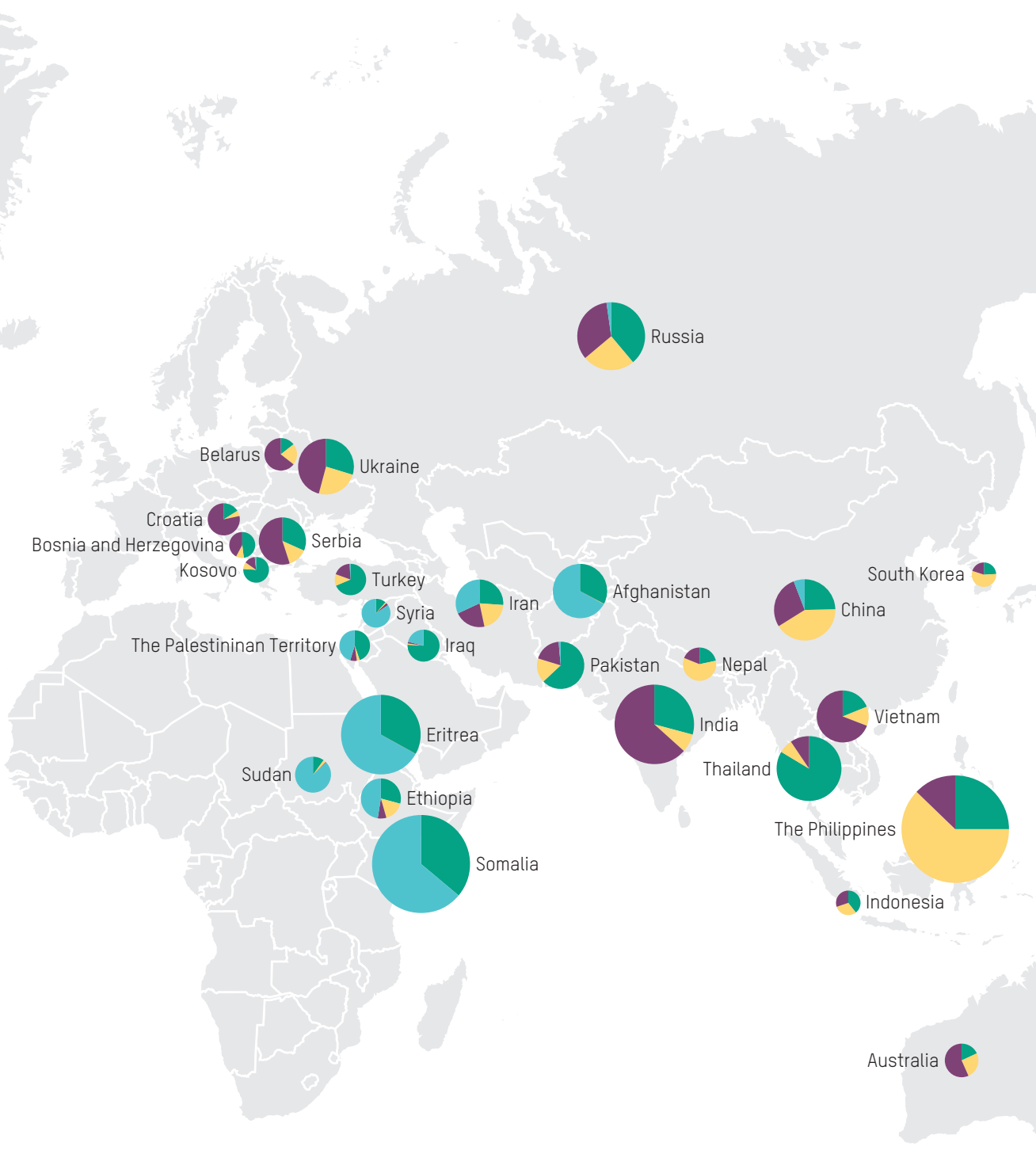
In the case of nine countries, residence permits were granted to more than 1 000 applicants. The majority of applicants from Thailand were granted family immigration permits, while work was the most common basis for residence for applicants from India, Romania* and Vietnam. Most of those who were granted au pair permits came from the Philippines, and most Chinese who came to Norway came to study. For Somalia and Eritrea, protection (asylum) was the most common basis for residence.

In total, 56 100 EEA nationals chose to register to stay in Norway for more than three months. That is an increase of six per cent from the year before. Applicants from Poland and Lithuania were still the biggest groups, with 20 300 and 10 000 registrations, respectively.**

* Romania is not shown on the map because, from 15 June 2012, nationals of Romania and Bulgaria no longer had to apply for residence permits, only to register as job seekers.

** Countries with EEA registrations are not included on the map.





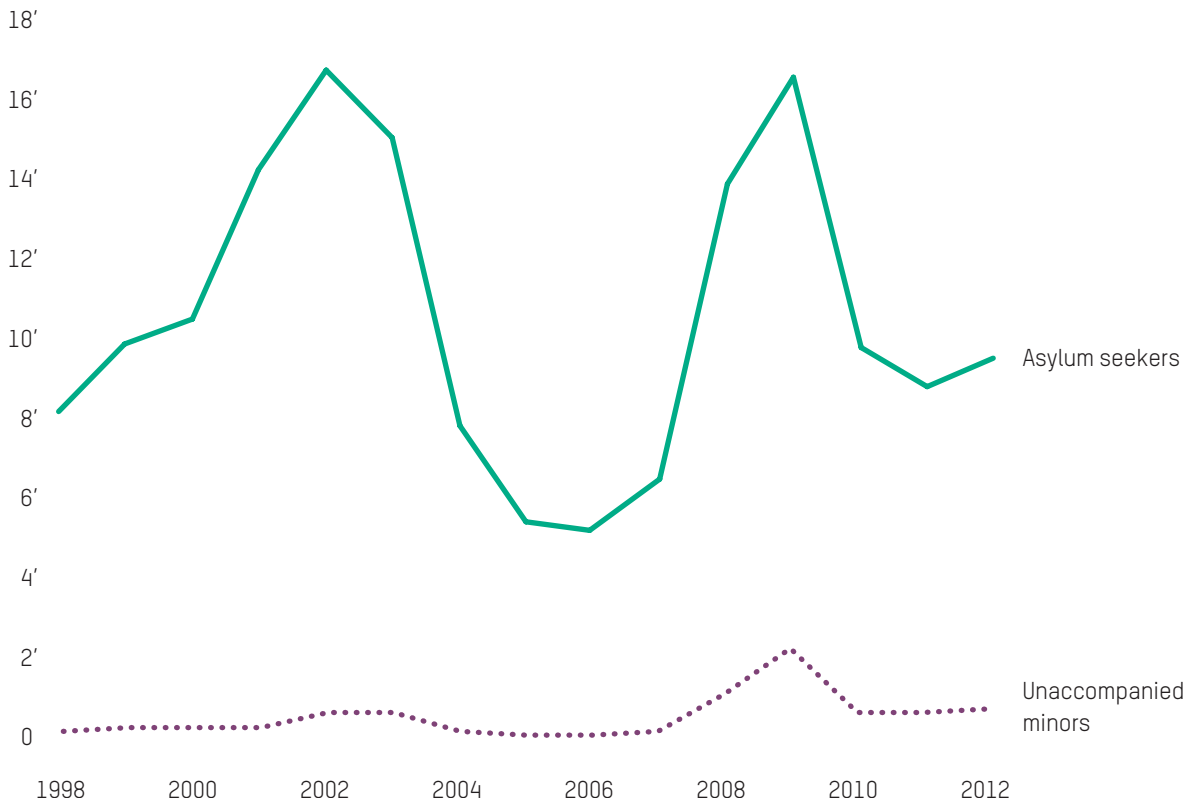
- Family
- Education
- Work
- Protection (asylum)



How many applied for asylum?

A total of 9 800 people applied for protection (asylum) in Norway in 2012. That is eight per cent more than in 2011. 3 000 of them were women, 5 800 were men and almost 1 000 were unaccompanied minors. Eighty-five per cent of unaccompanied minor asylum seekers were boys.

Figure
Number of asylum seekers to Norway, in thousands, 1998–2012



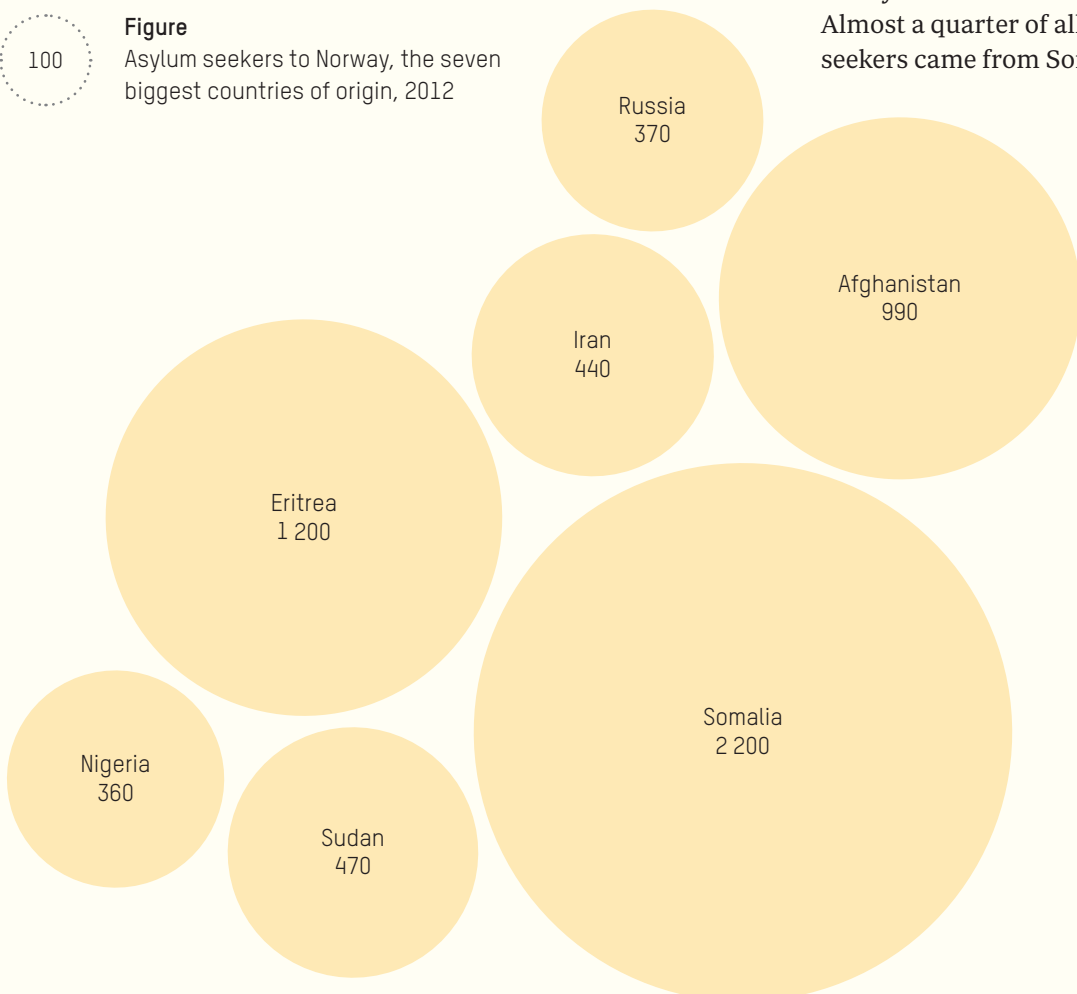
Where did the asylum seekers come from?

Those who applied for protection came from 107 different countries. Approximately six out of ten came from one of the seven biggest countries in this context: Somalia, Eritrea, Afghanistan, Sudan, Iran, Russia and Nigeria.

From the three biggest countries, Somalia, Eritrea and Afghanistan, about the same number of applicants came as the year before. In total, applicants from these countries accounted for 44 per cent of all asylum seekers to Norway. Almost a quarter of all asylum seekers came from Somalia.

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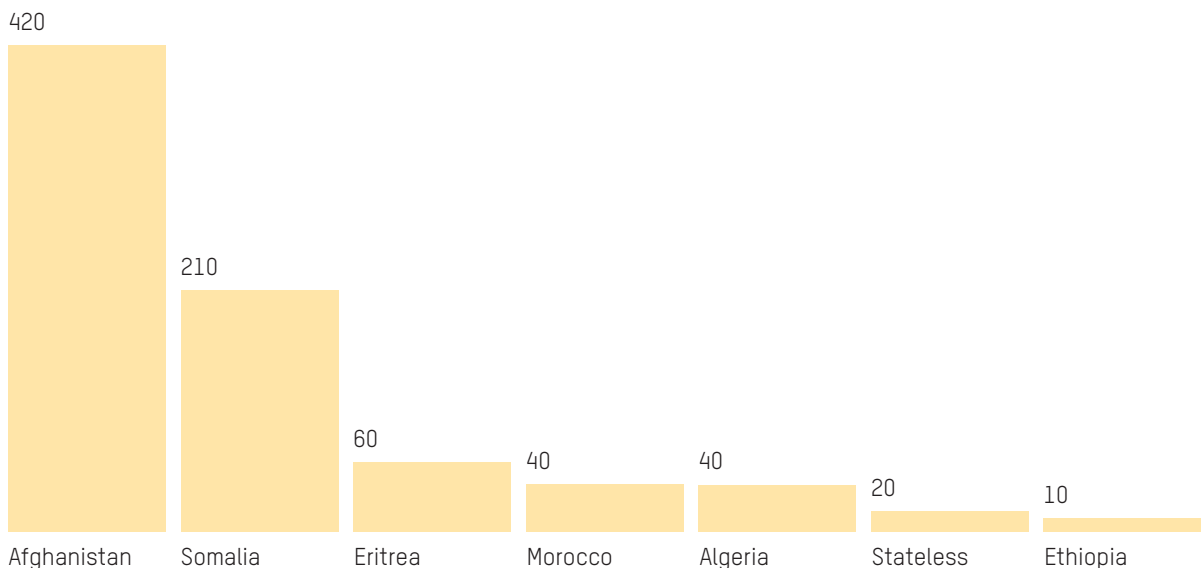
Figure
Asylum seekers to Norway, the seven biggest countries of origin, 2012



Who came as unaccompanied minor asylum seekers?

Unaccompanied minor asylum seekers are children and young people under the age of 18 who arrive in Norway to seek asylum unaccompanied by parents or other persons with parental responsibility.

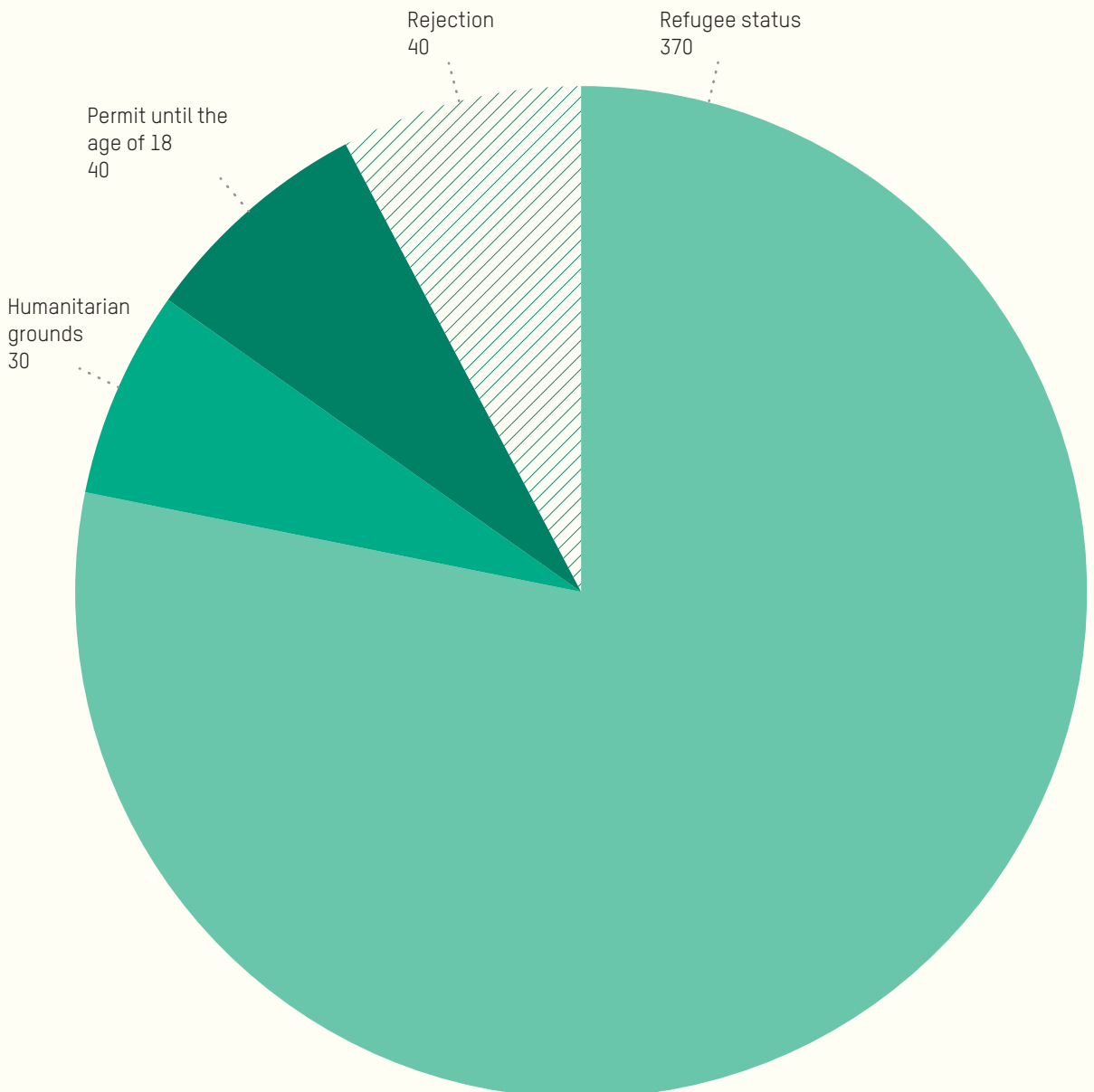
Figure
Unaccompanied minor asylum seekers to Norway, the seven biggest countries of origin, 2012



In 2012, 960 asylum seekers stated that they were unaccompanied minors. That is an increase of 100 from the year before. Eighty-five per cent were boys, and, as in 2011, nearly half of them came from Afghanistan. We recorded an increase in the number of unaccompanied minor asylum seekers from North Africa, especially Morocco and Algeria, and they accounted for a large proportion of the total number of asylum seekers from these countries.

Figure

Cases considered on their merits where the applicant was deemed to be an unaccompanied minor at the time the decision was made, by outcome, 2012



More than a thousand more asylum seekers were allowed to stay

Fifty-eight per cent of all asylum applications considered on their merits were granted in 2012. In total, 5 200 applicants were granted residence after having applied for protection (asylum). Of the total, 4 900 were granted refugee status, while 300 were granted residence on humanitarian grounds. A total of 1 200 were children under the age of 18, 1 600 were adult women and 2 400 adult men. 40 unaccompanied minors were granted temporary residence permits, which means that they can stay in Norway until they reach the age of 18.

Applicants from Somalia and Eritrea accounted for 62 per cent of all those granted protection. Nine out of ten applicants from Somalia, Eritrea and Sudan were granted protection. Half of the applications from Afghanistan were rejected, however, and only one out of ten Russian applicants were allowed to stay in Norway. The applicants from Bangladesh who applied for asylum were labour immigrants to Greece who had become unemployed. They were not entitled to protection in Norway, but were offered support to return voluntarily.

Figure

Permits and rejections for the 12 countries with most asylum decisions, 2012

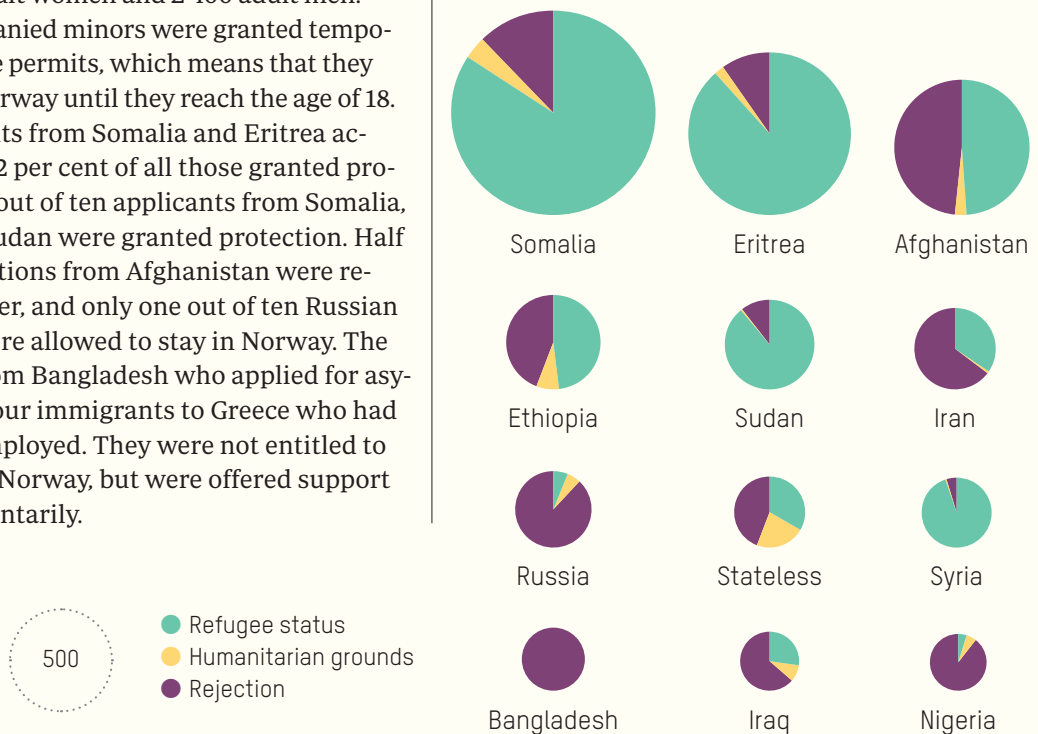
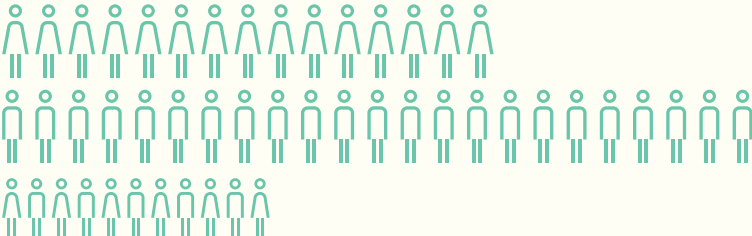


Figure
 Decisions in asylum cases by outcome, broken down by men, women and children, 2012
 Each figure represents approx. 100 people.

Refugee status



Women: 1 500
 Men: 2 300
 Children: 1 100

Residence permit on humanitarian grounds



Women: 140
 Men: 60
 Children: 130

Rejected



Women: 770
 Men: 2 100
 Children: 890

Migration trends in the Nordic region

We often think about the Nordic countries as relatively similar, but there are big differences between the countries as regards how many apply for asylum or residence, and which countries the applicants come from.

Reasons for the differences

Denmark is the most popular country among foreign students. Norway has the highest labour immigration from the EEA, and Sweden receives most asylum seekers and has the highest family-related immigration.

There are many complex reasons for these differences. The regulations relating to immigration are probably not one of the main reasons for the differences, except perhaps in the case of family immigration. Denmark has the most restrictive regulations in this area, Sweden has the most liberal rules, while Norway is somewhere in between. This is also reflected in the figures.

Factors that are more likely to explain the differences are differences in the countries' economic situation and labour markets, how different groups of applicants perceive the countries, what direct and indirect signals the countries send to different groups of applicants, and what groups already have a large presence in the countries.

Sweden

For several decades, Sweden has been the country in the Nordic region that has received most asylum seekers, and it also experienced a marked increase in the number of asylum seekers in 2012. A total of 43 900 people applied for protection in Sweden, which is 14 000 more than in 2011.

By comparison, 9 800 asylum seekers came to Norway, 6 100 to Denmark and 3 400 to Finland.

Most asylum seekers to Sweden came from Syria, Somalia, Afghanistan, Serbia and Eritrea. Applicants from Syria were the group that increased most compared with the year before. Sweden also received many applicants from the Balkan countries.

Several reasons for choosing Sweden

There are probably several factors that can explain why Sweden receives most asylum seekers. To some extent, Sweden has more liberal rules for family immigration than the other Nordic countries. It also has big population groups with the same national backgrounds as the biggest groups of applicants, including Syrians, Somalis and Afghans. Differences in the reception system may also play a role. In Sweden, asylum seekers receive financial support to live in private accommodation while their applications are being considered. This makes it possible for them to live in the big cities, which is often seen as attractive. In Norway, applicants who wish to live outside an asylum reception centre do not receive financial support.

Other permits in Sweden

Sweden granted 12 600 asylum applications in 2012. In addition, it issued 30 900 family

immigration permits, 16 500 work permits and 7 100 study permits.

Finland

Finland introduced more stringent regulations for asylum and family immigration during the period 2009–2011, when the Finnish government decided to make it more difficult to take employment. Finland received the same number of applications for asylum in 2012 as the year before. Most asylum seekers came from Iraq, Russia, Afghanistan and Somalia. Finland granted 1 600 asylum applications and issued approximately 5 700 family immigration permits. Most family immigration permits were granted to Russian nationals.

Denmark

Denmark granted 6 100 asylum applications in 2012, an increase of 61 per cent from 2011.

Denmark has traditionally had many applicants from Syria and it received almost twice as many Syrian asylum seekers as the year before. The number is still low, however. Of the Nordic countries, Denmark has the most stringent rules for family immigration, and it granted 3 700 family immigration applications in 2012. In addition, it issued 6 200 study permits and 9 000 work permits.

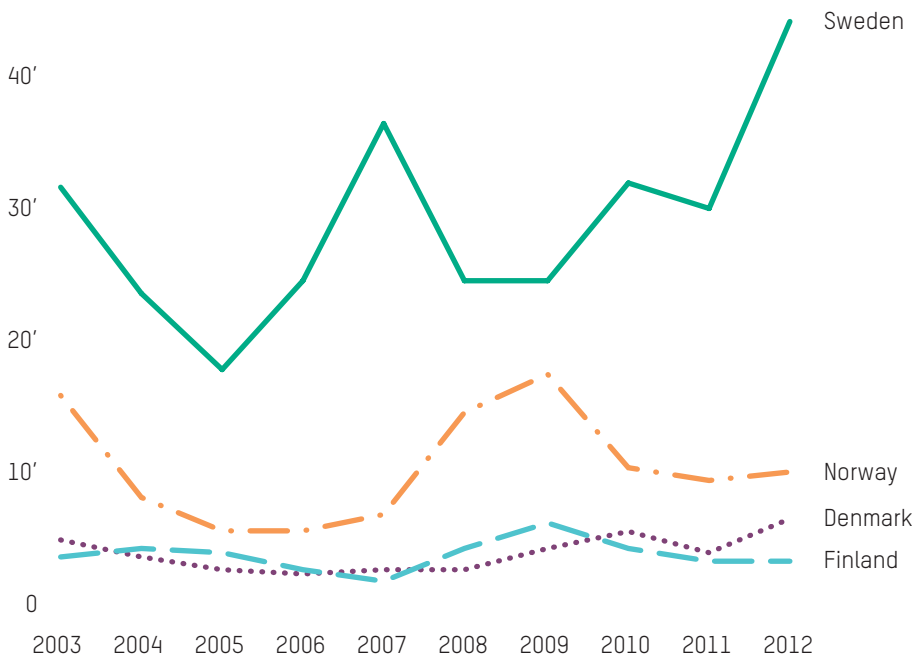
Iceland

Iceland received 121 asylum applications in 2012. Most of the applicants came from Nigeria, Albania and Iran.

Despite the fact that few asylum seekers come to Iceland, the proportion of immigrants is relatively high. In 2012, 1 400 applicants were granted family immigration permits to be reunited with a parent or partner living in Iceland.

Figure

Number of asylum seekers to the Nordic countries, in thousands, 2003–2012





How many places did we have in reception centres?

The UDI is responsible for offering asylum seekers somewhere to stay. We closed about 980 places in reception centres in 2012, and at the end of the year, we had 18 050 places in 105 reception centres.

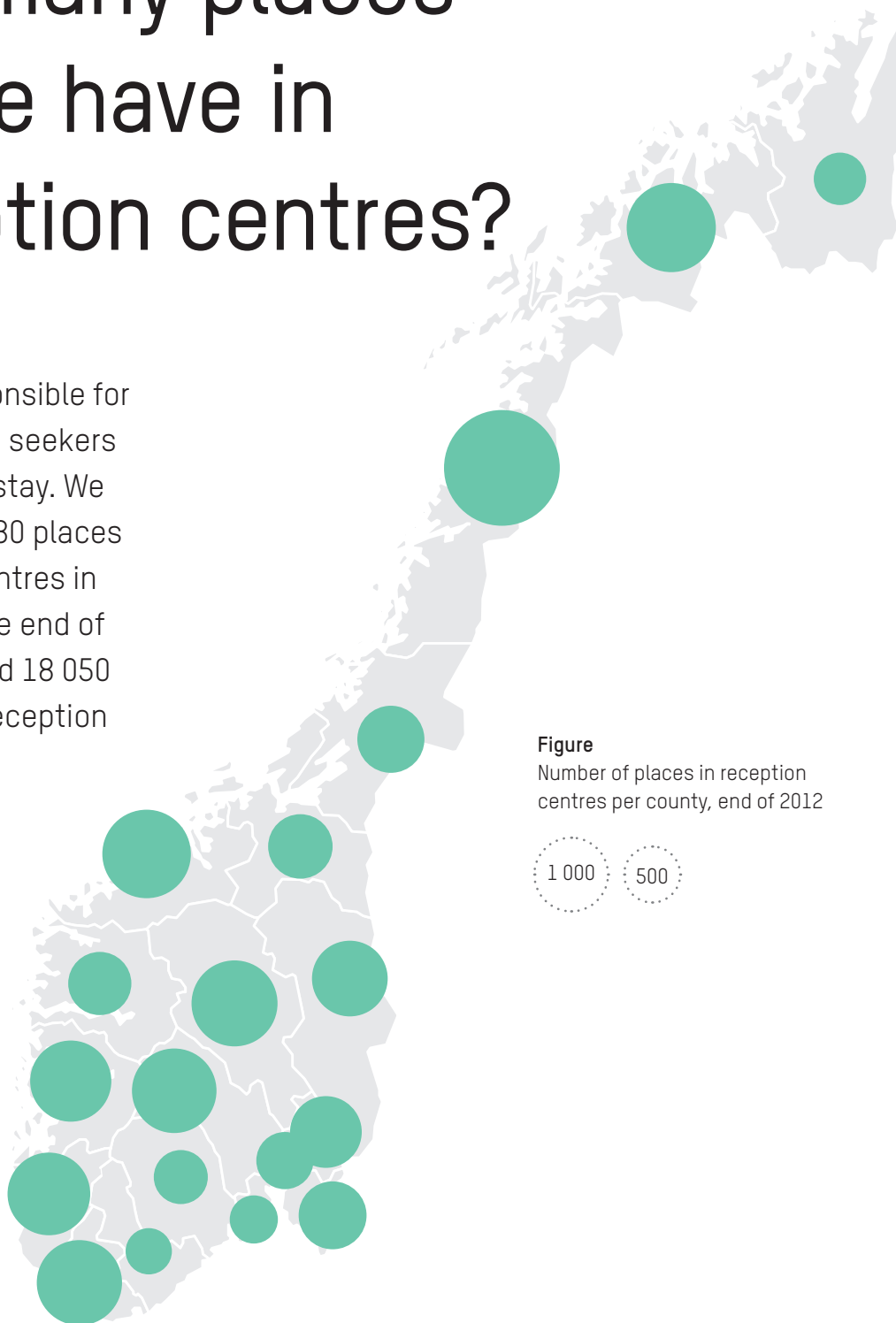


Figure
Number of places in reception centres per county, end of 2012



Myth: 'Asylum seekers live in centres for years waiting for application to be decided by

What are they waiting for?

Very few of the 15 600 people who lived in reception centres at the end of 2012 were waiting for their application to be decided by the UDI.

17 % had an application under consideration by the UDI

22 % were waiting for an appeal to be decided by the UDI / Immigration Appeals Board (UNE)

24 % had been granted residence and were waiting to be settled

How long do they wait for their applications to be decided by the UDI?

Six out of ten received a decision within three months, while one out of ten had to wait for a year or more for a decision. The reason why some of them have to wait longer is often that their identity is unclear.

At the end of December, 2 900 asylum applications were being considered. A total of 1 400 applications were less than two months old, while 280 applications were more than one year old.

How long did they wait for their appeal to be decided?

Appeals against decisions that are not granted by the UDI are sent to UNE.

Three out of four appeals were decided by the UDI within two months in 2012. Some decisions were reversed, while most were sent to UNE for a final decision.

The average case processing time for asylum appeal cases in UNE was 11 months in 2012.

Many were waiting to be settled in a municipality

The Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi) is responsible for finding a suitable municipality in which asylum seekers can settle.

Of the 4 100 who were settled from reception centres in 2012, 2 100 waited less than six months from their residence permit was granted until they were settled in a municipality. A total of 1 600 waited for six to eleven months, and 400 waited more than a year.

At the end of 2012, 3 900 people were waiting to be settled.

After a final decision

Some people apply to have their decision reversed or take the case to court. This means that the case takes longer to process.

reception their the UDI'

Everyone who applies for protection, including those who have received a final rejection of their application, can stay at a reception centre. At the end of the year, 49 per cent had lived in reception centres for up to 18 months, 20 per cent had lived there for up to three years, and 31 per cent had lived there for more than three years.

5 % had been granted limited residence permits

Important to know who they are

If we believe that an asylum seeker needs protection, but are in doubt about his/her identity, he/she will be granted a limited permit for a year at a time until his/her identity has been substantiated.

Unaccompanied minor asylum seekers

Unaccompanied minor asylum seekers between the ages of 16 and 18 who are not in need of protection, and who have no care providers in their home country, are allowed to stay in Norway until they reach the age of 18. In the meantime, they are offered specially adapted accommodation in an asylum reception centre.

32 % had received a final rejection and were obliged to leave Norway

Some returned voluntarily

In 2012, 1 700 people returned to their home country voluntarily. The identity of some of them had previously not been clarified.

Some were forcibly returned

People who do not return voluntarily can be escorted out of the country by the National Police Immigration Service. In 2012, they escorted 2 500 asylum seekers out of the country after receiving a final rejection.

Not everyone can be forcibly returned

Their identity may be unclear, which makes it difficult to obtain travel documents.

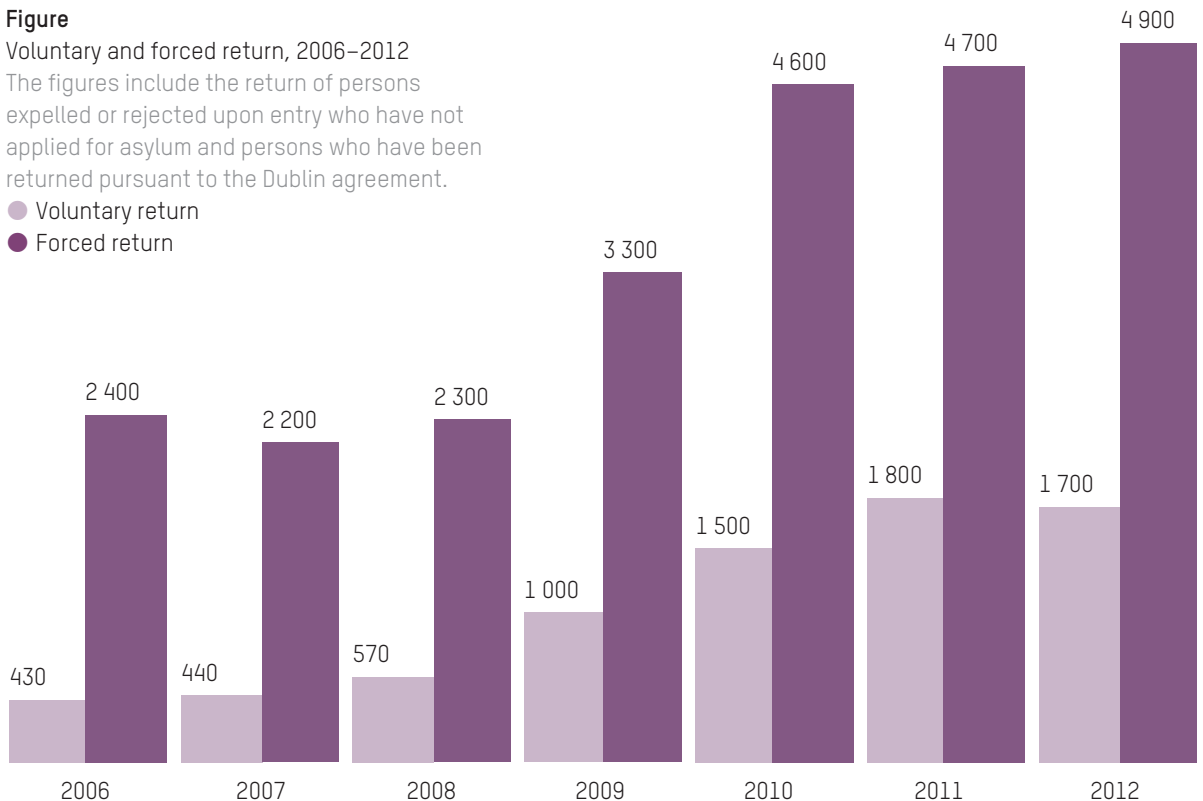
Some countries do not accept their own nationals who are forcibly returned, or only accept very few of them.

How many return?

The UDI has return support schemes. People whose application for protection is being considered, people who have received a rejection of their application for residence, or who do not have legal residence in Norway can apply for assistance and support to return and resettle in their home country. Applicants who have received a rejection

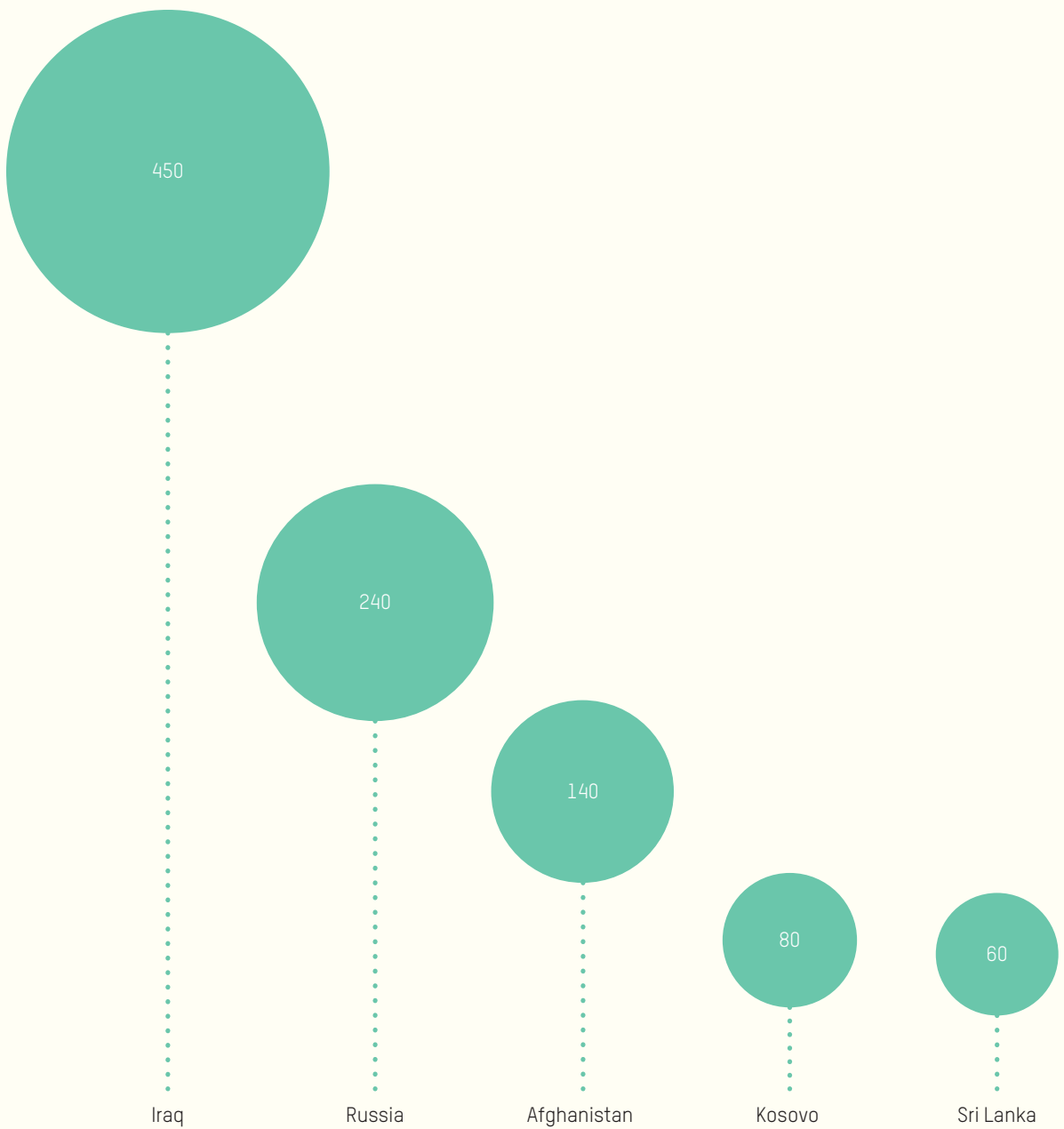
but who refuse to return voluntarily can be forcibly returned to their home country by the police.

The UDI has increased its focus on voluntary return in recent years. A total of 55 per cent of all asylum seekers who returned to their home country in 2012 did so voluntarily through the voluntary assisted return scheme.



50

Figure
Voluntary return, five biggest nationalities, 2012
Figures from the IOM



Who was granted family immigration to Norway?

Family immigration accounted for the largest proportion of regulated immigration to Norway in 2012. A total of 12 500 applicants were granted a permit to live with a family member in Norway. Four out of ten, 5 300 applicants, were related to a Norwegian or Nordic national. A total of 2 500 were family members of persons with a work permit in Norway, and 1 800 were family members of persons who had been granted protection in Norway.

People from Thailand were the biggest group of applicants who were granted a family immigration permit, with people from Somalia coming a close second. Those who came from Thailand were mostly spouses of Norwegian men, while most of those who came from Somalia were children being reunited with parents who had been granted protection in Norway.

Differences in the percentage of permits granted

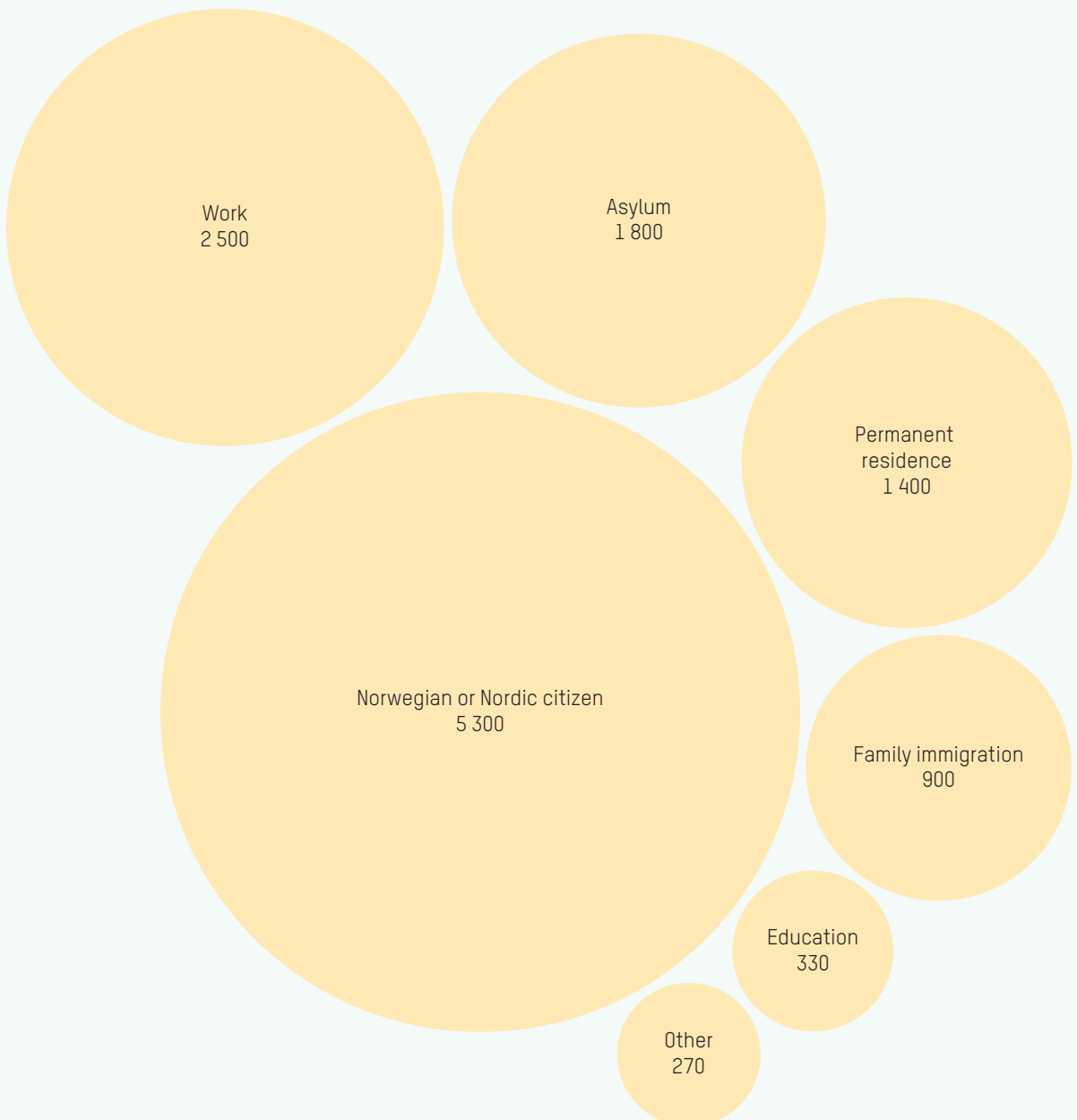
The percentage of family immigration applications granted varied in relation to the sponsor's grounds for residence:

- Applications where the family member in Norway had a work permit were granted in 99 per cent of cases.
- Applications from family members of Norwegian and Nordic nationals were granted in 68 per cent of cases.
- In cases where the applicant was a family member of a person granted refugee status, 68 per cent were granted a permit.
- Where the family member in Norway had been granted residence on humanitarian grounds, the proportion of applications granted was 42 per cent.

The differences are mainly due to the income requirement, although the requirement does not apply to all groups. For labour immigrants, for whom the proportion of applications granted was highest, meeting the income requirement is rarely a problem.

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Figure
Family immigration permits by grounds for residence of the person in Norway, 2012



Who came here to work?

A total of 9 600 applicants were granted residence permits to work in Norway in 2012. In addition, 39 800 people from the EU/EEA registered to work.

Increase in the number of skilled workers

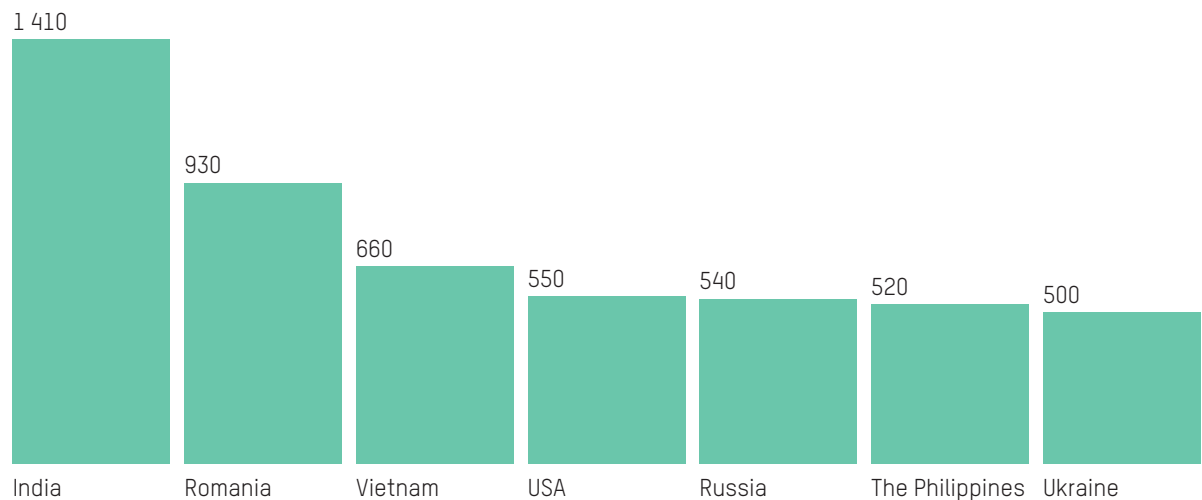
The number of skilled workers has increased considerably in recent years. In 2012, 4 100 applicants were granted work permits as skilled workers. That is roughly 600 more than in 2011 and 1 300 more than in 2010. Applicants from India* were the biggest group of skilled workers, with about 900 permits.

Of the total of 9 600 who were granted a work permit, most came to work in agriculture and the fish processing industry, in industry and in information and communication jobs.

Applicants from India, Romania and Vietnam were the biggest groups, and three out of four labour immigrants were men.

Figure

Residence permit for work purposes, the seven biggest countries, 2012



* In addition, 540 applicants from India held other types of work permits.

Most from the EEA

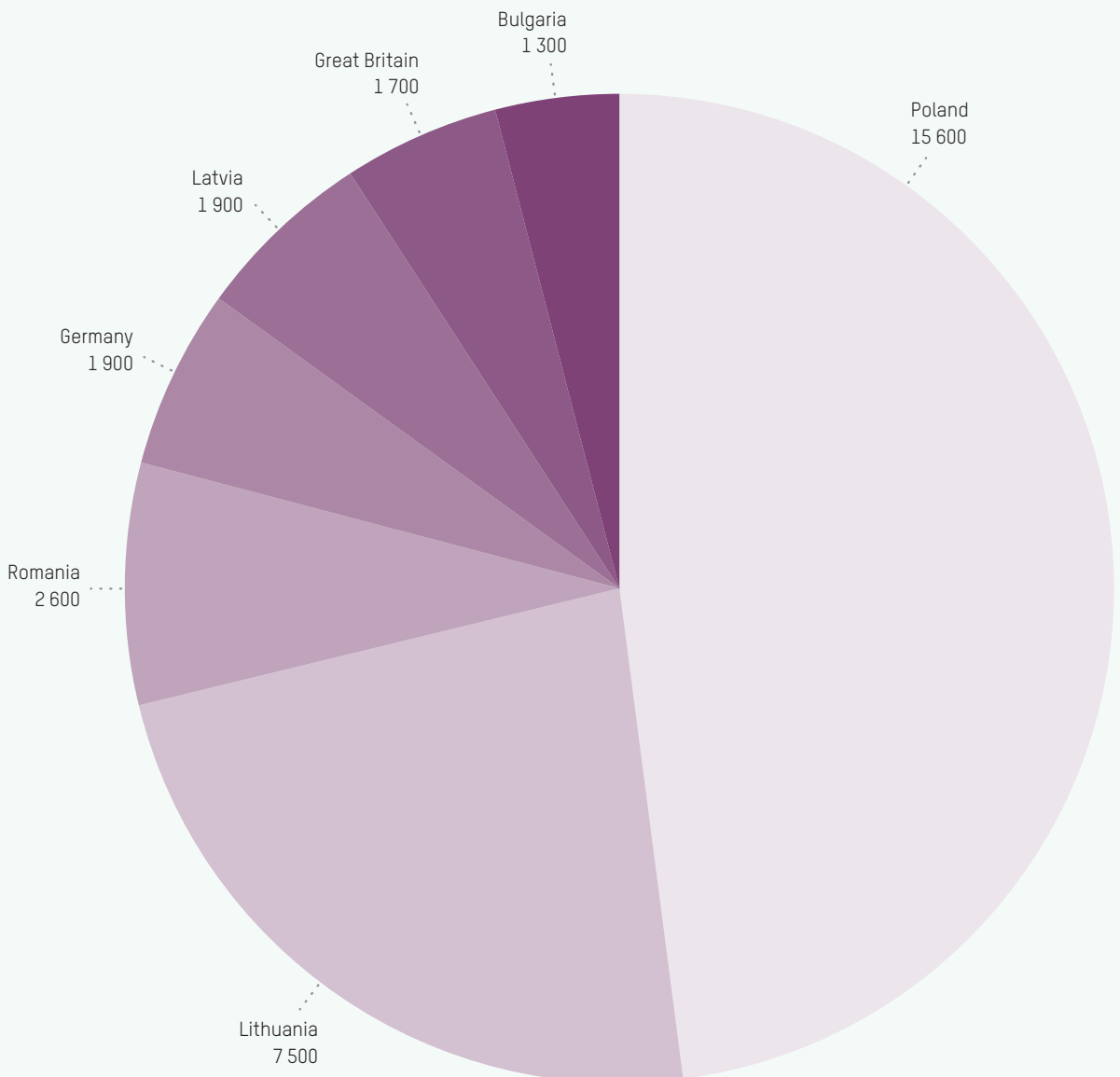
Most of those who came to Norway to work came from the EEA. EEA nationals do not have to apply for a work permit to work here, they only have to register with the police. A total of 39 800 people registered as employees, job seekers, self-employed persons or service providers.

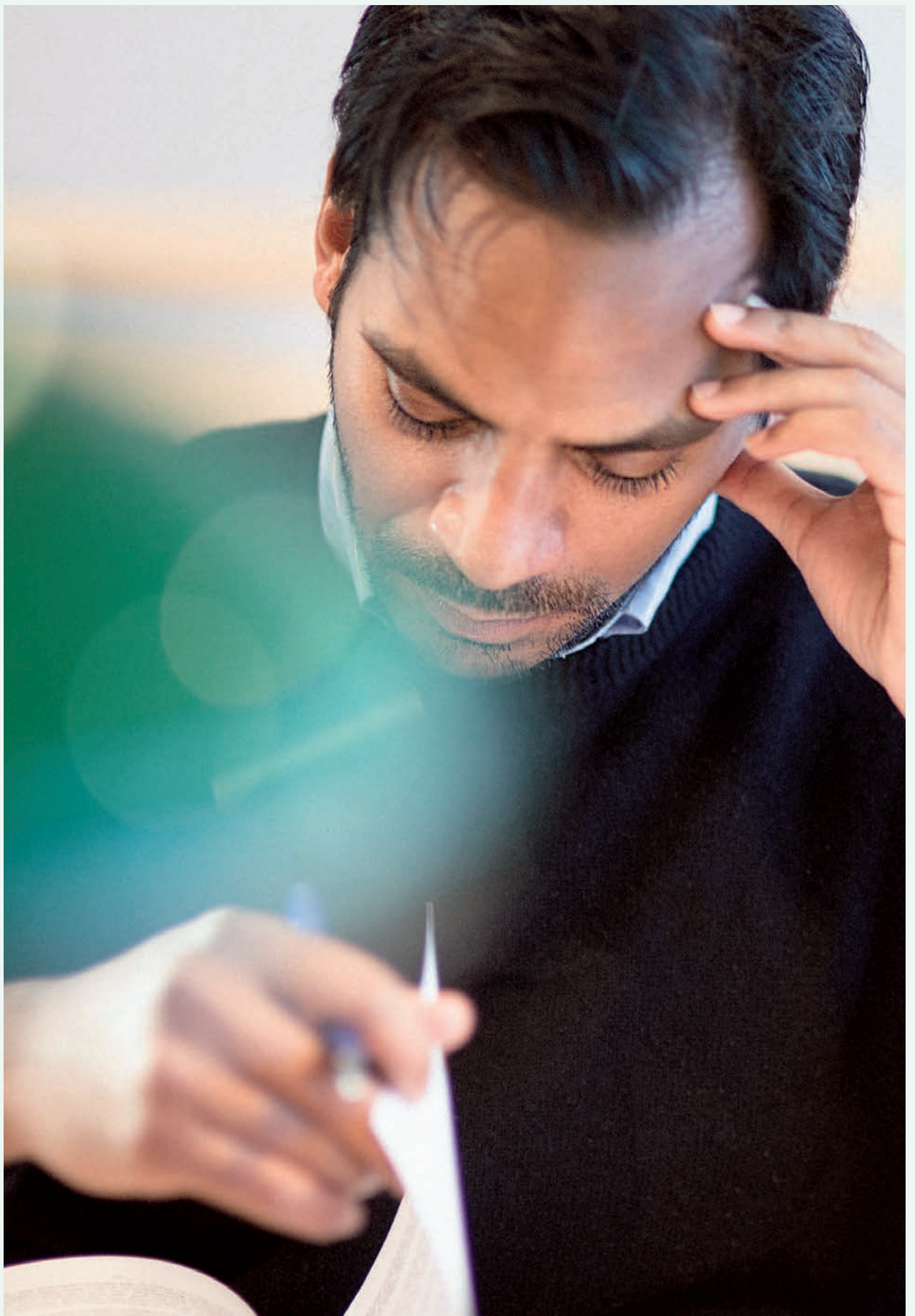
The biggest group by far came from Poland, followed by people from Lithuania and Romania.

On 15 June 2012, the transitional rules for workers from Romania and Bulgaria ceased to apply. Since the EU expansion in 2004, these groups have had to apply for a work permit in Norway. After 15 June, 2 600 Romanians and 1 300 Bulgarians registered with the police.

Figure

EEA registrations, the seven biggest countries, 2012





How many came here to study?

In 2012, 3 400 students from countries outside the EEA were granted study permits in Norway for the first time.

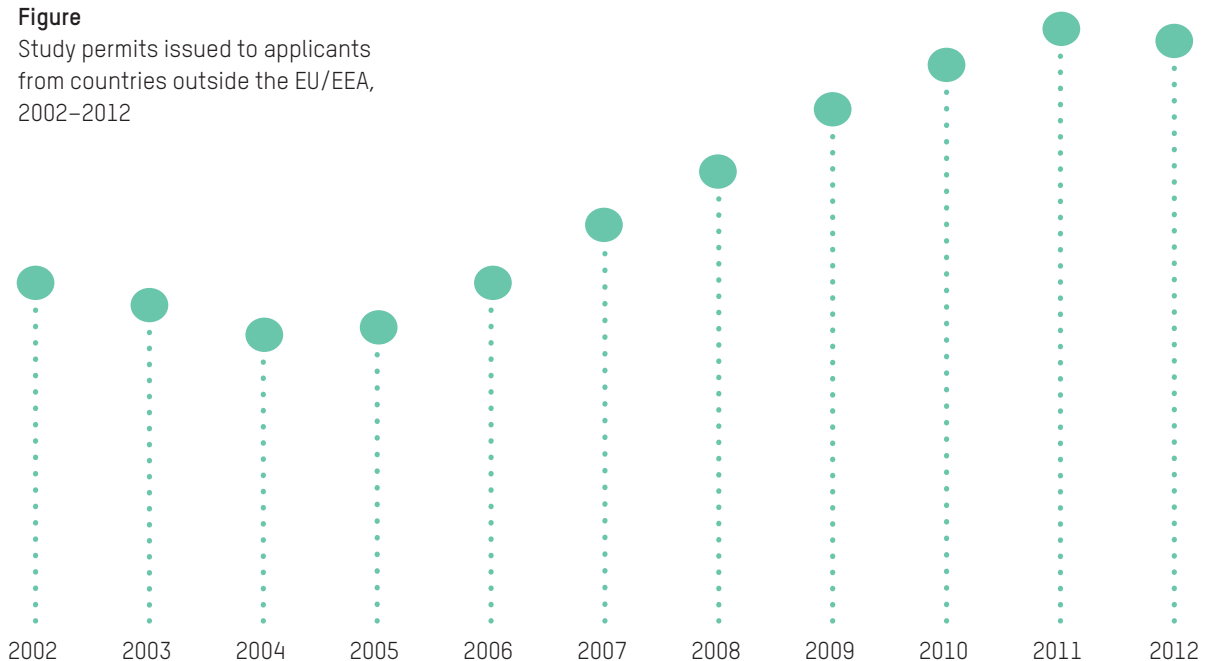
From 2009 to 2011, the number of people wishing to come to Norway to study increased by almost 50 per cent, but the number stabilised in 2012. Most students who were granted a study permit came from China, Russia and the USA, and the majority

came to Norway to study at a university or university college.

A total of 4 200 EEA nationals chose to register as students. EEA nationals do not have to apply for a residence permit in order to study in Norway, only to register as students with the police. Most by far came from Germany, but many also came from France and Spain.

Figure

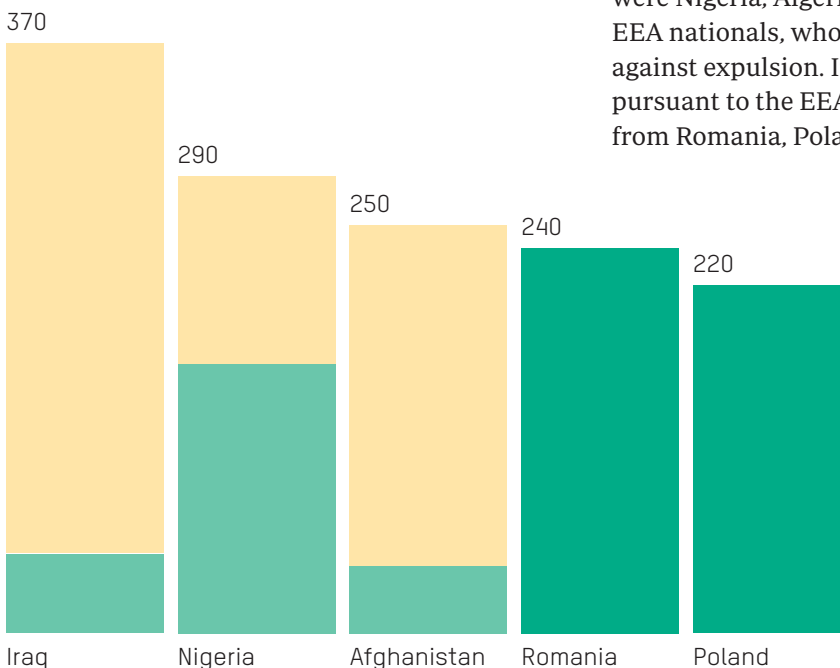
Study permits issued to applicants from countries outside the EU/EEA, 2002–2012



Who was expelled from Norway in 2012?

Figure
Expulsion decision by nationality and grounds, the five biggest countries, 2012

- Violation of the Immigration Act
- Violation of the General Civil Penal Code
- The EEA Regulations



Nearly 4 000 people received an expulsion decision in 2012. About 2 100 of them were expelled for violation of the Immigration Act, and the countries with the highest proportion were Iraq, Afghanistan, Nigeria and Turkey.

A total of 1 900 people were expelled because they were convicted of a criminal offence. Just over 1 000 of them came from countries outside the EEA, and the biggest countries in this context were Nigeria, Algeria, Russia and Iraq. 850 were EEA nationals, who have stronger protection against expulsion. In the group that was expelled pursuant to the EEA Regulations, most came from Romania, Poland and Lithuania.



Who were the new citizens?

In 2012, 12 100 immigrants became Norwegian citizens or were promised citizenship if they renounced their former citizenship. The proportion of children among this group increased.

Easier for children to be granted citizenship

Of those granted citizenship in 2012, 37 per cent were children. By comparison, the proportion of children the year before was 32 per cent. Of the biggest groups by country, former Iraqis and Somalis, children accounted for more than half of the new citizens.

The high proportion of children is due, among other things, to a change in the regulations that makes it easier for children born in Norway or who came to Norway as children to be granted Norwegian citizenship. Previously, children were treated identically with their parents if there was doubt about the parents' identity. With effect from July 2012, the rules were changed to allow persons who were under the age of 18 when they came to Norway to be granted Norwegian citizenship if the identity of one of their parents was clarified. In such case, the applicant must have done what is required

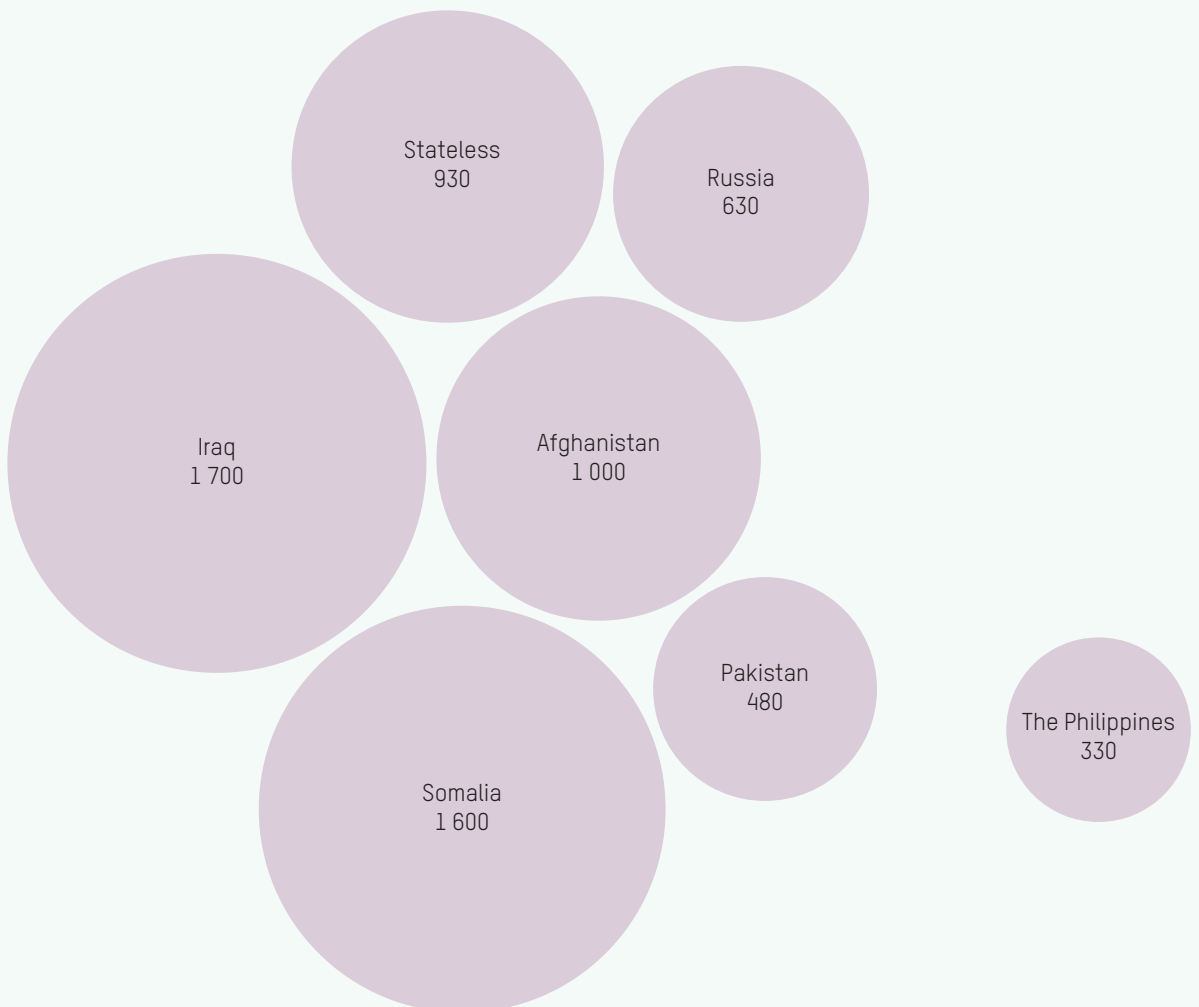
to clarify his/her identity. The identity of children born in Norway is deemed to be clarified regardless of whether the identity of their parents has been clarified.

Persons covered by the new provision who had previously received a rejection were encouraged to apply again. These applications were given priority and dealt with rapidly. We granted 1 100 such applications in 2012.

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Figure

The seven biggest countries of origin of new Norwegian citizens, 2012



Who visited Norway?

A total of 142 800 applicants were granted visitor visas to come to Norway and Schengen in 2012. Russian nationals accounted for 36 per cent of those who were granted visitor visas, which made them the biggest group. The biggest increase in the number of visa applications in recent years has been from Chinese nationals.

The vast majority of applicants were granted visas. A very high percentage of applications from Russia and China are approved, and nearly all applicants from these countries were granted a visitor visa.

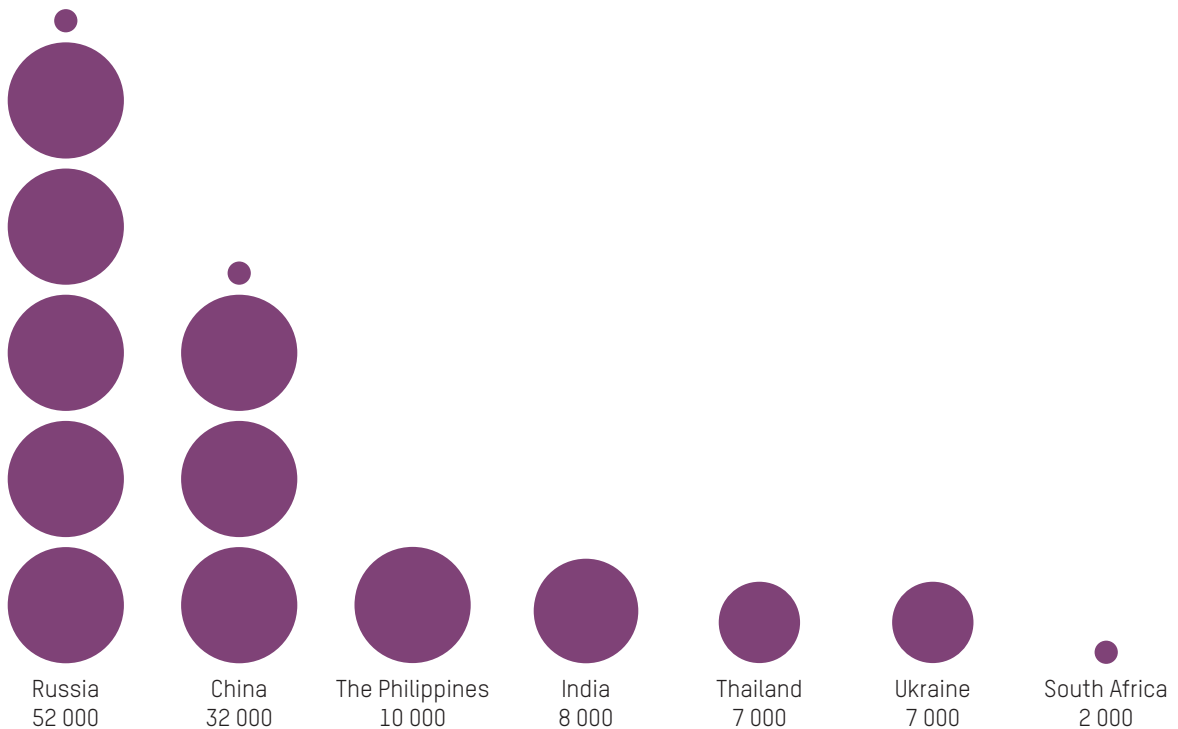
Of those whose applications were rejected, the most common reason was that we believed it to be unlikely that they would return to their home country on expiry of the visa period.



10 000

Figure

Visitor visas granted by nationality, the seven biggest countries, 2012



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