

COUNTRY FACTSHEET: NORWAY 2013

EUROPEAN MIGRATION NETWORK

1. Introduction

This EMN Country Factsheet provides a factual overview of the main policy developments in migration and international protection in Norway during 2013, including latest statistics.

2. Legal Migration and Mobility

2.1. PROMOTING LEGAL MIGRATION CHANNELS

A **new website** www.workinnorway.no became operational in June 2013. The website targets both third-country national jobseekers and employers. On one hand, it aims at directing potential migrant workers to relevant governmental websites, while it is also tailored to employers wanting to recruit foreign workers. By the end of 2013, *Workinnorway* was also expected to include foreign companies who want to provide their services in Norway.

Developments were also reported on the promotion of migration channels in countries of origin. For example, in the autumn of 2013, a **pilot project on labour migration from third countries** was launched by two Norwegian Foreign Service missions: in Russia (Murmansk) and India (New Delhi).

2.2. ECONOMIC MIGRATION

In January 2013 **two legal provisions regarding migrant workers were repealed**: the first one concerned the **permit issued to high salaried workers**¹ and the second one concerned the **permit issued to highly skilled workers** seeking work in Norway. The government decided to repeal these provisions due to repeated abuses and falsification of documents, but also due to the small number of requests for these permits. Skilled workers can nevertheless still apply for work permits when they have a job offer for full time employment matching their skills.

¹ Salaries higher than NOK 500,000/EUR 60,000.

Improvements on skill recognition and labour matching were highlighted during 2013 following the publication of the White Paper on integration policy on October 2012². Improvements particularly concerned two instruments: an **action plan to better use the skills of immigrants** and a **database of approved higher education programmes**. Both of these instruments are administered by the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT), to ensure more efficient procedures to assess foreign qualifications.

With regards to **au pairs**, in 2013 **new administrative sanctions**, including quarantine, were introduced against host families who breach the terms of the "Au Pair Scheme" or who commit crimes against their domestic worker.

2.3. FAMILY REUNIFICATION

In October 2012 a **proposal to increase the income requirement for family reunification cases** was submitted for public consultation. The main proposal was not adopted. However, some minor changes concerning family reunification were adopted July 2013. For example, provisions allowing the refusal of a resident permit to minors applying for family reunification along with the minor's mother or father where changed, to make it easier to refuse cases where there is a risk of sexual exploitation of the child by the new spouse of the child's parent in Norway. Also, a new Government took office in October 2013 and pledged a number of amendments regarding family reunification, including the increased income requirement.

2.4. INTEGRATION

One of the **main priorities** of the Norwegian integration policy has been **to increase participation of immigrants in the labour market**. Thus, during 2013 efforts continued regarding the implementation of integration projects such as the **"Job Opportunity"**

² "White Paper – A Comprehensive Integration Policy", adopted on 26 October 2012.

integration scheme which was a new measure that aims to increase the employment rate of immigrants between 18 and 55 years old. The scheme is tailored in particular for those groups that were not covered by other schemes, including women staying at home. The budget of the Job Opportunity scheme for 2014 amounts to 11 million euros.

Norway reported that according to research results, there is still room for improvement within the long established **Introduction Programme**, even though the programme has had a positive impact on the employment and education of newly arrived migrants. Thus, during 2013 several **amendments to the law on the introduction programme and language tuition for migrants were under consideration**. Possible changes would include the following: municipalities would be responsible for initiating classes of Norwegian language and social studies; it will for example be possible to be exempted from attending social studies classes, if the participant demonstrates some knowledge of Norwegian society; and it will also be possible to obtain authorised leave from classes for work related reasons.

Furthermore, during 2013 **a new grant scheme** was created **to improve the quality and performance in the municipalities' integration activities**. In particular, the scheme aims to increase the number of projects providing access to education, training and employment. A total of 4 million euro was allocated for 66 projects, the majority of which focused on women and people with low educational backgrounds.

A **National Strategy** for the period **2013-2017 to target health challenges of the migrant population was launched** in August 2013. The strategy aims to ensure that equal health services are provided to everyone and to tackle some migrant-specific challenges, such as: language, cultural differences, as well as particular health conditions.

Also, as part of the integration policy, achieving equality in the provision of public services is a key principle, not only in terms of meeting the needs of a diverse population, but also in terms of preventing discrimination. In this regard, an independent commission was established in 2013 with a mandate to propose changes to **improve the interpretation of services offered to the public** by September 2014.

2.5. MANAGING MIGRATION AND MOBILITY³

In 2013, the **Visa Information System (VIS) was operational in eight regions of the world**. The number of visa applications has increased more than 50% over the last five years and more than 200 thousand applications were estimated for 2013. At the same time, **cases of forgery of documents remain frequent**. Therefore, actions have been undertaken to increase cost-effectiveness and conformity checks. For

example, in 2013 consulate staff was provided with additional training; the fingerprints capture system was improved; and foreign missions were equipped with technical devices to check identity documents.

The **second generation Schengen Information System (SIS II)** was also implemented on 9th April 2013. In addition, four automated border control gates (ABC) were installed at Oslo airport as a pilot test. However, during 2013 there has been a lack of utilisation certificates for third-country nationals.

Regarding border monitoring, the national **EUROSUR became operational on 2nd December 2013**. In this regard, the development of a **new platform for electronic transmission of information on border monitoring** between different relevant authorities was planned for early 2014. The platform would be set up within the already operative "BarentWatch", which is a web portal established for the exchange of public information on Norwegian coasts and waters. Another web-based solution is under implementation within the existing platform "SafeSeaNet". The latter would transmit crew and passenger lists, avoiding overlapping, facilitating maritime transport and optimising control procedures.

Finally, regarding cooperation on border monitoring, Norway participated in 10 Frontex operations during 2013.

3. International Protection and Asylum

During 2013 **Norway continued its participation in the Dublin cooperation with EU Member States**. The Norwegian government has continued to align its policy on asylum and international protection to EU law and other European and international law instruments.

As of 2012, the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration introduced specific guidelines regarding the reception of vulnerable groups, with particular attention being given to the need of minors, lesbian, homosexual, bisexual, trans- or intersexual (LGBTI) applicants.

Norway also continued to **cooperate with the European Asylum Support Office (EASO)** and provided its expertise, in particular on interview techniques and age determination. The formal signature of the Norway-EASO agreement was expected at the beginning of 2014. The working arrangement will allow Norway to participate in EASO's work and be entitled to receive support from EASO. Moreover, nationals of Norway may be engaged under contract by EASO. Finally, Norway will be represented in the EASO Management Board as observers.

Through the European Economic Area (EEA) grants, during the 2009-2014 period **Norway contributed with 21 million euro to support Greece's Asylum and Migration institutional framework**, also in cooperation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) programme partners and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM). During the first part of the

³ "Managing migration and mobility" refers to the following themes: visa policy, Schengen governance and border monitoring.

programme support was provided to: UNHCR in support of the Greek asylum procedures and 872 persons were provided with assistance to return to their countries of origin through IOMs assisted voluntary return programme; and to expand capacity of the reception centres for asylum seekers.

Regarding relocation activities for third-country nationals entitled to international protection, the **2013 resettlement quota was allocated to** a total of 1120 people of which: 200 were Afghan women at risk in Iran, 200 Eritreans in Sudan, 150 Somalis in Kenya, 150 Iranians (alternatively other nationalities) in Turkey, 150 Congolese (DRC) refugees in Uganda, 175 so called "open cases" (with mandate status from UNHCR), whereas 75 were Columbian women in Ecuador and 20 health related cases.

4. Unaccompanied Minors and other Vulnerable Groups

A **new legislation on guardianship for unaccompanied minors** (UAMs) seeking international protection entered into force in July 2013. The new provisions have ensured more consistency to recruitment, training, and supervision of guardians and have clarified the role of the legal representative of an UAM, aiming to reinforce the legal status of UAMs.

5. Actions against Trafficking in Human Beings

In response to the increased number of cases of facilitation of irregular migration (smuggling), Norway has established a **new analytical framework for intelligence assessment of threats and risks of smuggling**, based on multilevel cooperation between relevant authorities, police and public and private partners.

The Council of Europe expert group on action against human trafficking (GRETA) published its first report on Norway on 7th May 2013. In the report, GRETA acknowledged the significant steps Norway has taken to prevent and combat trafficking in human beings, and commended Norway's leading role in international efforts to fight human trafficking. Nevertheless, a number of important challenges remain, including the need to adopt clear procedures and criteria for the identification of victims of human trafficking. Thus, GRETA called on the Norwegian authorities to set up a national system for identifying and assisting victims of trafficking. The report also noted that there are around 150-200 possible victims of trafficking per year in Norway, mostly women from Nigeria, Romania and Lithuania who are trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

6. External Dimension of EU Migration Policy

The **Norwegian Development Agency** (NORAD) has **continued to integrate the work of diaspora groups** with the work of traditional development

organisations and to prioritise projects that partner NGOs with diaspora groups, or that include several diaspora organisations.

7. Irregular Migration

To prevent the exploitation and illegal employment of third-country nationals, several measures were implemented in 2013 to strengthen existing regulations and to monitor migrants' working conditions. In particular, the **competences of the Labour Inspection Authority were strengthened** to issue penalty fines and to monitor clauses on salary and working conditions in public-sector contracts. Moreover, **trade unions have now the right to bring action against illegal hiring**, as provided by the Temporary Agency Work Directive (2008/104/EC). Furthermore, **cooperative programmes between business and social actors** were initiated within some identified vulnerable sectors such as: the cleaning industry, and restaurant and transport industries.

The Ministry of Justice is reflecting on some **new provisions to prevent the misuse of free movement rights** through use of fraudulent identity. Among these, the introduction of a new biometric database has been considered.

8. Provision and Exchange of Information to support Policy Development

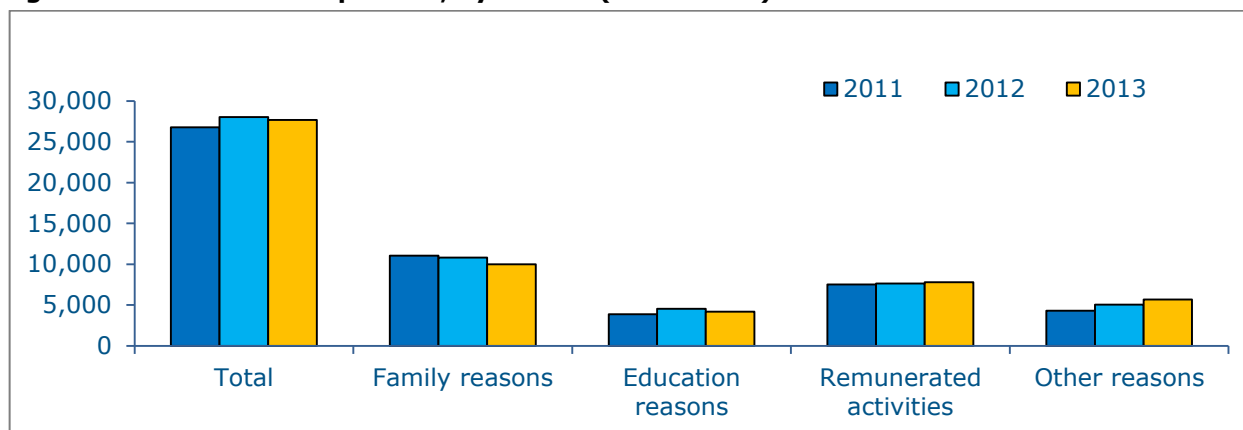
Norway is actively engaged in a range of different European and international fora activities to exchange information and to contribute to policy developments in organisms such as: the EMN, the General Directors' Immigration Services Conference (GDISC), the European Platform of Reception Agencies (EPRA) and the Intergovernmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees (IGC). In 2013 **participation in EASO activities was intensified** in light of the upcoming signature of the arrangement agreement.

STATISTICAL ANNEX

The Statistical Annex provides an overview of the latest available statistics for Norway on aspects of migration and asylum (2011-2013), including residence, asylum, unaccompanied minors, irregular migration, return and visas. Where statistics are not yet available, this is indicated in the Annex as "N/A".

Statistical Annex: Immigration and Asylum in Norway (2011-2013)

Figure 1: First residence permits, by reason (2011-2013)



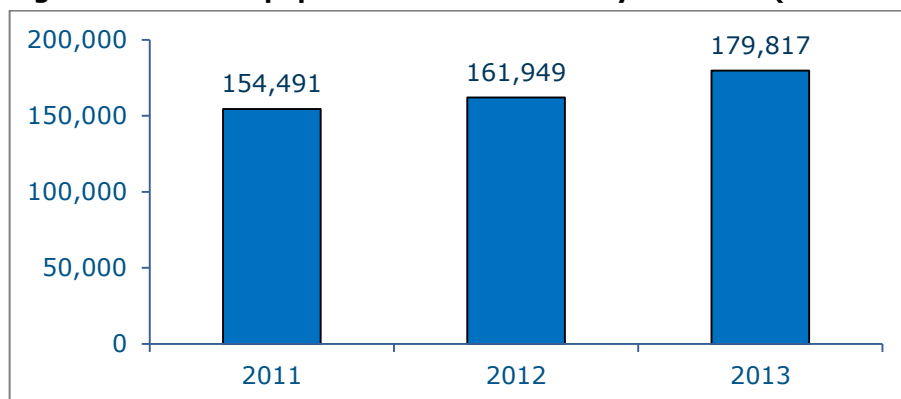
Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_resfirst), extracted 28 July 2014

Table 1: First residence permits: Top five third-country nationalities (2010-2013)

2011	2012	2013
1. Philippines – 2,827	1. Philippines – 2,966	1. Philippines – 2,689
2. Somalia – 2,036	2. Somalia – 2,730	2. Eritrea – 2,685
3. Eritrea – 1,597	3. India – 2,087	3. Somalia – 2,317
4. India – 1,579	4. Eritrea – 1,652	4. India – 2,097
5. USA – 1,373	5. USA – 1,411	5. USA – 1,387

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_resfirst), extracted 28 July 2014

Figure 2: Resident population of third-country nationals (2011-2013)



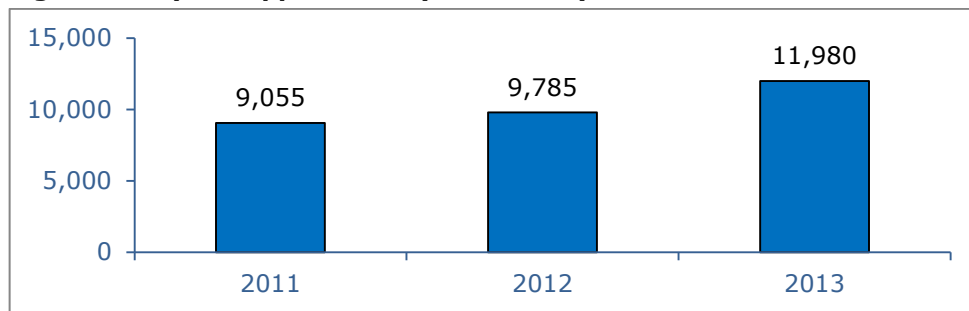
Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_pop1ctz), extracted 4 June 2014

Table 2: Resident population: Top five third-country nationalities (2011-2013)

2011	2012	2013
1. Somalia – 11,123	1. Somalia – 11,356	1. Somalia – 14,637
2. Russia – 10,797	2. Russia – 10,873	2. Russia – 11,249
3. Iraq – 10,556	3. Iraq – 10,444	3. Thailand – 11,084
4. Thailand – 9,293	4. Thailand – 10,037	4. Philippines – 10,320
5. USA – 8,614	5. Philippines – 8,838	5. Eritrea – 10,214

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_pop1ctz), extracted 4 June 2014

Figure 3: Asylum applications (2011-2013)



Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asyappctza), extracted 4 June 2014

Table 3: Asylum applications: Top five third-country nationalities (2011-2013)

2011	2012	2013
1. Somalia – 2,215	1. Somalia – 2,180	1. Eritrea – 3,250
2. Eritrea – 1,255	2. Eritrea – 1,185	2. Somalia – 1,695
3. Afghanistan – 980	3. Afghanistan – 985	3. Syria – 865
4. Russia – 365	4. Sudan – 470	4. Afghanistan – 725
5. Iran – 355	5. Iran – 440	5. Sudan – 600

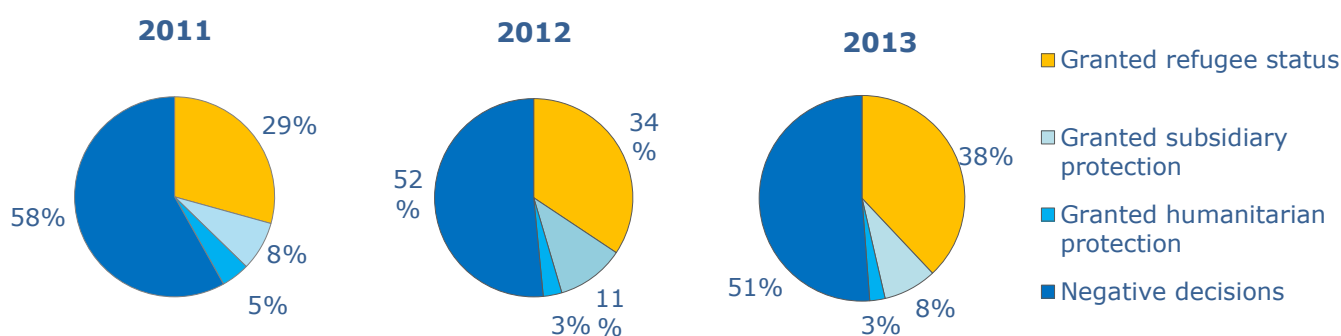
Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asyappctza), extracted 4 June 2014

Table 4: Asylum applications - First instance decisions by outcome (2011-2013)

	Total decisions	Positive decisions	Of which:			Negative decisions
			Refugee status	Subsidiary protection	Humanitarian reasons	
2011	9,590	4,015	2,810	765	440	5,575
2012	10,695	5,180	3,675	1,185	325	5,515
2013	11,830	5,770	4,495	995	285	6,060

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asydcfsta), extracted 4 June 2014

Figures 4-6: Asylum applications - First instance decisions by outcome (2011-2013)



Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asydcfsta), extracted 4 June 2014

Table 5: Third-country nationals relocated and resettled (2011-2013)

	2011	2012	2013
Third-country nationals relocated	0	30*	5
Third-country nationals resettled	1,270	1,230	955

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asyresa), extracted 6 June 2014 and Commission Staff Working Document -Accompanying the 5th Annual Report on Immigration and Asylum 2013; * Data provided by NO EMN National Contact Point

Table 6: Unaccompanied minors (2011-2013)

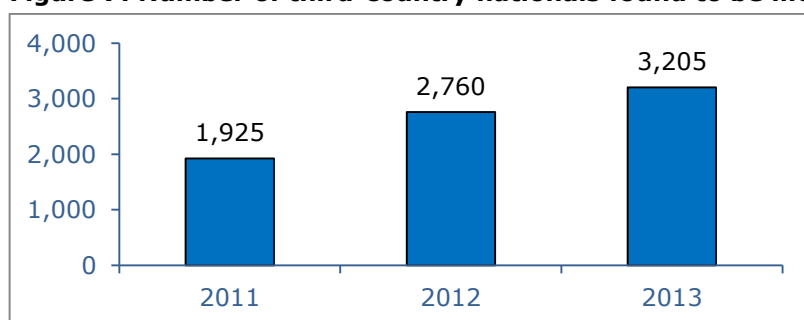
	2011	2012	2013
Unaccompanied minors (total)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Unaccompanied minors not applying for asylum	N/A	N/A	N/A
Unaccompanied minor asylum applicants	860	965	1,070

Source: Data provided by NO EMN National Contact Point

Table 7: Number of third-country nationals refused entry at external borders (2011-2013)

	2011	2012	2013
Third-country nationals refused entry at external borders	150	175	235

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_eirfs), extracted 4 June 2014

Figure 7: Number of third-country nationals found to be illegally present (2011-2013)

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_eipre), extracted 4 June 2014

Table 8: Third-country nationals returned (2011-2013)

	Third-country nationals ordered to leave	Returned as part of forced return measures*	Returned voluntarily*	Returned through an Assisted Voluntary Return Programme**
2011	15,855	4,745	N/A	1,815
2012	14,680	4,905	N/A	1,750
2013	14,245	5,935	N/A	1,890

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_eiord), extracted 4 June 2014 and Commission Staff Working Document - Accompanying the 5th Annual Report on Immigration and Asylum 2013; * data provided by the NCP; ** Data provided by NO EMN National Contact Point according to IOM statistics as of May 2014.

Table 9: Number of visas issued by type (2011-2013)

	2011	2012	2013
Total visas	139,645	142,780	184,915
Schengen visa (short-stay visas)	139,460	142,605	184,710
National visa	185	175	205

Source: Data provided by NO EMN National Contact Point