

Report of exchange programme in Norway



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HUB INTERVIEW GUIDE

on STATISTICAL DATA AND GENERAL RECEPTION CONDITIONS

COUNTRY PROFILE / STATISTICAL DATA

Please provide data on the following for the whole of the country, if available, unless otherwise specified. This information will be used to compile a basic country profile database which can be updated yearly.

Norway 2006		Key figures 2006
Number of processed asylum cases	4200	
Number of residents at reception centres /average per month/	8090	
Number of persons who received protection or residence on humanitarian grounds	2600	
Number of family immigration permits	14000	

In 2006, 5300 applicants arrived from a total of 104 countries.

The reception centre I visited was Bergum, located in Forde. This centre had 109 residents, when I was there.

- China 20
- Somalia 16
- Russia 14
- Sri Lanka 14
- Eritrea 9
- Iraq 9
- Palestine 9
- Iran 3
- Jordan 3
- Angola 2
- Ethiopia 2
- Ukraine 2
- Afghanistan 1
- Kazakhstan 1
- Liberia 1

/ 32 women and 25 children /

/ There were no precise numbers available from countries of origin from the whole country who are specified in single women, UMA's, pregnant women etc.../

GENERAL RECEPTION CONDITIONS

Initial reception

Where are asylum seekers placed when they first enter the country?

In Norway asylum seekers are transferred to a transit centre in Tanum/ operated by Hero /. A person will stay there for 3 weeks up to 1 month and will get the interview there and TBC check .After this the asylum seeker will get a transfer to a Transit Centre in Oslo The UDI will check there if a person will enter the 48 – hour procedure or the normal procedure. Also the fingerprint registration and the Dublin – check take this place. The stay in this centre will take 1 to 2 months. Afterwards the asylum seeker, who follows the normal asylum procedure will go to a reception centre. .

Medical screening

What are the minimum practices on medical screening (health and mental health)?

They get a medical check-up / TBC test / in the transit centre.

They get a blood test in the reception centre, if they wanted, also one free appointment in the doctor.

Information

Do asylum seekers receive information on the asylum process?

They all get information about the asylum process already in transit centre. DVD has been made to inform asylum seekers. In addition to this information they have to go through an information program in the ordinary centres.

Do they receive adequate information on their rights?

All the persons who request usually get all the information they need to about their rights by lawyers or social counsellor, information adviser. All centres have an information adviser

What is the quality and accessibility of this information?

There are printed materials and dvd materials in different languages about the information they need.

Legal services

What type of legal services are offered?

The asylum seekers are appointed lawyer after the first negative answer. Free lawyers is limited, they get five hours for free consultations.

How are asylum seekers supported in making their application?

They have the information from organization like NOAS and Norway Refugee help in the transit centre. In the ordinary centres the staff give just practical help,/language help etc./

Interpreters

Are professional, culturally sensitive and gender-matched interpreters available for asylum seekers when required?

Yes, mostly used are the interpreters by phone, they are professional and they try to gender/matched. If they need special interpreters the staff can call and order it. The organization Hero they have interpreters services.

Waiting times

How long do asylum seekers have to wait for a decision in their case? Please provide examples.

The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration /UDI/ has the main responsibility for the handling of asylum seekers in Norway. This includes the assessment of asylum applications and providing accommodation during the asylum processes. After arrival in Norway the asylum seeker will be called in for an interview. The UDI uses the interview and an application with a personal statement of the asylum seeker as basis for assessing if there are grounds for being granted asylum. If not, the Norwegian authorities will automatically assess whether there should be granted a residence permit on protection grounds or on humanitarian grounds. If the UDI rejects the application, a person may appeal the decision within 3 weeks after the lawyer receives the UDI's decision. The UDI will determine first whether there are new facts in a case. Normally the asylum seeker may stay in Norway while appeal is processed, except if the UDI believes it is obvious that there are no grounds for protection.

The applicants are informed by a letter from the lawyer, which is pointed out by the UDI, about the negative decision.

The waiting time is individual. It is impossible to give accurate time for waiting because it differs a lot.

Detention

Are any asylum seekers held in detention/ detention-like facilities? Please provide statistical data if available.

Statistical data:

-700 persons were deported from the reception centres after a final rejection of the asylum application /in 2006/

-2700 persons were escorted out of Norway by the authorities after receiving a final rejection/in 2006/

400 of this group have left voluntarily through IOM. The UDI has a contract with the IOM and they organise information meetings for different language groups.

What are the conditions and practices around detention (e.g. lengths of time spent in detention, material conditions, services available for detainees)?

In the Norwegian reception centres people are not forced to leave the centre, unless they are escorted to the country of origin.

Dispersal (= placement/distribution of asylum seekers)

Is there a dispersal policy for asylum seekers?

Every asylum seekers is entitled to move where they want to, but that would mean they will not receive any support from the government. If they receive a residency, and they agree to participate in the introduction program they will primarily be settled in the region of the reception centre. The Norwegian government wants asylum seekers in all parts of the country and to mix various ethnic groups too. But sometimes they try to build certain environments in certain place, like there are no uigur asylum seekers in the

county of Fordo, most of them get settled in Bergen because they are building a uigur environment there.

Staff

How are staff at the reception centre trained?

The staff is trained and educated professionally.

The reception centre I visited was Bergum Reception Centre lies municipality in the county of Sogn og Fjordane.

Employees in the centre are:

Manager of the centre

Responsible for economics, guiding of the staff, competence, cooperation with local organisation and municipality, annual reports, etc..

Information adviser

Responsible for the information programme, introduction programme, education for adults, settlements of people with permits

Economy counsellor

Responsible for economy, payments, budget etc..

Employees for organising activity

Responsible for activities- plan, participation, education for adults

Care taker/ part time job /

Responsible for maintenance of the building, technical reparations etc...

Employee for medical service- nurse /part time job /

Employed not by Hero but by the municipality health care organisation. Responsible for nursing, referring to specialists etc...

Social worker

Responsible for service of accommodation, technical service

Kinder garder employee

What is the level of involvement by staff members in their clients' experiences at the reception facility?

The staff members are quite involved in the resident's life and help out according to the resident's needs. They have much contacts with asylum seeker, but tried to keep a certain professional distance. The staff try to see the asylum seekers as independent adults. They try to guide them instead of doing everything for them.

What is the turnover rate of members of staff?

It seems that it is a rather low turnover rate.

Client information

How much information do staff have about their clients?

When a new client arrives, the person is interviewed by the social counsellor. There is a personal contact between staff and residence. Employees know about individual skills, competences of a person, and about the personal situation of the resident.

How is this information obtained?

The information like for example an education back ground, financial information, working experience, languages, family connections is in the electronic file in SESAM. This file can be used, filled and read by the staff members.

They have files on each asylum seekers locked away.

Yes, use a personal safety access

Schooling and education

What kind of educational opportunities are available to asylum seekers?

Children from 6 years and youngest until 16 years old attend primary and secondary school. They go to the same public school like origin citizens.

Do they receive language training?

As soon as a person has a residence- permit, he or she can attend classes in the school for adult education of the municipality. Residents of a reception centre who receive a permit to stay can immediately join classes of people settled in the municipality. In co-operation with United World College they have had weekly English activities.

Health care

What kind of health services are available?

The asylum seekers have the same access to health care as Norwegian people. When the nurse orders the first doctors appointment the consultations is for free. After they have to pay a small amount for there visit, but everything which is related to psychiatry is for free.

To what extent do asylum seekers have access to medical aid and treatment?

The nurse worked on the centre and she used giving information about health and health-care system in Norway, referring to specialists etc...

Mental health care

What are the provisions for mental health care?

If they need a health care they the same rights for care as as origin citizens. They don't have to pay mental health care.

Food

What are the arrangements around food provision?

The clients have to buy and cook food by themselves. Every floor share a kitchen, where they can prepare their own meals.

Accommodation

Where are asylum seekers housed at various stages of the asylum process?

When the asylum seekers arrive in Norway they are place in transit camps in the Oslo area. Here they are placed a couple of months before they are sent various reception centres in Norway. At Bergum reception centre the residents live in 4 separate blocks on

the premises. As far as possible they try to house residents of the same nationality together. There is one transit camp for single minors.

Are they able to choose their own accommodation?

No, they are not able to choose their own accommodation. However the information they give about relations will be taken in to consideration. For example: If you have a sister in Bergum you will be sent there if there is a room.

What is the quality of accommodation arrangements for asylum seekers?

At Bergum reception centre there are double bedrooms which the residents are located in. The rooms are small, approximately 9 square metres altogether. The rooms have 2 beds, 2 chairs and 1 table, 1 refrigerator and 1 shelf. Families with small children are given 2 rooms, one for relieving purposes.

Financial support

What kind of financial support do asylum seekers receive? How do they receive it (cash, cheques, bank account) Are they expected to refund expenses?

In the Reception Centres asylum seeker receive pocket money like this:

-for an adult	2890 NOK	/361 EUR/	per month
-for t couple	2380 NOK	/595 EUR/	per month
-for the children	670 NOK	/86 EUR/	per month

When they are living in a centre they have got money every 14 days.

Clothing

What kind of arrangements exist for clothing, including shoes, winter garments, etc.?

In transit centre there are given basic clothing for winter season. The residence from the municipality can bring an extra cloths for clients, but there are no rules for that.

Freedom of movement

Do asylum seekers have freedom of movement in the country? If not, how is this controlled?

They have a certain freedom of movement. They can be away from the centre for three days without a written agreement. If they wanted be away from more then three days they must write an application. The centre can give up to two weeks permission. If they want to be away for more then two weeks they have to apply UDI.

Recreation

Are there opportunities for recreation and leisure activities, in areas such as arts, sports, reading, games, music, and being outdoors?

The council pays for different activities at the reception centre. Football, swimming, internet, table tennis and pool are activities paid by the council. Also, some residents use the local training facilities in Forde and the library. During the summer quite a few like to go fishing too

Religious practice

Are there facilities for religious practice?

They are free to practice their own religion. in private rooms and also there is a common room for praying and they can practise a religion.

Host community

To what extent can asylum seekers engage with members of the host community?

The asylum seekers at Bergum reception centre are engaged through different activities with the local community. Firstly, it's an annual tradition to participate at the local food festival each November called Fargerike /colourful/ Forde. At this festival residents mix with the local inhabitants, and where the locals can buy food from all around the world. Fargerike Forde has become more and more popular and has been going on for some years now.

Secondly, the high schools invites the residents for to an international day at the schools. This is a golden opportunity for the students to meet the residents and learn more about their situation and history.

Communication and media

Do asylum seekers have access to phonecards, telephones and/ or mobiles?

Many of the clients have their own mobile, they also can buy a phone card in the city. The contact person are given a phone card each month for the job what they do in the centre.

Do asylum seekers have access to the Internet, TV and radio?

They also have access to Internet, TV and Radio in the common rooms.

Withdrawal of benefits

Are there any circumstances in which benefits or services may be withdrawn from asylum seekers?

If an asylum seeker doesn't follow the accommodation rules they will be cut 100NOK. Example: If they don't attend an information meeting or don't clean a common areas, if they are not back in time from permission, the staff can cut 100NOK.

Complaints and participation

Do asylum seekers have the opportunity to make official and/ or informal complaints against practices in the residence facilities?

The person can write a letter and to make an official complaint by Hero, UDI and local police.

Are asylum seekers involved in any aspect of the ways in which the facility operates?

At Bergum reception centre they have a residents council. The council shall actively participate in activity work, information to the residents and maintenance of the camp. Annually the council dispose approximately 96 000 NOK. These funds are earmarked for the residents at the reception centre. The council is run by a leader , an assistant leader , a secretary and 4-5 members. English is the language of the council. In case

which have sensitive and confidential character, the member of the council must keep secrecy./this must be informed in any case/

Each block /where the residents reside/ has two contact persons, and they are in a way a link between the administration and the residents. Their tasks is to make sure that everything goes smoothly in the living areas, and report the deviations to the office in case this don´t.

Good practice

Are there specific examples of good practice relating to any of the above aspects?

- **The work in the local community /centred on children and youth/**
- **The Introduction Programme /effective communication between a municipality and reception centre/**
- **The counselling system**
- **The kinder garden**
- **Many activities for all asylum seekers**

HUB INTERVIEW GUIDE

on CHILDREN, INCLUDING UNACCOMPANIED MINORS (UAMs)

The definition of 'child' in this questionnaire applies to anyone under 18 years of age. However, different reception practices may exist for children of different age groups, including adolescents, and these should be accounted for in the reporting.

I have not visited a centre where UAMs are living, I have no specific information about this part. There are 2 centres special for UMAs. In 2006 350 underage minors entered to Norway.

Reception of clandestine (=illegal) entrants/ port of entry claimants

How are clandestine entrants/ port of entry claimants received?

Are suitable facilities offered to children?

Do children receive information on their rights?

Age determination

What are the procedures for age determination?

They take a bone test and teeth test

Are they compulsory?

How are children prepared for and supported throughout the procedures?

Age definitions

What is the age definition of a 'child' in the asylum process and what are the implications of this?

What happens when an asylum-seeking child reaches the legal age for adulthood?

Interview arrangements

Are the interviewers trained in interviewing children?

Is the purpose of the interview explained to the child in a way that he/ she can make sense of it?

Initial Accommodation

Where are children placed for accommodation, and how are the accommodation facilities like?

Are children accommodated separately, or with adults?

What are the accommodation arrangements for UAMs?

Guardians

Are UAMs assigned a guardian?

How are the guardians selected?

Yes, there is an appointed guardian for every UMA. They will look at the financial and legal interests.

Language support

Are interpreters available for children?

Yes,

Are they trained in communicating with children?

How is trust built between the interpreter and the child?

Do all children receive training in the host language?

Information

Do children receive adequate information at all stages of the asylum process, and are children explained their rights, in a language they can understand?

Do children in families and UAMs differ in the extent of information they receive?

Legal support

What kind of legal services are on offer for children?

They have a legal guide and lawyer.

Family tracing

Do children receive services for tracing their families?

Can children and UAMs in particular keep in touch with their families or friends abroad, if they wish to do so?

Waiting times

How long do children have to wait for decisions in their case, and how are they prepared for and supported throughout the waiting?

It is individually, a permit should be given no later than 3 months.

Access to education

What kind of education do children receive?

The UAM receive the same education as Norwegian children. They are entitled to attend a course of Norwegian language.

Is the schooling mainstream or separate?

Health and mental health screening

At what stage are children screened for health/ mental health?

Are there any specific health services for children?

Are adolescents (in families/ UAMs) offered information on sexual health?

What kind of mental health services are offered to children?

Are children aware of the health/ mental health services on offer?

The UAM receive the same health care as Norwegian people.

Psycho-social support

How is trust built between children and professionals?

Are members of staff trained in communicating with children?

Are members of staff familiar with cultural and religious differences in the experience of childhood?

What information does the centre collect about a child's past, and how does staff treat this information?

Do children have the opportunity to engage with children from the host community?

Do UAMs receive support/ coaching in every-day life-skills?

Are there activities that bring together children at the centre as a group?

Are there any special programs available for enhancing children's well-being?

Children's voice

Are children being heard as individuals at the reception centre?

Do they take part in decision-making processes?

Are children in families treated differently compared to UAMs?

Freedom of movement

Are there any restrictions on children's freedom of movement?

Dispersal practices

Is there a dispersal policy for children?

How long can children normally stay in one place?

How are children prepared for and supported during dispersal?

Transportation

If dispersed, what are the practical arrangements for travelling to a new location?

How are children prepared for the journey?

Financial support

What kind of financial support do children receive?

Are there any conditions attached?

Recreational activities

What kinds of play facilities exist for children of different ages?

Do children have the opportunity to engage in sports or games?

Do children have the opportunity to engage in arts, music, reading and other recreational activities?

Good practice

Are there specific examples of good practice relating to minors?

HUB INTERVIEW GUIDE

on OLDER PEOPLE AND DISABLED PEOPLE

In the centre I visited were no disabled and older people staying. The staff members could not say to many information about this group, their centre is not adequate for the older and disabled people. They are supported in the same way as other asylum seeker, they have a close contact with the medical care. All centres where used live older and disabled people have a special conditions like adjustments in the bathrooms, wheelchairs, bigger rooms.

OLDER PEOPLE

Interpreting

Are professional, culturally sensitive and gender-matched interpreters available for older people?

Information

Do older people receive sufficient information on the asylum process in their own language?
How are they supported throughout the process?

Accommodation

How are older people accommodated?
Do they have access to privacy if required?

Social support

What kind of social support do older people receive in the reception centre?
How does staff take into account the cultural backgrounds of older people?
Are there activities that bring together older people as a group?

Health services

What kind of health services do older people receive?
Do older people receive appropriate medication and other medical treatment?
How are they supported in looking after their health?

Mental health services

What kind of mental health services are offered to older people?

Food

Do older people have access to the kind of food they require and are accustomed to?
Are the dietary needs and intake of older people monitored regularly?

Language

Do older people receive language tuition appropriate for their needs and style of learning?

Religious practice

Are there facilities for religious practice if needed?

Recreational activities

Are there recreational activities suitable for older people?

Dispersal

What are the effects of dispersal practices on older people?
How are older people transported during dispersal?

Training and education

What kind of training/ educational opportunities exist for older people?

Host community

Are there opportunities for older people to interact with people in the host community?

Good practice

Are there specific examples of good practice relating to older people?

DISABLED PEOPLE**Types of disability**

What kind of disabilities do the asylum-seekers have?

Accommodation

How are disabled people accommodated?
Do they have access to privacy if required?

Disabled facilities and services

Are there special facilities/ services for disabled people?

Counselling

What kind of counselling services are available for disabled people?

Social support

How are disabled people supported socially?

Health screening and support

Do disabled people receive appropriate health screening and treatment/ support?
Do they have access to professional support for their disability?
In the case of a disabled child, do parents receive appropriate information and support?

Recreational activities

Are there recreational activities for disabled people to take part in?

Dispersal

How are disabled people transported if dispersed?

Detention

What is the impact of potential detention policies on people with disabilities?
How is this dealt with?

Training and education

What kind of training/ educational opportunities exist for disabled people?

Host community

Are there opportunities for disabled people to interact with people in the host community?

Good practice

Are there specific examples of good practice relating to disabled people?

HUB INTERVIEW GUIDE

on VICTIMS OF TORTURE, RAPE AND PHYSICAL OR PSYCHOLOGICAL VIOLENCE, VICTIMS OF TRAUMA AND OTHER PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

I have no specific information about this subject. There is no special program available for victims of trauma and other people with mental problems. The persons who are diagnosed and they cannot live with other people, or they are a danger to themselves are transferred to a place where they can get the right support.

Health and mental health screening

At what stage is health and mental health screening arranged?
What is the quality of the screening?

Interpreters

Are professionally trained, culturally sensitive and gender-matched interpreters available?

Information on processes

Do people with mental health problems receive adequate information on the asylum process, their rights, and the services available to them?
How are they prepared for and supported throughout the various stages of the asylum process?

Interview arrangements

Are there appropriate interview arrangements for women, minors and elderly people with mental health problems?

Waiting times

For how long do victims of trauma normally have to wait for their case to be decided?

Psychological and psychiatric support

What forms of support or rehabilitation are on offer, and to whom?
Is specialist support available for minors, women, older people and/ or disabled people with mental health problems?
Are services available to asylum seekers with mental health problems, who have not been diagnosed as victims of trauma?

Medical support

To what extent do asylum seekers have access to medical aid and treatment?

Psycho-social support

Are the personal backgrounds of victims of trauma known to members of staff?
What types of community support are available?
Do people with mental health problems have the opportunity to participate in community activities?
Can they receive support with daily tasks, if required?
Can family members of people with mental health problems receive counselling and social support, if required?

Accommodation

Is the physical environment suitable for people with mental health problems?

Is there adequate privacy?

Is the accommodation environment both safe and unthreatening?

Dispersal

What is the impact of potential dispersal policies on people with mental health problems?

How is this dealt with?

Detention

What is the impact of potential detention policies on people with mental health problems?

How is this dealt with?

Age determination

For victims of trauma, how is the potentially traumatic effect of age determination procedures dealt with?

Recreation

Do people with mental health problems have opportunities for recreation and leisure activities, in areas such as arts, sports, reading, games, music, and being outdoors?

Host community

Are there opportunities for people with mental health problems to interact with people in the host community?

Good practice

Are there specific examples of good practice relating to people with mental health problems?

HUB INTERVIEW GUIDE

on PREGNANT WOMEN, SINGLE PARENTS WITH MINOR CHILDREN, WOMEN AND FAMILIES

PREGNANT WOMEN

Health screening

Do pregnant women receive adequate and ongoing health screening?

Do they have access to medication and gynaecological treatment if necessary?

The pregnant women have access to regular visit to a doctor and controls of the midwife.

Information

Do pregnant women receive sufficient information on practices around giving birth in the host country?

Yes, they to get an information.

Interpreters

Are professional, culturally sensitive, female interpreters available for pregnant women?

Yes, mostly used translators by phone.

Counselling

What kind of counselling is available for pregnant women?

What kind of guidance/ counselling services are on offer for women after giving birth?

The nurse can give an information about having a baby, etc..

Material environment

Is the material environment adequate for pregnant women's needs?

Do they have required privacy?

Are pregnant women in families accommodated with their families or with other women, and do they have a choice in the matter?

Food

Do pregnant women have access to the food they require?

They are responsible for their own food and preparation.

Clothing

Is maternity and baby clothing available?

Newborn's get start packet. They receive 1700 NOK for clothes and 750 NOK for bed-clothes.

Financial support

Is the financial allocation sufficient to cover for pregnancy-related needs?

They can get a financial bonus when a child is born, but this is possible received when a permit to stay has been decided. When a child is delivered a women can get child money.

Social support

Are there opportunities for women to interact with pregnant women in the host community?

Do pregnant women have the opportunity to keep in touch with friends or family members abroad, if required?

Yes, it is possible.

SINGLE PARENTS WITH MINOR CHILDREN, WOMEN AND FAMILIES

Interviews

Are all family members interviewed separately?

Interpreters

Are professional, culturally sensitive, female interpreters available for women?

Yes

Family friendly accommodation

Is accommodation family-friendly?

Play facilities

Are there play facilities available for children?

They can visited a kinder garden

Child care

Is child care available if required?

Educational opportunities

Are educational opportunities available for single mothers and other women?

Children's schooling

Are parents consulted with around matters regarding their children's schooling?

Safety

How is the safety and security of women taken into account?

Privacy

Is there sufficient privacy for single women and families?

What are the arrangements for toilets and washing areas?

They have a separate women's division

Freedom of movement

Do single women have the same freedom of movement as single men and families?

Dispersal

What is the impact of potential dispersal policies on pregnant women?

How are pregnant women transported if dispersed?

Detention

What is the impact of potential detention policies on pregnant women?

How is this dealt with?

Sexual health counselling

Do women/ men receive information/ counselling about sexual health and family planning options?

Do women/ men have access to their preferred forms of contraception?

Children's clothing

Are children provided required clothing?

Financial support

Is the financial allocation sufficient to cover for family-related needs?

How are financial allocations distributed to families?

Do mothers receive a personal share of the financial allocations?

Information and psycho-social support

Do single mothers and families have access to services by professionals such as nurses, counsellors, social workers, etc.?

Do women receive information on their rights in the host country?

Do they have access to women's support services?

What kinds of opportunities exist for women to interact with women in the host community?

Are there activities at the reception facility that bring together women as a group?

Recreational activities

What kinds of recreational activities are available for women?

Good practice

Are there specific examples of good practice relating to pregnant women, families, single mothers or women in general?

The single mothers have an opportunity to live in separate rooms.