



Wise project.

Report on education in social cultural field in Norway.

1. Short facts:

Immigration to Norway:

Immigrants in Norway come from 213 different countries. They have come as refugees, work immigrants, for education/study or for family reunification.

Total population: 4.808.266 (feb.16.2009). Immigrants: 460.000 which is 9,7 % of total population.

Immigrants come from:

Europe: 203.000, Asia: 174.000, Africa: 56.000, South America: 16.000 and North America and Australia/New Zealand: 9.000.

Poland, Sweden, Iraq and Denmark are the countries with the biggest number of immigrants.

38 % have a Norwegian citizenship and the number of immigrants have increased during the last 50 years.

Immigrants from Nordic and Baltic countries (2007):

Sweden: 6.300, Denmark 2.956, Lithuania: 2.356, Latvia: 466, Estonia: 410 and Iceland: 337.

2. Laws and education plans:

Integration and social inclusion:

Policy goals and guidelines

The clearly stated goal of the Norwegian government is that Norway should be an inclusive society in the sense that all inhabitants, regardless of their background, should have equal opportunities to contribute and participate actively in the Norwegian society. Immigrants and their descendants should be able to achieve equal living conditions compared to the rest of the population.

To achieve this goal government policies and measures are formulated with the aim that immigrants and refugees can contribute and use their resources in the labour market and in society at large. The evolution of a divided society where persons with an immigrant background have poorer living conditions and lower social and political participation than the rest of the population should be prevented. Participation in the labour market is regarded as the most important tool to fight poverty and exclusion.

Mainstreaming is an important principle for government policies. The needs of immigrants, refugees and their descendants are included in broad general programmes or policies at the various administrative levels (state, regional, and local). Public administration must recognise and respect diversity by ensuring that different needs in the population are reflected in the design of public services and general social systems.

Ensuring equal access to public services constitutes recognition in practice of the diversity in the Norwegian society. Dialogue and contact with civil society are important elements of the policy-making process.

Some special measures for newly arrived immigrants are deemed to be necessary to ensure equal opportunities, for example the Introduction Programme.

Strengthened language and job training are of utmost importance in this respect. Both with regard to objectives and means, a distinction is made between immigrants and their children. An important objective is to secure that descendants of immigrants have the same opportunities as others when they reach adulthood, first of all in education and participation in the labour market.

A coherent policy is sought by giving the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion responsibility for co-ordination of the policies on social inclusion and integration of immigrants, refugees and their descendants as well as the policies concerning the indigenous population and national minorities. From October 2007, following a reorganisation within the government ministries, the Ministry of Children and Equality, was given the coordinating responsibility for all forms of discrimination. The ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion will continue to co-ordinate policies relating to integration and inclusion of immigrants and descendants.

Plan of action for integration and social inclusion

This plan of action is the response of the government to the challenges in the area of labour, welfare and social inclusion linked to some sections of the immigrant population. Higher unemployment levels, higher welfare dependency, less civic participation and school dropout among some groups are documented.

The plan emphasises the importance of participation in working life, knowledge of the Norwegian language and culture, equality of opportunities for immigrants and their descendants, participation in society at large and gender equality. The plan is divided into four areas: Employment, Childhood, Education and Language; Gender Equality and Participation. Combating racism and discrimination should be an integral perspective of all measures.

Right and obligation to participate in Norwegian language and social studies tuition:

Tuition in the Norwegian language and social studies became statutory for immigrants on 1 September 2005. The aim of the tuition is to improve opportunities for immigrants to actively participate in the employment market and in society in general.

Norwegian language skills are important in order to be able to understand and be understood, in order to get a job and an education and to be able to participate in society.

Adult immigrants with residence permits that form the basis for settlement permits have a right and obligation to complete 300 hours of tuition in the Norwegian language and social studies. The municipal authorities are responsible for the provision of this tuition. In order to obtain a settlement permit or Norwegian citizenship, immigrants must either complete 300 hours of tuition or be able to document adequate knowledge of Norwegian or Sami. This applies to persons granted residence permits after 1 September 2005. A transitional scheme is in force for persons granted residence permits before 1 September 2005.

Norwegian social studies:

The 50 hours social studies covers 7 topics:

1: Immigrants in Norway

2: Democracy, welfare and values

3: Health

4: School, education and gaining qualifications

5: Work, working life and the labour market

6: Children and family

7: Population structure and nature

The socio-cultural situation for immigrants in 2009.

Surveys (in 2008) shows that Norwegians are more positive to immigrants than before, 7 out of 10 asked say that foreigners enriches the cultural life of Norway and only 6 percent don't like getting an immigrants as a neighbor.

Immigrants in Norway have different ways and rights to learn about our society/country.

Many have the right and obligation to have social studies with free lessons and some can have a social studies course if they pay.

Adult educational centres run by municipalities give this courses and there are also some private firms who offers it to people who can pay.

Immigrants from the Baltic states are in almost all cases among the people who have to pay to attend a class, but they will have an opportunity to get some information for free through brochures and through the internet – in English or russian.

Jan Erik Waagene, februar 16. 2009

Appendix.

Right and obligation to participate in Norwegian language and social studies tuition:

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The main principles governing the right and obligation to participate in Norwegian language and social studies tuition

- Immigrants have a right and obligation to complete 250 hours of tuition in the Norwegian language and 50 hours of tuition in social studies, in a language they understand.
- The municipal authorities are responsible for organising the tuition.
- Each person must apply him/herself to the municipality for tuition. The tuition shall start as soon as possible and within three months, at the latest, of the person's application.
- It is the municipal authorities who make decisions relating to the tuition.
- Immigrants must take 300 hours of tuition within three years.
- The completion of 300 hours of tuition in the Norwegian language and social studies is a precondition for the granting of a settlement permit and subsequently Norwegian citizenship.
- Immigrants who are able to document adequate knowledge of Norwegian or Sami may be exempted from the requirement for 300 hours of tuition.
- Immigrants may be given up to 2700 hours of further tuition if
- The provision of tuition must be adapted to suit the individual's background and qualifications. Everyone participating in the tuition must therefore have an individual plan for his/her own tuition.
- The right to free tuition in Norwegian will normally cease to apply if the tuition is not completed within the deadline. Persons who have been prevented from participating in the tuition can apply to renew their right and obligation to tuition if the deadline has expired.

Who has a right and obligation to participate in Norwegian language and social studies tuition?

The following groups have a right and obligation to participate in Norwegian language and social studies tuition:

- Persons with asylum status
- Resettlement refugees
- Persons granted residence on humanitarian grounds
- Persons with collective protection

- Family members reunited with persons with the above status
- Family members reunited with Norwegian or Nordic citizens
- Family members reunited with persons who have been granted settlement permits

The right and obligation means that these groups are obliged to complete 300 hours of tuition, and that they are entitled to free tuition. Only persons in the age group 16 – 55 have a right and obligation to participate in Norwegian language tuition. Persons between the ages of 55 and 67 are entitled but are not obliged to participate in tuition.

The following groups are not entitled to free tuition but are obliged to complete 300 hours of tuition in the Norwegian language and social studies:

- Labour immigrants from outside the EEA/EFTA area
- Persons who come to Norway on the basis of family reunification with labour immigrants from outside the EEA/EFTA area.

There is, however, no obligation to complete more than 300 hours of tuition. The municipal authorities can require an immigrant to take tests to determine whether or not further tuition in addition to the 300 hours is necessary.

Only persons between the ages of 16 and 55 are obliged to participate in tuition.

Who neither has a right nor an obligation to participate in Norwegian language and social studies tuition?

The following groups neither have a right nor an obligation to participate in Norwegian language tuition:

- Students
- Au-pairs and other persons with temporary residence
- Nordic citizens
- Persons with residence pursuant to the EFTA/EEA rules

This means that the municipal authorities are not responsible for organising Norwegian language tuition for these groups.

There is, however, no obligation to complete more than 300 hours of tuition. The municipal authorities can require an immigrant to take tests to determine whether or not further tuition in addition to the 300 hours is necessary.

2. Norwegian social studies:

The 50 hours social studies covers 7 topics:

1: Immigrants in Norway

Residence permits

Family reunification

Introductory programme

Norwegian language training: rights and obligations

Norwegian language training: three different tracks
Norwegian history: immigration and emigration
Many dialects - two written forms of Norwegian

2: Democracy, welfare and values

Norwegian history: World War II
The Storting
Political parties
The government
The Norwegian legal system
The court system
Equality between the sexes
The monarchy
Norway's national day

3: Health

A brief history of the health services in Norway
Pregnancy
Self-determined abortion
Contraception
Vaccinations
Choosing a hospital
Chemists and products available from chemists
Allergies

4: School, education and gaining qualifications

Primary and lower secondary education
Primary and lower secondary education for adults
Universities and university colleges
Approval of foreign qualifications and vocational qualifications
The State Educational Loan Fund
Upper secondary education for adults
A brief history of education in Norway

5: Work, working life and the labour market

NAV (The work and welfare agency)
Trade unions
CV
Job application

The Worker Protection and Working Environment Act and the Holiday Act

Absence from work

Starting your own company

6: Children and family

Mortgages

Owning your own home

Home contents insurance

Budgets

Child benefit allowance

Cash benefits

Pregnancy leave and parental benefit

Forced marriage

7: Population structure and nature

Transport

The Sámi people

Oil

Public right of access (Allemannsretten)

Angling

Common animals in Norway

Books and websites:

“Intro” – Student book in many different languages and a *free* internet site (very good!)

url: <http://introcappelen.no>

“Velkommen” – student book in many different languages and a pay internet site.

url:<http://www.norgesquiz.no>

The norwegian immigration agency, UDI, has its own internet site for newly arrived immigrants called “NY i Norge” (New in Norway) with information about the basic social facts in different languages, but not in any of the baltic languages.

Url: <http://www.nyinorge.no/>

IMDI, the integration agency, also have information about Norwegian and social studies in different languages.

Url: http://www.imdi.no/Templates/FirstPageLanguage____4429.aspx (English)

10 Integration and social inclusion. (SOPEMI report Norway 2006-2007)

10.1 Policy goals and guidelines

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conditions compared to the rest of the population.

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Some special measures for newly arrived immigrants are deemed to be necessary to ensure equal opportunities, for example the Introduction Programme, cf. 10.3.

Strengthened language and job training are of utmost importance in this respect. Both with regard to objectives and means, a distinction is made between immigrants and their children. An important objective is to secure that descendants of immigrants have the same opportunities as others when they reach adulthood, first of all in education and participation in the labour market.

A coherent policy is sought by giving the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion responsibility for co-ordination of the policies on social inclusion and integration of immigrants, refugees and their descendants as well as the policies concerning the indigenous population and national minorities. From October 2007, following a reorganisation within the government ministries, the Ministry of Children and Equality, was given the coordinating responsibility for all forms of discrimination. The ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion will continue to co-ordinate policies relating to integration and inclusion of immigrants and descendants.

10.2 Plan of action for integration and social inclusion

This plan of action is the response of the government to the challenges in the area of labour, welfare and social inclusion linked to some sections of the immigrant population³⁷. Higher unemployment levels, higher welfare dependency, less civic participation and school dropout among some groups are documented.

The plan emphasises the importance of participation in working life, knowledge of the Norwegian language and culture, equality of opportunities for immigrants and their descendants, participation in society at large and gender equality. The plan is divided into four areas: Employment, Childhood, Education and Language; Gender Equality and Participation. Combating racism and discrimination should be an integral perspective of all measures.

Employment: Participation in the labour market is regarded as the most important tool to fight poverty and exclusion. In this area the action plan focuses both on individual qualification and labour market programmes, on measures like immigrant entrepreneurship activities and on measures to encourage employers to recruit persons with an immigrant background.

A major measure involves increased state funding for the expenditures of municipalities

related to the introduction programme to integrate refugees and their families. The aim of the programme is to provide basic skills in Norwegian language, insight into the Norwegian society and to prepare for participation in working life and/or further education and to increase financial independence. The programme organised by the local municipalities combines an introductory programme with an economic benefit that participants are eligible for. Women participate on an equal footing with men.

The qualification programme *New Chance* aims to contribute to give more immigrants permanent ties to the labour market. The target group is persons with a long period of residence in Norway, but with no permanent ties to the labour market and thus dependant on welfare benefits. The programme is based on the model of the introductory programme for refugees, and among participants are many immigrant women.

Education and language: The objective of the government is that all children born in Norway should be able to speak Norwegian before they start school and that a larger proportion of children with immigrant background attend kindergarten. Several measures are aimed at achieving these goals, among others are free core time in kindergarten for all four- and five-year-olds in certain areas in Oslo with a high proportion of minority language children and extra resources to schools where more than 25 percent of the pupils have a minority language.

Gender equality and participation: In order to promote equal opportunities for all, including women with immigrant background, there is a focus on measures to ensure financial independence for women and measures to counteract actions and traditions that take away the right of young people to decide for themselves and their own lives like forced marriages and genital mutilation.

⁴ For the full text see http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/aid/doc/rapporter_planer/planer/2006/Action-Plan-for-Integration-and-Social-I.html?id=271538

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Dialogue and contact with civil society and organisations representing immigrants are deemed important in developing relevant policy. The plan contains increased funding for NGOs and voluntary activities that promote participation and inclusion in local communities.

Ensuring equal access to public services: A new guide on equal opportunities was launched in May 2007. The aim of the guide is to ensure that state bodies, in the best way possible, take into consideration what kind of consequences their proposals will have for people with immigrant background, indigenous peoples (the Sami) and national minorities.

The plan of action for integration and social inclusion was presented by the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion in 2006, in connection with the fiscal budget for 2007 and contained 28 measures worth at a total of EURO 50 million. The measures involve eight ministries. The plan of action is renewed and strengthened in the budget for 2008 with additionally EURO 30 million. Measures directed against forced marriages and language instruction for adult immigrants and young children are particularly strengthened in 2008.