

UDI events calendar 2004

January

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- Provision of accommodation is withdrawn.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

February

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

March

- On assignment from the UDI, FAFO (the Institute for Labour and Social Research) publishes a report on human trafficking of women

- Duration of seasonal work permits is extended from three to six months



April

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



May

- EU/EEA is expanded by ten new countries. Norway introduces transitional rules for workers from eight of these countries



- The UDI launches a teaching package for lower secondary schools in municipalities that have settled refugees from Liberia about prejudice, being a refugee and solidarity
- Decision to close down around 30 asylum reception centres during 2004

June

- Introduction of the requirement for travel and sickness insurance to obtain a visa
- Increase of fees for applying for residence and citizenship to NOK 800 and NOK 2000, respectively

- Our website, www.udi.no, is among the top three in a competition for state website of the year
- Utrop (Calling out), Norway's first multicultural newspaper, is published on 15 June
- World Refugee Day, 20 June



July

- 1 July: Case processing fee is introduced for everyone who applies for a visa to Norway • Fafo-rapporten "Hvordan gikk det etterpå?" [How did it go afterwards?] shows that refugees who participate in introductory programmes find regular employment more quickly than other refugees

August

- The Government decides to expand the resettlement refugee quota for 2005 from 750 to 1000



- The consultants PLS Ramboll Management submit a report containing proposals for alternative organisation models to ensure a dedicated focus on long-term efforts aimed
- The UDI participates in the multicultural event Mela at Rådhusplassen in Oslo

September

- The introductory programme becomes compulsory for all municipalities as of 1 September



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

October

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



Foto: Elmer Laahne

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

November

- The UDI, KS (the Norwegian Association of Local Authorities) and the Norwegian State Housing Bank carry out a joint settlement campaign from 15 August to 15 November. This leads to the settlement of 953 single refugees in a municipality in a short period of time
- A number of fact sheets with information about rules and application procedures are launched in 19 languages. The fact sheets are available at www.udi.no



- Information about rights for women who apply for reunification with family members resident in Norway is made available at the embassies
- The EU summit meeting adopts a multi-year programme to strengthen freedom, security and justice (the Hague programme), where greater cooperation on asylum and immigration policy is an important part
- The UDI's conference on unaccompanied minor asylum seekers and refugees
- Establishment of expert teams to put an end to forced marriages, with representatives from the UDI, the police and the Norwegian Red Cross

December



Foto: CF-Wesenberg

- Erna Solberg, Minister of Local Government and Regional Development, announces the recommendation to establish a new Directorate: the Directorate of Integration and Diversity
- Parliament agrees to the Government's proposal to make instruction in the Norwegian language and social studies compulsory for immigrants. This scheme will enter into force on 1 September 2005
- The Government obtains a majority in favour of discontinuing the right and obligation to take the introductory programme for family mem-

- bers of persons granted residence on humanitarian grounds
- The Government decides that all relevant asylum seekers must sign a declaration informing them about the prohibition on sexual mutilation and forced marriages
- Parliament decides to establish a separate entity, the Country of Origin Information Centre, from 1 January 2005
- 1 January 2005: an expanded information and guidance programme replaces free legal aid for asylum seekers in the initial phase
- Information activities related to the tsunami disaster in South-East Asia