

The Directorate of Immigration's main objectives

The UDI shall process all cases and tasks within an acceptable period of time

The UDI shall provide satisfactory user service

The UDI shall develop a flexible organisation

The Directorate of Immigration's core values

Dignity

Human rights, the UN refugee convention and other conventions Norway has acceded to are international expressions of an attitude to human dignity that governs the UDI in all its activities. As a value, dignity clearly expresses the fact that the Directorate's work involves individuals. The Directorate bears a heavy responsibility because so many of the decisions it makes affect individuals. The Directorate's focus on good communication and user service also reflects the fact that human dignity is a core value for the UDI. The priority given to dignity also applies to our internal processes, thus ensuring that it is applied to our employees as well as to external parties

Professionalism

The emphasis on professionalism underlines the fact that the UDI is part of the public administration and must carry out its duties in compliance with laws and regulations. In many cases the rules allow for individual judgement, and it is an important aim for the UDI to exercise this judgement correctly. The Directorate wishes to be seen as a professional administrative body in which professional expertise and competence form the basis for objective and impartial decision-making. A professional attitude also means that the Directorate's employees must be professionally skilled and have the required expertise.

Comprehensive approach

A comprehensive approach underlines the interaction between the UDI's various tasks, a shared understanding of objectives, methods and values, and focus on the tension between regulated/controlled immigration on the one hand and the facilitation of integration on the other. A comprehensive approach also requires conscious prioritisation to achieve a balance between quality and quantity in the performance of our duties. This approach also means contributing to the social debate to promote impartiality and balance in the presentation of the immigration field. The UDI wishes to contribute to a debate that takes account of the fact that, in this era of globalisation, Norway is moving from a unilateral focus on border control to a more comprehensive management of migration.

Values – a guiding tool

These values are binding and demanding. They place a responsibility on each Directorate employee, and on management in particular, to give that little bit extra when performing their duties. Together, the values constitute a tool that guides the Directorate in its implementation of and contribution to a humane immigration, integration and refugee policy

KEY FIGURES

- The UDI administered a total budget of around NOK 5 168 million, whereof around NOK 463.7 million was spent on the Directorate's operations
- The UDI processed 12 500 applications for asylum
- The UDI processed 59 700 other work and residence cases
- The UDI processed 8800 applications for citizenship
- The reception centres had an average of 14 300 residents throughout the year
- 4200 refugees were granted asylum, protection or residence on humanitarian grounds (including the quota of resettlement refugees)
- 5500 refugees and family members reunited with refugees were settled in a municipality
- 12 800 persons were granted family immigration
- 33 000 were granted work permits (4900 of them were granted permits for seasonal work for up to six months)

A NORMAL WEEK AT THE UDI

- 1500 new cases
- Progress in 1500 other cases
- 7000 incoming calls
- 170 000 hits on the Internet
- 625 personal inquiries at the reception desk
- 4000 inquiries to the Information Service for Applicants
- 55 press inquiries



“Our commitment to getting the whole migration management picture across appears to be bearing fruit.”

After we presented the UDI's annual statistics for 2004 at the turn of the year, Aftenposten (a leading Norwegian national daily newspaper) wrote in a leader: “[...] the UDI has presented very exciting figures for the 2004 migration year.” Aftenposten pointed out that immigration is much more than asylum. The newspaper drew particular attention to the fact that family reunification involving Norwegian nationals deserves more attention than has been the case until now. Other major media also commented on the connections between various types of migration.

This means that our commitment to getting the whole migration management picture across appears to be bearing fruit. We see that an increasing number of people are contacting the UDI to learn more about migration. The figures and the connections that caught the interest of the newspapers are dealt with in detail in this annual report and in the accompanying document providing facts and figures.

On the production side, 2004 represented a new trend: The number of asylum cases for processing was reduced by 50 per cent. The number of residence cases for processing was reduced by 40 per cent. This gave us the opportunity to improve our contact with and service to our users. Feedback from business and industry

organisations shows that they are satisfied with the UDI's service and information relating to recruiting labour from abroad.

New approaches to integration were introduced in 2004. The statutory introductory schemes were made compulsory for all the local authorities. Here too, feedback indicates that the programme content, which is the result of many years of preparations and development by the UDI, is functioning well.

2004 was the year when the Government decided to organise integration efforts separately under a new Directorate as of 1 January 2006. Employees and managers at the UDI wholeheartedly support this reform, and we shall do our utmost to give the new Directorate of Integration and Diversity an optimal start. For the UDI, which will continue its work on regulatory duties, the challenge will be to maintain our focus on how regulatory activities must also assume some of the responsibility for ensuring integration and cultural diversity.

A stylized signature of Trygve G. Nordby in dark ink.

Trygve G. Nordby
Director General

International obligations and cooperation

International conventions such as the UN Refugee Convention, the European Convention on Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child have an influence on Norwegian policy and practice in the UDI's field of work. Norway cooperates closely with the EU through the Schengen Treaty and the Dublin Convention. Important international partners for the UDI include the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM).

The sector responsibility principle

An important principle in Norwegian public administration is that a sector authority is responsible for providing equal and fair services in its sector. This can be illustrated by a municipality which has a reception centre. The local education authorities in this municipality are responsible for providing an adequate education programme for the children in the reception centre, while the local health authorities are responsible for providing adequate health services for the residents in the reception centre. The local authority receives state funding for this. On the state level, the Ministry of Education and Research and the Ministry of Health and Social Care, and their subordinate agencies, are responsible for following up local implementation of the tasks and activities in their sectors. The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development and the UDI play an important role in this work as prime movers vis-à-vis the public authorities.

The Directorate of Immigration (UDI) is the central administrative body dealing with immigration into Norway. The UDI's overriding aim is to contribute to the implementation and development of a humane immigration, integration and refugee policy, with a solid basis in political decisions and human rights, and which earns the trust of the users and the public at large. To succeed in this aim, the UDI depends on good cooperation and an open dialogue with the rest of the immigration administration, other public agencies, NGOs and, not least, the immigrant population's own organisations.

The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development (KRD)

KRD has the overriding responsibility for refugee, immigration and integration policy. The Ministry directs the UDI and UNE (the Immigration Appeals Board) through legislation, regulations, budgetary appropriations and allocation letters. The Ministry also determines the framework for the integration activities of the local authorities through the Introductory Programme Act and by stipulating the amount of integration subsidies allocated to the local authorities for settling refugees.

The Immigration Appeals Board (UNE)

The UNE is an autonomous administrative body similar to a court of law which considers appeals of UDI decisions pursuant to the Immigration Act and the Immigration Regulations. The board is administratively subordinate to the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development. The Immigration Appeals Board is the UDI's superior body when it comes to interpreting legislation, and the board's practice sets precedents for the UDI's practice.

Country of Origin Information Centre

This office is tasked with collecting and analysing information about social conditions and human rights in countries which the UDI, UNE and KRD need to know about. It replaces corresponding offices at the UDI and UNE. This is an independent office, and is only administratively connected to the UDI.

The police

The police are responsible for a number of tasks in the immigration field, both in asylum and other cases. Important tasks include receiving and processing certain residence cases, registration and identity control in asylum cases, border control and activities related to illegal immigration and illegal residence, and escorting rejected asylum seekers out of Norway, in addition to other foreign nationals residing illegally in the

country. The police are subordinate to the Ministry of Justice and the Police (JD).

The Contact Committee for Immigrants and the Authorities (KIM)

KIM is a government-appointed advisory body which provides advice to the authorities in cases relating to immigrants, and conducts dialogues between immigrants and the authorities. KIM consists of all the members of Innvandererforum (the Immigrant Forum), as well as representatives of the central authorities, the political parties represented in Parliament and the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities.

The foreign service

Norway's foreign service missions play an important role as the first-line service for immigrants wishing to visit or move to Norway. The duties of the foreign service missions include providing information about regulations and procedures, processing applications for visitor visas and receiving and preparing applications for visas and residence to be processed by the UDI. The foreign service missions in countries from where asylum seekers come also report to Country Info about human rights conditions. When necessary, they verify specific information in asylum cases on behalf of the UDI and UNE.

The municipal sector

The local authorities have an important role to play when it comes to facilitating integration and cultural diversity at the local level. The local authorities settle refugees in cooperation with the UDI and the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities. From 1 September 2004, the integration activities undertaken by the local authorities were regulated by law for the first time, through the Introductory Programme Act. The local authorities must also ensure that general municipal services are adapted to a multicultural population.

The Directorate of Immigration (UDI)

The UDI's core duties include ensuring that refugees receive protection by assessing their applications for asylum, ensuring that asylum seekers are offered accommodation, and ensuring that refugees who are granted residence are settled in a municipality. The UDI also helps to ensure that immigration is regulated by processing applications for various residence and work permits. The UDI helps to ensure equal opportunities for everyone through its overriding responsibility for integrating immigrants and refugees into Norwegian society and by helping to combat racism and discrimination. As the central administrative body for immigration, the UDI is responsible for following up the other administrative bodies to ensure that the system as a whole functions well.

The Asylum Department

This department's primary task is to process applications for asylum with the aim of providing protection to those who qualify for it. The department also helps to develop the regulations in the asylum field. At the end of 2004 the department had 150 permanent and 77 temporary staff.

The Residence Department

This department's primary task is to process cases related to work permits, family immigration, visas, study permits, citizenship and expulsion. The department also helps to develop the regulations in the residence field. At the end of 2004 the department had 128 permanent and 70 temporary staff.

The Integration Department

This department has the main responsibility for the UDI's activities centred on providing asylum seekers with accommodation while their applications are being processed (asylum reception centres), settling refugees in a municipality and for their integration into Norwegian society. At the end of 2004 the department had 140 permanent and 32 temporary staff. Of

these, 95 permanent and 20 temporary staff worked at the UDI's six regional offices.

The Department for Strategy and Coordination

This department is responsible for developing the regulations in the immigration field and for coordinating the UDI's participation in international cooperation. The department is also responsible for the Directorate's statistics and analysis work. At the end of 2004 the department had 45 permanent and three temporary staff.

The Administration Department

This department is responsible for finances, human resources, information systems, security, crisis and contingency planning, office services and management of buildings. At the end of 2004 the department had 104 permanent and ten temporary staff.

The Communications and Service Department

The work of this department consists of general communications and service activities, focusing on society at large, the media and the UDI's users, as well as the coordination of overriding information issues, the development of communication strategies, service and in-house information. At the end of 2004 the then information office had eight permanent and nine temporary staff. On 1 March 2005, the Communications and Service Department was established to take over the first-line service, including the information service for applicants, the switchboard and reception desk functions.

The Director General's Staff

The director general's staff assists the director general in his management of the Directorate and works on organisational development, managerial development and specific development and reporting functions, in addition to running the director general's outer office. At the end of 2004 the staff had five permanent positions.

The UDI's regional organisation

The UDI's six regional offices perform a number of the directorate's tasks and duties, ranging from asylum reception centres to long-term integration into the local community. The regional offices work closely with the directorate's partners and have developed solid competence on local conditions.

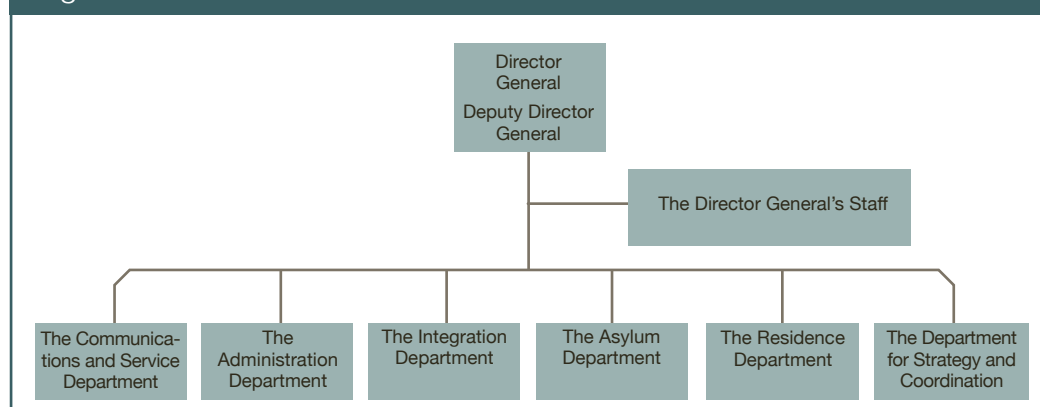
The regional offices shall establish and supervise the operation of the state reception centres for asylum seekers in their regions, and cooperate with the reception centres and municipalities on the settlement of refugees. They shall also work to achieve equality between immigrants and the majority population, provide information on repatriation and return, process applications for return grants and carry out information campaigns targeting Norwegians and refugees.

Important challenges in 2005

Through the allocation letter from the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development (KRD), the UDI has been assigned responsibility for a number of duties:

- Preparations and restructuring in connection with the establishment of a new Directorate of Integration and Diversity as of 1 January 2006
- Improving the service to our applicants
- Improving programmes for asylum seekers with mental-health problems and special care requirements
- Illegal immigration and the withdrawal of the offer of housing
- Introduction of the scheme giving immigrants a right and obligation to attend Norwegian language and social studies courses.

Organisation chart



The UDI's attainment of goals in 2004

The Directorate of Immigration had good attainment of goals in important areas in 2004. For the UDI's users it was particularly positive that the number of unprocessed cases was dramatically reduced. This resulted in shorter case processing times in many cases.

The Government's four main goals for its immigration, refugee and integration policy:

1. Regulated immigration
2. Protection of refugees
3. Equal opportunities for participation
4. Efficient and user-oriented administration

The allocation letter's four priority areas for the UDI in 2004:

1. Reduce case processing times
2. Protect the institution of asylum
3. Improve the service provided to applicants and other users
4. Follow up the introductory programme and prepare for the right and obligation to instruction in the Norwegian language

The central governing documents for the activities and priorities of the Directorate of Immigration are the Government budget and the accompanying allocation letter from the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development. The Government budget defines the financial framework for the UDI's activities and formulates the Government's general objectives in this policy field. The allocation letter specifies the goals and the accompanying performance requirements for the UDI's activities. The Government also uses the allocation letter to define the areas it wants the UDI to pay particular attention to each year.

Attainment of goals in the priority areas in 2004

Among the many performance requirements the UDI was given in the allocation letter for 2004, we have chosen to focus on those related to the four main priority areas. In the first two priority areas it is relatively easy to measure performance, as this involves production that can be measured by the number of cases processed. Performance in the other two priority areas is not so easy to quantify, therefore the reporting for these areas is more qualitative.

Priority area 1: Reduce case processing times

Residence cases

At the end of 2003 the UDI had 21 100 residence cases for processing (including applications for family immigration, work permits and citizenship). The allocation letter therefore paid special attention to reducing the case processing queue and the case processing time

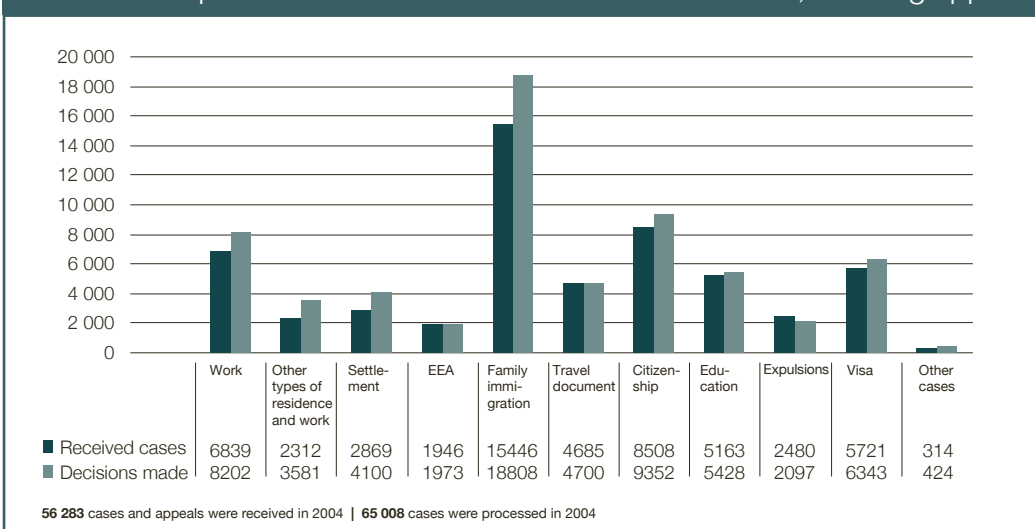
for residence cases. The performance requirement was that the UDI should not have more than 11 000 unprocessed residence cases by the end of 2004.

A number of measures were implemented during the course of the year to meet this goal. Organisational changes in the Residence Department, new procedures for speedier processing of uncomplicated cases and assistance from the Asylum Department helped the UDI to process 65 000 applications in 2004, compared with 52 000 in 2003. At the end of the year the number of unprocessed residence cases had been reduced to 12 500. The goal of 11 000 cases was thus not fully met. Endeavours to reduce the case processing times in residence cases continue in 2005, with a substantially better starting point than in the previous year.

Asylum cases

After several years with a high influx of asylum seekers, asylum case processing has had high priority throughout the immigration administration. In 2003 the UDI processed 17 500 asylum applications. The forecast for the influx in 2004 was 10 000, and the case processing goal was set at 14 000 cases. The result was that the UDI managed to process 12 500 cases, 1500 less than the performance requirement. However, there were 2000 fewer asylum seekers than forecast. This means that at the end of 2004 the Directorate had fewer unprocessed asylum cases than the stipulated case processing goal.

Received and processed residence cases in the UDI in 2004, including appeals



Priority area 2: Protect the institution of asylum

An important performance requirement under this priority area was the implementation of a rapid procedure model (the 48-hour procedure) for asylum seekers with assumed groundless applications to help reduce the number of asylum seekers without any need for protection. The rapid procedure was introduced on 1 January 2004. The 200 cases that were processed according to this procedure were completed in less than 48 hours, as intended.

In accordance with the requirements set out in the allocation letter, a scheme was also introduced whereby persons whose asylum applications have been rejected no longer receive an offer of accommodation in a reception centre. The intention is to show that persons residing illegally in Norway after receiving a rejection will not at the same time receive free board and lodging from the Norwegian state. Families with children and some others are exempted from this scheme. In 2004, 600 persons were notified that they were no longer allowed to live in a reception centre. At the end of the year around 75 per cent of them had either left the reception centres or were granted exemption from the scheme for various reasons.

Priority area 3: Improve service to applicants and other users

Due to such problems as long case processing queues the UDI has long faced major challenges in the service area. In accordance with the performance requirements in the allocation letter the following measures were implemented in 2004:

- New procedures have been drawn up for sending and updating information to applicants about expected case processing times
- A service declaration for applicants has been adopted
- A service strategy and accompanying action plans for measures have been drawn up, and the implementation of the measures in the action plans has begun under the leadership of a newly appointed service manager

Priority area 4: Follow up the introductory programme

On 1 September it became compulsory for all the municipalities in Norway settling refugees to offer individual introductory programmes for newly arrived refugees. Prior to this the UDI implemented a number of measures to assist the local authorities with this work. All the regions organised training seminars for the municipal sector. A number of information measures were implemented to assist the local authorities, other public authorities, employers and various organisations in their preparations. The Directorate also put a great deal of emphasis on presenting information to the general public through the media about this major escalation of the integration efforts at the local authority level.

Residence permit

Permission to reside in Norway for more than three months. Such a permit does not confer a right to work, with the exception of EU/EEA citizens.

Work permit

Permission to take employment in Norway. Work permits can be granted to persons over 15 years of age who satisfy the conditions laid down in the Immigration Act. .

Asylum

A place of refuge for persons who have a well-founded fear of being persecuted on the grounds of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion. Asylum includes, for example, protection against being sent back to the area where the person in question has reason to fear persecution. Asylum also confers certain rights during the stay in the country of asylum. Foreign nationals who are granted asylum in Norway are granted refugee status

Asylum cases in the UDI without a decision

