

Events calendar

January

- On 1 January the former Integration Department at the UDI is restructured into a separate directorate: the Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDI). The Department for Regions, Reception and Return is established.
- Trygve G. Nordby resigns as Director General. Manuela Ramin-Osmundsen is named Acting Director General.

February

- Several amendments to the Immigration Act enter into force. These amendments include measures against abuse and forced marriages.
- A fire at the embassy in Damascus halts the processing of immigration cases.
- The Dublin Agreement is expanded to also apply between Norway and Denmark.
- NORVIS, a new system for processing visa cases, is commissioned.

March

- Manuela Ramin-Osmundsen is appointed as the new Director General of the UDI.
- Ny i Norge ("New in Norway"), the information portal for recently arrived immigrants, is launched.
- The Norwegian daily newspaper VG highlights the UDI's granting of temporary residence permits to 197 Kurds; called the MUF case (temporary permits without family immigration).
- The departure centre at Lierskogen is opened. This centre provides housing for asylum seekers whose applications for asylum have been rejected with final effect.

April

- Bjarne Håkon Hanssen, Minister of Labour and Social Inclusion, convenes an independent commission of inquiry to review the processing of the so-called MUF case by the UDI and AID (the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion). In this connection, Manuela Ramin-Osmundsen takes a leave of absence.
- Ida Børresen, Deputy State Secretary at the Ministry of Education and Research is named Acting Director General.
- A new programme for return and repatriation to Afghanistan is introduced.

May

- Afghan refugees start a 26-day hunger strike to draw attention to the situation in their country of origin and protest against being returned there. They end their strike when promised legal assistance to review their asylum applications.
- The Graver Commission of inquiry issues its first interim report on the MUF case. Manuela Ramin-Osmundsen resigns her position as Director General.
- The UDI resumes processing of asylum applications from Ethiopian nationals following the suspension in November 2005.

June

- The Graver Commission of inquiry presents its second interim report on the MUF case.
- The UDI arranges a knowledge-exchange conference on secure sections at reception centres.
- Parliament's Standing Committee on Scrutiny and Constitutional Affairs holds open hearings on the MUF case.
- The theme of UDI's spring conference is "The best interests of the child and regulated immigration – a contradiction in terms?"
- The UDI arranges the first European conference on legal migration: "Managed Migration".
- The website Landinfo is launched.

July

- Due to unrest and hostilities in Lebanon, the UDI temporarily ceases the processing of some cases from this country.

August

- Case processing for children who have been waiting for a decision for a long time is put on hold. Pending amendments to the regulations, no decisions are to be made in cases involving children who have been in Norway for three years or more.

September

- A new act relating to citizenship enters into force.
- The UDI holds a national conference for operators and managers of reception centres.
- A seminar for Interdisciplinary cooperation against human trafficking is held in Oslo.

October

- New provisions concerning the right to apply for work and residence permits from Norway enter into force.
- The documentary "The interview – behind the doors at the UDI" is aired on NRK 1, giving a unique insight into how interviews with asylum seekers are conducted.
- Norway and Russia enter into an agreement to simplify travel between the two countries.

November

- The return obligation for Somali nationals is halted.
- Ida Børresen is appointed the new Director General of the UDI.
- The Directorate of Health and Social Affairs and the UDI hold a seminar on the children of mentally ill asylum seekers and children with mental problems who apply for asylum.
- SESAM, a system for electronic communication with reception centres, is commissioned.
- The UDI holds a specialist meeting on labour immigration through the study permit in Norway.

December

- The UDI receives instructions concerning the introduction of temporary work permits of six months' duration to assumed victims of human trafficking.

Table of Contents

THE UDI IN 2006 – AN OVERVIEW

Events calendar	2
The UDI: objectives, values and figures	4
The Director General's comments	5
Norwegian immigration administration	6
The UDI is investigated	7
The UDI's main priorities	8

MIGRATION

Migration on the international agenda	10
Countries in focus	12

THE UDI'S AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

Labour immigration	14
Asylum seekers and refugees	18
Family immigration	21
Children and the immigration administration	22
Visas	25
Citizenship	25

THE UDI'S ORGANISATION

The UDI as a workplace	26
The departments	28
Management	29
Finances and accounts	30

Facts and figures, which is published together with the annual report, gives a supplementary picture of the immigration's activity in concrete, measurable quantities, with emphasis on the Directorate of Immigration's work in 2006.



The UDI: objectives, values and figures

Mission statement:

- The UDI shall implement and contribute to the development of the Government's immigration and refugee policies.
- The UDI shall carry out its duties as efficiently as possible within the framework of the Acts, regulations, directives and international obligations.
- The UDI shall be a user-oriented and open directorate.

The UDI is Norway's central executive body for immigration and refugees. Its duties are laid down in the annual appropriations letter from the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion. Within the framework of political decisions, the UDI both facilitates lawful and welcomed immigration, involving the provision of protection to refugees as necessary, and contributes to the prevention of unlawful and unwelcome immigration.

The UDI also plays a key role as the competent authority in this field. In interaction and dialogue with the Ministry, the UDI sets the agenda for the formulation of policies and regulations. The work of the UDI is based on analyses of its own operation, knowledge gained from research and development

projects and an in-depth knowledge of national and international trends.

The UDI shall treat users with respect both in its role as service provider and facilitator and in its role as an inspection authority. This means that cases should be processed within a reasonable amount of time and that applicants must receive adequate and comprehensible information while the case is being processed and in the decision itself.

As an open directorate, the UDI endeavours to give users, the media and the general public an insight into its activities and an understanding of the regulations within the immigration field and of the administrative work performed by the immigration authorities.

Key figures 2006

		2004	2005	2006
Budget	NOK	5 168 million	4 650 million	1 458 million ¹
UDI operations	NOK	464 million	444 million	378 million
Number of processed asylum cases		12 500	7 500	4 200
Number of processed work and residence cases		59 700	70 000	64 900
Number of processed citizenship applications		8 800	13 900	13 700
Number of residents at reception centres (average per month)		14 300	10 200	8 090
Number of persons who received protection or residence on humanitarian grounds		4 200	3 400	2 600
Number of family immigration permits		12 800	13 000	14 000
Number of persons granted work permits		33 000	50 500	71 000
Number of incoming calls received by the switchboard		267 600	236 000	231 850
Number of visitors to the service centre		23 000	21 300	25 600
Number of enquiries to the information service		192 750	141 700	169 700
Number of e-mails answered by the information service		10 200	13 200	26 600

The UDI's core values

Dignity

Treat users and their situation with respect. Treat your colleagues with respect and do what you can to ensure a good working environment.

Professionalism

Ensure quality and efficiency in everything you do. Be professional and objective. Be loyal to the regulations, directives and our main objectives.

The total picture

See the total picture and the interaction between our duties. Take joint responsibility for creating good results. Communicate openly and clearly.

1. The change from 2005 to 2006 is due to the transfer of responsibility for the integration subsidy for newly arrived refugees to IMDi.

The Director General's comments

2006 was a demanding year for the Directorate of Immigration (UDI), and it is impossible to look back over the year without mentioning the investigation of the Directorate. This was a year dominated by the public debate on the UDI and the challenges faced by the Directorate following the processing of 197 applications for temporary residence permits from North Iraqi Kurds (called the MUF case).

One of the results of the MUF case was that the undersigned was asked to take on a new job in a new field literally overnight. The intense media attention on the MUF case, and the politically volatile field the UDI is part of, led many to warn me against taking the job. However, I found the UDI to be a well-structured organisation with competent employees who welcome innovation and change. They are also deeply committed and highly aware of the importance of the UDI's social duties.

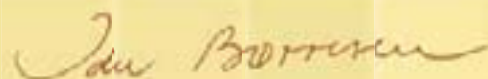
With this point of departure and with such professional employees, it was easy for me to accept the job at the UDI on a permanent

basis. However, that does not alter the fact that the UDI is facing a great many challenges. There will always be many areas that can be improved in such a large and diverse organisation. The UDI manages important responsibilities on behalf of Norwegian society. Norway's migration challenges, including such issues as the need for labour and the effective protection of people who have fled their native country, represent the UDI's challenges. We must perform our duties in the best interests of society and with loyalty and respect for the individuals who seek our assistance.

The UDI believes that it is important to cooperate positively with the other authorities within the immigration administration, the foreign service missions, the police, the UNE (the Immigration Appeals Board) and IMDi (the Directorate of Integration and Diversity). Good interaction within the administration is a vital part of how we can guarantee our users the service and predictability they are entitled to, whether they are individuals, employers or other actors in the field.

The UDI's case load is increasing, and case processing times and waiting times at the UDI are too long. No one regrets this more than we do. However, I feel reassured by the spirit of the people who work at the UDI, and by their willingness to adapt and seek new solutions. This will enable us to streamline our work and case processing, so that we can be in a position to increase our productivity without compromising quality.

The UDI must increase its use of electronic tools to make case processing more efficient. In 2007, we will be introducing electronic solutions that will enable applicants to apply and pay for a visa and then check the progress of their application on the internet. We plan to develop such solutions for other kinds of cases in the coming years. We must also use electronic solutions to improve how we interact within our own immigration administration and with other public agencies and external partners. This will enable us to redeploy resources and facilitate more expedient and better processing of all cases.



Ida Børresen
Director General



Norwegian immigration administration

The Directorate of Immigration (UDI) is the executive body for immigration and refugee administration in Norway.

The UDI also plays a key role as the central competent authority in this field.

In interaction and dialogue with the Ministry, the UDI sets the premises on which the policies and regulations are based.

The Directorate also depends on effective cooperation and a positive dialogue with the rest of the immigration administration.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion

The Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion (AID) has overall responsibility for Norway's refugee, immigration and integration policy.

The Ministry directs the UDI, the Directorate

of Integration and Diversity (IMDi) and the Norwegian Immigration Appeals Board (UNE) through Acts, regulations, budgets and letters of appropriation.

The Directorate of Immigration

The UDI is responsible for ensuring regulated immigration by processing applications for various types of residence and work permits, and for ensuring that refugees are granted protection through the processing of applications for asylum. The UDI also provides expert advice and recommendations in connection with the formulation of policies and regulations.

The Police

The National Police Immigration Service and the 27 police districts are responsible for many tasks in the field of immigration in both asylum and other cases. Important tasks include receiving and processing certain residence cases, registration and identity checks for asylum cases, border controls and the general regulation of immigration. The police are also responsible for the deportation of asylum seekers whose applications have been rejected and other illegal aliens. The police are under the authority of the Ministry of Justice and the Police.

The foreign service

Norway's foreign service missions play an important role as the first-line service for foreign nationals who wish to visit or move to Norway. The duties of the foreign service missions in the immigration field include providing information on regulations and procedures, processing visitor's visa applications and receiving and preparing applications which are to be processed by the UDI. The foreign service missions are under the authority of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Immigration Appeals Board

The UNE is an independent administrative body which acts like a court to consider appeals lodged against the UDI's decisions pursuant to the Immigration Act and the Citizenship Act.

Landinfo

Landinfo is the immigration administration's specialist division for country information. Landinfo's task is to obtain and analyse information on social conditions and human rights in countries that the UDI, UNE and AID need information about. The division works independently within its area of responsibility but is administratively linked to the UDI.

The Directorate of Integration and Diversity

The Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi) was established on 1 January 2006, when responsibility for integration was transferred from the UDI. IMDi's tasks include increasing participation in the labour market for people with immigrant backgrounds, implementing government policy for settling refugees and following up the Introductory Act, the programme of rights and obligations to receive tuition in the Norwegian language and Storting Report No. 49 (2003–2004) "Diversity through inclusion and participation – responsibility and freedom".



The UDI is investigated

In the spring of 2006, the UDI was the subject of public debate and inquiry due to the way in which it processed 197 applications for residence in Norway from a group of Kurds from northern Iraq (the MUF case).

The Graver Commission

Professor Hans Petter Graver led the independent commission of inquiry that was appointed by AID in April 2006 to review the MUF case (see “The MUF dispute”, page 20). Ida Børresen, Deputy State Secretary, was named Acting Director General of the UDI.

The commission submitted two reports, one in May and one in June. The commission concluded that the UDI had violated its reporting obligation to the Ministry and stretched the regulations without establishing whether this practice was within the bounds of the Act and regulations. The commission also identified challenges in connection with understanding roles and the chain of authority, issues connected to production demands, the quality assurance of decisions and the establishment of UDI practice. The reports also referred to challenges relating to the UDI's organisation culture and internal communication, management and human resources policy. Manuela Ramin-Osmundsen stepped down

as Director General after the commission's first report in May.

This matter was also raised in Parliament, where a hearing was held under the auspices of Parliament's Standing Committee on Scrutiny and Constitutional Affairs.

Follow-up

Due to the investigation, a follow-up project was established within the UDI. This project is scheduled for conclusion in the summer of 2007.

The follow-up project consists of seven sub-projects: reviewing quality in case processing, establishing practice and making it visible, internal control, management and human-resources policy, values and ethics, competence, communication and reputation.

Quality of case processing has been an important area in the project. General requirements have been drawn up for the quality of case processing. The UDI is currently formulating procedures and processes to ensure case processing quality on a day-to-day basis.

The project has examined and recommended a number of measures to quality-assure how practice is established with a view to ensuring that all practices are duly authorised and in accordance with political signals.

The project has worked on introducing a framework for internal control and risk analysis in the residence and asylum departments. This will help the departments to raise the profile of, and act in response to, the circumstances that affect the ability and scope of the UDI to meet its objectives.

In addition the project has prepared a recruitment manual and the UDI's core values and ethical guidelines have been reviewed. It has also approved a number of immediate measures to ensure that the Directorate's heads and executive officers have the appropriate competence. Correct competence is a basis for quality and efficiency in case processing. The project has met this challenge by introducing the UDI-school, a complete plan for developing and securing competence. Immediate measures have also been undertaken in the winter of 2006/2007

Through the project, a plan for internal communication was devised, as well as a drawing up of further schemes to strengthen management and human resources policy.



The UDI's main priorities in 2006

The national budget sets the financial framework for the UDI's activities and formulates the Government's general objectives in the policy area. The Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion (AID) formulates performance goals and priorities for the UDI's activities in the appropriations letter.

New user groups

Changes in the migration pattern lead to new requirements as to how the UDI communicates and provides services to its users. In 2006, the UDI's information service received enquiries from users from more than 100 countries. Almost half of those calling the information service are Norwegian citizens.

In 2006, the UDI received substantially more applications for work permits than in previous years, which in turn means much more communication between the UDI and employers. Employers need different kinds of information and services than individuals who are waiting for their family to enter Norway. Communicating with so many groups represents a challenge, and this is one particular area where the UDI wishes to provide better service in 2007.

User service

Answering enquiries from users is a key part of the UDI's services. Due to the steep rise in the number of telephone and e-mail inquiries in 2006, our accessibility goals were not met. To satisfy user needs, the UDI hired additional employees to answer telephone enquiries. More staff increases are planned in 2007.

In addition to internal service polls, a survey is undertaken each year amongst those who have submitted enquiries to the information service. The results from 2006 showed clearly that the users thought the waiting times on the telephone and at the service centre were too long. A large majority nevertheless felt that they were treated with courtesy and respect and that the information they received was generally clear and understandable.

In 2006, a qualitative survey was also carried out to determine what kind of information labour immigrants and employers need from public agencies. The survey showed a clear need for the coordination of information on rights, options and obligations and confirmed the importance of quick case processing of work permits.

Case processing times

In 2006, the case processing time was reduced slightly for most case types. However, the number of outstanding cases increased during the year.

A total of 77 000 residence permit applications were received for processing by the UDI, including appeals. Just under 65 000 applications were processed, exceeding the Ministry's production target of 62 500. The UDI gave priority to applications relating to the start of school, applications for work permits, applications for family reunification from children under 18 years of age who apply on their own, and applications for temporary residence from victims of human trafficking.

The goal for the processing of asylum cases was set at 5500. During the year 4200 cases were processed. The main reason for the shortfall relative to the production goal is the requirement to improve the quality of case processing and the fact that more time is now spent on interviewing asylum seekers. Moreover, many new employees were recruited in the asylum department during 2006, and this required resources for training and supervision.

Comprehensive approach

One priority area in 2006 has been the development of cooperation with the child welfare services, the police and the foreign service missions.

To improve service and rationalise case processing in general, the UDI launched several measures aimed at improving the work of the foreign service missions. These measures include the introduction of the



case processing tool NORVIS, training foreign service personnel and using cover staff from the UNE, UDI and AID during the summer. A special web portal (the Migration Portal) was developed, enabling foreign service mission staff to find the information they need to give correct information to applicants and to prepare cases properly. The portal was launched in February 2007.

Users must receive the same answers regardless of where they make their enquiry. To improve the coordination of information, the UDI cooperates with the police and foreign service missions on this matter.

The cooperation and coordination of information are particularly important aspects of crisis management. One example was the fire at the embassy in Damascus in February 2006, where the situation required close cooperation between the UDI and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in immigration cases, particularly with regard to case processing procedures and personnel.

Reports to the Ministry

Another of the UDI's priority areas in 2006 was its work to provide the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion (AID) with adequate and updated overviews of practice and development trends within the field of migration. Together with AID, in 2006 the UDI developed procedures for, and the content of, statistical reports to the Ministry. The UDI has also focused on its reporting duties to the Ministry by following up the reports from the Graver Commission, see page 7.

Differentiated asylum case processing

The UDI continued to differentiate asylum case processing in 2006. This means that different procedures are followed depending on the country that the applicant comes from or due to special circumstances in the case.

For example, special procedures are used for unaccompanied minor asylum seekers and for Dublin cases (see the "Dublin cooperation" on page 18). Differentiation of case processing has had particularly beneficial effects on asylum cases that require rapid processing (Dublin cases, the 48-hour procedure and the three-week procedure).

Operation of reception centres

During 2006, a number of measures were launched to ensure sound financial management of the substantial funds spent on operating the state reception centres. One of these was SESAM, an electronic tool for communication with the reception centres (see page 27). Together with the continuous development of the UDI's monitoring of the quality of the programmes provided to reception centre residents, this has led to a general improvement in the level of control. Special monitoring of financial and administrative matters has been introduced in addition to the monitoring of the programmes.

NORVIS

NORVIS is a new tool for processing visa applications. The system was launched in the spring of 2006. NORVIS links the foreign service missions to the immigration database, to which only the UDI, the UNE and the police were previously linked. NORVIS facilitates more efficient case processing and better interaction between the UDI and the foreign service missions.

The long-term aim is that NORVIS will enable the foreign service missions to decide more cases independently. NORVIS represents a stage in the development programme "A simpler electronic workday" (see page 27).

Received and concluded residence cases at the UDI including appeals. 2006

