Resettlement and humanitarian admission - Norway

Overview

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Relevant EU legislation

Norway is not bound by the Union Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission Framework Regulation (URF).

National legislation

03/07/2015: Immigration Act, Guidelines for work with quota refugees, Section 35 | G-15/2020: Retningslinjer for arbeidet med overføringsflyktninger jf. utlendingsloven § 35.

Competent authority and stakeholders

Authorities responsible for establishing resettlement and humanitarian admission policy	Norwegian Parliament

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Identification and referral of refugees for a) resettlement programmes b) humanitarian admission programmes c) community sponsorship programmes	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) In some cases, referrals can be done by: • Norwegian embassies in the countries of origin. • PEN Norway, where the applicant will be part of Cities of Refuge Network. • International Criminal Courts with which Norway has witness resettlement agreement. • Norwegian NGOs.
Selection of refugees for a) resettlement programmes b) humanitarian admission programmes c) community sponsorship programmes	The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration | Utlendingsdirektoratet (UDI)
Pre-departure assistance a) resettlement programmes b) humanitarian admission programmes c) community sponsorship programmes	Directorate of Integration and Diversity | Integrerings- og mangfoldsdirektoratet (IMDi) International Organisation for Migration (IOM)

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Travel arrangements a) resettlement programmes b) humanitarian admission programmes c) community sponsorship programmes	Norwegian Foreign Service under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs | Utenriksdepartementet International Organisation for Migration (IOM)
Arrival and reception a) resettlement programmes b) humanitarian admission programmes c) community sponsorship programmes	Local government and municipalities Norwegian NGOs

Programmes currently in place

The national resettlement programme is based on an annual quota.

National quotas on resettlement and humanitarian admission

National commitments for resettlement, humanitarian admission and emergency quota

2-year Union Plan	National commitment for resettlement	National commitment for humanitarian admissions	Emergency quota

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Period 2024-2025	In 2024, 1000 quota. In 2025, 500 quota.		2025: 50 Unallocated slots including Emergency
Period 2026-2027			
Period 2028-2029			

In 2018, resettled refugees constituted more than 50% of all refugees settled in Norway annually, which was an increase from 20% during the 2010–2017 period. In 2021, the resettlement quota was set at 3,608 places (including 608 places carried over from 2020). In 2023, the resettlement quota was 2,000 places.

In 2024, Norway decided to reduce the quota and resettle 1,000 refugees in 2024. However, 247 places from the 2023 quota were transferred to 2024, meaning that the total quota for 2024 was 1,247.

In 2025, the Norwegian government reduced the number of resettlement refugees from 1000 to 500, citing the need secure sufficient services on the receiving end, due to the influx of Ukrainian refugees. The number of 500 includes 100 persons from Gaza who are medical evacuees and family members. In addition, 97 slots were transferred from 2024, amounting to a quota of 597 in total.

Procedural and practical arrangements

The admission procedure

Identification and referral:

Based on instructions from the Ministry of Justice and Public Security every year, the UDI informs UNHCR about the relevant profile of cases (e.g. vulnerable women, families with children, medical cases).

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Norway usually prioritises vulnerable women and families with minor children and LGBTIQ+ cases. UNHCR finds cases that meet the profile requirements.

UNHCR consider who has the greatest need for resettlement prior to referral.

UDI will provide UNHCR with specific requests in accordance with the capacities of the municipalities The UDI conducts interviews and further examines the written information received in the applications.

In addition, cases can be referred by:

- Norwegian NGOs with presence in areas where UNHCR is not present or does not have a mandate for resettlement,
- Norwegian embassies in the countries of origin,
- PEN. Norway, where the applicant will be part of Cities of Refuge Network,
- International criminal courts with which Norway has witness resettlement agreement.

A referred case may consist of several family members and is assessed as one entity.

No information provision activities are carried out during this stage of the procedure.

Selection:

Norway uses different methods to select refugees for resettlement: Selection Missions, Dossier-based Selections and Remote Interviews.

Norway accepts referrals for resettlement on dossier basis for all sub quotas, but most fall under the medical and emergency quota and the unallocated quota.

For all selection methods, the UDI needs detailed material facts of the case, as well as both inclusion and exclusion evaluations. Medical cases must be supplemented with a written medical assessment form (MAF).

In case of selection missions, decisions are finalised, and permits are normally given within three weeks after the selection mission has been completed. Some cases may, however, take longer due to further documentation needs or if there are issues concerning national security and/or foreign policy. In case of foreign policy concerns or issues related to national security, the case is subjected to political scrutiny and the decision is taken at ministerial level. UNHCR is then informed about all decisions by the UDI.

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In case of dossier cases, the UDI takes the decisions of normal or urgent resettlement cases within three weeks from referral. In emergency cases, the decision is taken within 48 hours.

The average time from decision to departure is approximately 5 months.

Selection criteria are:

- Need of international protection (In exceptional circumstances Norway will also accept applicants based on strong humanitarian considerations, for example where a refugee has an accompanying family member of a different nationality without protection needs).
- He/she must need resettlement: Prospects for other durable solutions should be considered in the short term as well as in a longer perspective.
- When considering resettlement cases, female refugee vulnerabilities are particularly taken into consideration. Norway gives priority to woman at risk cases.
- When considering resettlement cases, Norway will give priority to families with underage children.
- Norway will give priority to LGBTIQ + persons.

Information is directly provided by the responsible Norwegian authorities during hybrid sessions and remote sessions. Relevant information material has been developed at a national level. EUAA operational tools for resettlement particularly developed for information provision (e.g. former EU-Frank tools) are not used at this stage as they are not relevant.

In 2019, Norway piloted a project to test the provision of Cultural Orientation after the identification stage and before the selection phase through an implemented partner (IOM), but it was discontinued after that year.

Assessment:

During selection missions the UDI conducts interviews and further examines the written information received in the application. The purpose of the interview is to establish:

- the applicant’s identity,
- the applicant’s need for international protection,
- the applicant’s situation in the host country,
- other criteria that follow from the guidelines for the work on resettlement refugees.

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Applicants are also subject to the same credibility assessments as applicants seeking protection in Norway

Type of protection granted and residence permit issued after the admission procedure

All accepted cases are given an entry permit to Norway normally valid for 12 months. When cases are accepted on dossier basis, the refugee receives an entry permit with residence and work permit valid for one year. Soon after arrival the refugee receives a status decision which gives the refugee residence and work permit valid for five years. Refugees who are accepted through the UDI's resettlement missions receive a status decision including residence and work permit valid for five years. This is issued prior to his/her entry to Norway.

Pre-departure assistance

The Norwegian Cultural Orientation Programme (NORCO) is a project currently implemented by IOM Oslo, that provides pre-departure cultural orientation classes for refugees accepted for resettlement. In close coordination with IOM offices in hosting countries, IOM Oslo organises training for selected target groups of refugees, aged 8 years and above, on the practicalities of life in Norway. The primary objective of the programme is to promote smoother integration of refugees into the Norwegian society. Classes are conducted in the refugees' own language.

During this phase, Norway conducts face-to-face and hybrid information provision activities through an implementing partner with whom material is developed.

EUAA operational tools for resettlement particularly developed for information provision (e.g. former EU-Frank tools) are not used at this stage because implementing partner uses their own tools.

Implementing partners are responsible for answering questions from refugees. However, Norway is monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the programme by:

- participating and observing in some selection missions;
- through reports provided from the implementing partner after each session;
- through regular coordination meetings where the implementing partner informs about the sessions.

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Travel arrangements

The IOM is requested to provide pre-embarkation checks for all accepted refugees to ensure travel safety. The IOM may also be requested to conduct medical examinations and vaccinations for refugees who have been accepted for resettlement before their departure with the purpose of ensuring safe travel. Municipal health services will secure relevant follow-up on arrival.

The Norwegian Foreign Service mission issue travel documents (laissez-passer) and Schengen visas to refugees for entering Norwegian territory.

Information sessions are organised by an implementing partner and information materials are developed in collaboration.

Follow up questions later on in the transfer stage will be addressed upon arrival in Norwegian municipalities.

Arrival and reception

Municipalities welcome refugees at the closest airport to their destination in Norway. They are provided with food, clothing and are shown the housing facilities. The norm is that the refugees live in communal housing for a five-year period.

A compulsory medical screening for tuberculosis is made within 7 days from the arrival. IMDi has calculated that the average cost per person in a refugee resettlement program is approx. NOK 800,000 (EUR 77,994) over the course of five years.

The Introduction Act entitles refugees to participate in a full-time introductory programme for up to three years and consist of:

- Norwegian language courses,
- measures to facilitate the entry to the labour market,
- career advice and counselling,
- measures to continue education.

Refugees participating in the Introductory Programme receive an economical support of NOK 222,000 per year.

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Information sessions are directly delivered by the national authorities during face-to-face sessions.

There is a programme with full attendance over the period considered necessary for each individual, focusing on language, culture and society, labour market and education. The programme stretches from some months to several years.

Integration support to resettled and admitted refugees

Information is currently not available.

Resettlement programmes

National resettlement programme is based on an annual quota set by Parliament through the budget process.

Humanitarian admission programmes

Currently, Norway does not have any humanitarian admission schemes.

Complementary pathways

Community sponsorship schemes related to state-led resettlement programmes

Currently, Norway does not have any community sponsorship programmes.

Community sponsorship schemes linked to civil society-led humanitarian admission programmes

Norway does not currently have any community sponsorship programmes.

Community sponsorship schemes linked to other complementary pathways

Currently, Norway does not have any community sponsorship programmes.

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