

*Eivind Lofthus (ed.)*

# Immigrants in Norway

A summary of findings

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**Statistical Analyses**

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# Preface

Statistics Norway prepares a number of statistics on immigration, emigration and various aspects of the resident population with an immigrant background in Norway. In 1997 Statistics Norway for the first time prepared a publication presenting a complete overview on immigration and immigrants, based on these statistics. A selection of the chapters and topics presented in the Norwegian original publication has now been translated and made available for an international audience through the present publication.

Data are mainly fetched from various register statistics at Statistics Norway. The chapters on elections and living conditions are based on sample surveys.

Mr. Kåre Vassenden, Senior Executive Officer, was in charge of the original Norwegian edition. He was also the author of the general chapters and the chapters on demography. The authors of the remaining chapters work in different divisions of Statistics Norway, except Mr. Karl-Eirik Kval (chapter 8), who was working with the Institute for Social Research at the time when analysis for the publication was being done.

Ms. Solveig Hofossbråten of the publishing group in the Department of Social Statistics edited the English publication. Mr. Eivind Lofthus, Senior Executive Officer, was responsible for the abridged English version. Ms. Pearl Hamre has translated into English.

Statistics Norway  
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Svein Longva



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# 1. Introduction

## Purpose and background

Statistics and analysis of immigration, emigration and immigrants (for simplicity's sake referred to as Migrant statistics), have until now been spread over many different publications. The main purpose of this publication is to *jointly* present analyses and statistics from several subject areas.

The project *Migration Statistics* was established in 1991 when the Ministry of Local Government and Labour and Statistics Norway entered into an agreement to develop migration statistics. The Ministry of Local Government and Labour was responsible for most of the financing of the general development of statistics and various special projects. This book is based on different sub-projects of which the project *Migration Statistics* covered the general aspects of migration statistics, population statistics, labour market, opportunity structures and survey of living conditions.

## Terms and definitions

There is no definition of “immigrants” that suits all purposes. In addition to familiar definitions such as “foreign

citizens” and “foreign-born”, Statistics Norway also has other possibilities. The most important are “first-generation immigrants without Norwegian background”, the “immigrant population”, and “persons with immigration background”. “First-generation immigrants” refers to foreign-born persons with two foreign-born parents, while the immigrant population also includes second generation immigrants (Norwegian-born with two foreign-born parents). Persons with immigration background are all those that are either born abroad or have at least one parent that is born abroad. This last definition is only used in special cases.

We use “immigrant” as a general term in order not to reduce readability by using long expressions. So the term immigrant has no permanent definition but must be defined in each context.

The part of the population that does not fit a given definition and are therefore “non-immigrants” are referred to as “Norwegians”, “the Norwegian part of the population” and such. This choice of words does not imply that immigrants cannot be Norwegians.

Here, the term “country of background” is used instead of “country of origin”.

“Third World” is used as a shortened form for “Asia, Africa, South and Central America and Turkey” even though we know that some of the countries in this group are seldom associated with the term Third World. Eastern Europe is included in the group of “non-western countries”. The group “Western countries” consists of Nordic countries, Western Europe (excluding Turkey) and North America/Oceania.

**Target group**

This book is an abridged version of the Norwegian original edition. The English version is aimed at giving information on immigration in Norway to an international audience with an interest for the situation in Norway.



Kåre Vassenden

## 2. The immigrant population. Some demographic aspects

At the beginning of 1996, what we refer to as the *immigrant population* constituted 223 800 people or 5.1 percent of the population (Statistics Norway 1996). 191 900 first-generation immigrants and 31 900 second-generation immigrants are included in this figure. First-generation immigrants are born abroad by parents that are also born abroad, while second-generation immigrants are born in Norway by foreign-born parents. Hence Norwegian-born persons with one parent born in Norway are not included in this definition. This also applies to adopted persons and persons born abroad by one or two Norwegian-born parent(s). There is a total of 48 300 foreign-born persons that are not included in the immigrant population, while 31 900 Norwegian-born are included.

Most people would consider the 191 900 first-generation immigrants without Norwegian background (4.4 percent of the population), as the real immigrants.

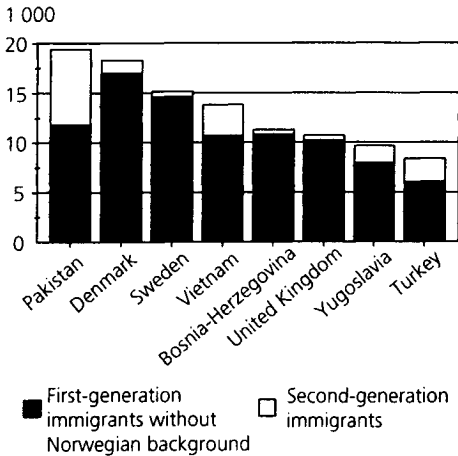
If one combines all persons that are either born abroad or have at least one foreign-born parent, we attain a figure as high as 396 700 persons or 9.1 percent of the population. A great part of this group has quite a «diluted» immigrant

background. Almost one-third of them has no stronger immigrant background than one parent being foreign-born. 4 percent is born abroad by Norwegian parents that were «coincidentally» abroad at the time of the birth.

Pakistanis are the largest group within the immigrant population, with 19 400. Next in line are the Danes (18 200), Swedes (15 200) and Vietnamese (13 800). There are also many immigrants with a background from Bosnia-Herzegovina and Yugoslavia, totalling 20 900, thus making “former Yugoslavia” larger than any individual nationalities.

When distributed by continent, the immigrant population is mostly made up of persons from Europe (104 000 not counting Turkey). 81 000 have their background from Asia (including Turkey). There is a wide gap to the next group, Africa with 18 700, while both North America (USA and Canada) and South and Central America have 9 200 each. The number of persons with a South-American background alone are 8 200, hence Central America (including the Caribbean) is not very significant in this context.

**Figure 2.1. The immigrant population, 1 January 1996. The largest groups**



There are only about 800 people from Oceania, and the group usually referred to as North America/Oceania therefore almost only consists of North Americans.

Persons with a background from the Third World (Asia, Africa, South and Central America and Turkey) represent half of the immigrant population in the 1990's.

**Reasons for immigration**

When immigration to Norway began to accelerate at the end of the 1960's, it involved the immigration of foreign unskilled labour. In 1975 the government put a stop to this type of immigration and it was succeeded by the immigration of families related to immigrants that came before 1975. About the same time, the oil business took off and there was a need for experts. Furthermore, many refugee situations were created around the world, and consequently there was more immigration to Norway.

About half of the non-Nordic citizens that migrated to Norway between 1990-1993, came as refugees or family members of refugees (Statistics Norway 1995a). In 1993, almost 11 000 persons came to seek asylum, while equivalent figures for each of the three previous years were at about 6 000.

About a quarter of this non-Nordic immigration was due to family reasons that were not related to seeking asylum. At least 35 percent of this immigration (1 200-1 300 persons annually) was again due to the fact that foreign citizens had become related to Norwegian-born persons through adoption or marriage.

9 percent of the non-Nordic immigrants that came in 1990-1993 were granted residency because of employment and 8 percent because of education. For each of these two groups (immigration for employment and education), the figures remained relatively stable in this period, slightly more than about 1 000 persons annually. There is little immigration of families related to persons coming to Norway for education, while migrant workers more often bring their family along.

Most refugees came from Eastern Europe, Asia and Africa, while those that came for reasons of work or education are mainly from Western Europe and North America. Most immigrants from these countries have also come for family reasons that have nothing to do with seeking asylum.

**Few refugees have moved back**

Refugees attract particular interest among immigrants. From 1971 to 1993 inclusive, 56 900 refugees came to Norway (excluding all persons not granted leave to reside, however including those who came to seek asylum as well as their

family members). By 1 January 1996, 50 900 or 90 percent of them were still residing here. This figure includes many persons that came to Norway either just before or in 1993 and indicates however, a great permanency of residence among the refugees even today. Other immigrants of the same period were clearly less stable because only 46 percent of 239 000 migrants without a background of seeking asylum were resident here on 1 January 1996. The principal reason for this difference is that refugees can seldom return to their home country before several years have elapsed (at best), by which time they have begun to take root in Norway.

### Increasing births of people with immigrant background

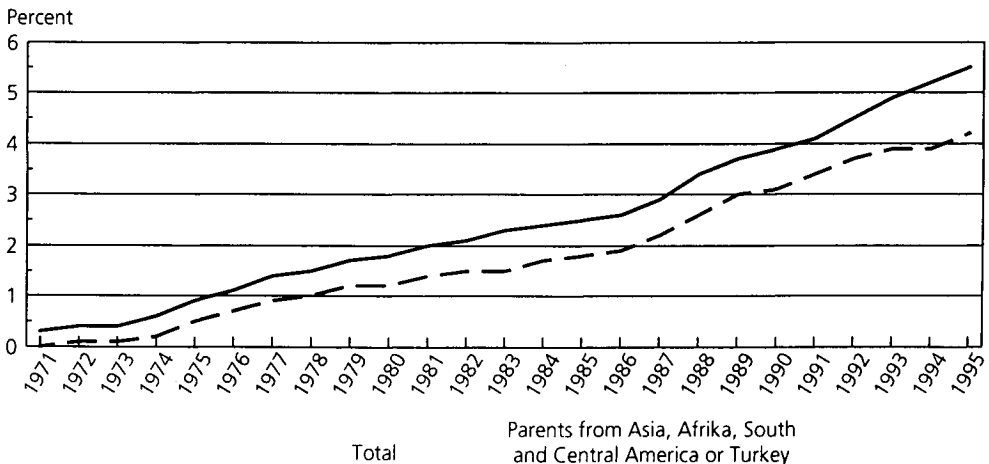
Right at the beginning of the 1970's, 200-300 second-generation immigrants were born in Norway. The figure has since then been increasing steadily and in 1995, it was at 3 340 or 5.5 percent of all births. That same year, a further 4 600 persons were born with one Norwegian-born and

one foreign-born parent. Altogether, there was a total of 7 900 or 13 percent of all births in 1995 with at least one foreign-born parent.

Almost half of all births with two foreign-born parents takes place in Oslo. In 1995, they constituted about 18 percent of all births in Oslo. Nearly one-third of those born in Oslo that year had at least one foreign-born parent. Of all second-generation immigrants born in 1995, three-fourths or almost 2 600 had a background from the Third World.

Every year since the middle of the 1980's, there has been an increasing proportion of second-generation immigrants of persons born with an immigrant background, from 31 percent in 1985 to 42 percent a decade later. The proportion has declined for West Europeans and North Americans while the proportion of Third World and particularly Eastern Europe has increased markedly during the last decade. The reason for these changes is mainly that the *composition*

Figure 2.2. Proportion born in Norway with two foreign-born parents. 1971-1995. Percent



**Table 2.1. Proportion born with two foreign-born parents of all births with immigration background, by country of background<sup>1</sup>, 1995<sup>2</sup>**

Country of background	Percentage with two foreign-born parents	Born with immigration background
Somalia .....	93.4	226
Bosnia-Herzegovina ...	93.3	225
Vietnam .....	90.8	359
Pakistan .....	90.2	563
Sri Lanka .....	89.9	348
India .....	79.5	156
Turkey .....	74.4	270
Yugoslavia .....	71.5	253
Morocco .....	56.8	183
Iran .....	52.8	193
Chile .....	39.0	213
Philippines .....	20.5	205
Netherlands .....	19.7	122
Poland .....	18.2	159
Finland .....	10.9	138
Denmark .....	10.6	658
United Kingdom .....	8.9	383
Thailand .....	8.8	114
Sweden .....	8.4	812
Germany .....	7.4	216
USA .....	7.3	341

<sup>1</sup> Mother or father's country of birth.

<sup>2</sup> Only nationality groups with more than 100 births.

of these main groups has changed considerably. It is simply that there are now many immigrants of the nationality groups that tend to have children together.

On the contrary it is rather surprising that there has been little change within each individual nationality group of a certain size. Since the beginning of the 1980's, for instance, the proportion of second-generation immigrants of those born with Pakistani background has remained at about 90 percent.

A low proportion of second-generation immigrants of those born and a similarly high proportion with a background of mixed parents, indicate that the nationality groups concerned are experiencing a process of assimilation of subsequent generations.

In a year such as 1995, the proportion of second-generation immigrants fluctuates from as much as 93 percent among those born with a background from Somalia and Bosnia, to only 7 percent among Americans and Germans. Topping the list otherwise are Vietnam, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, while at the bottom of the list together with the Americans and Germans, we find persons with a background from Nordic countries, Thailand and Great Britain (all below 11 percent). In comparison with those born with Norwegian background, 92 percent had two Norwegian-born parents.

### Total fertility rates

We have seen the number of children with immigrant background that were born in a year like 1995. The question now is how high or low these figures are in proportion to the number of women behind them. Thereafter, we could have simply divided the number of births by the number of women of childbearing age. However, such a calculation does not take into consideration the variations in age distribution between the groups. By using the standard called total fertility rate (TFR), however, the age differences are evened out. To estimate TFR, the number of children per female is calculated for every individual age group after which figures for every age group are finally summed up<sup>1</sup>. In order to avoid fluctuations of small incidental

<sup>1</sup> Total fertility rate here is the sum of 5-year age-specific fertility rates, for females between 15-44 years, multiplied by 5.

**Table 2.2. Total fertility rates<sup>1</sup> by age, age at immigration and country of background<sup>2</sup>. Foreign background applies to first-generation immigrants without Norwegian background. 1994 and 1995 together**

Country of background	All	Age at immigration		Median population of females 15-44 years <sup>3</sup>
		0-17	18-44	
		Age <sup>3</sup>		
	15-44	18-44		
Total population .....	1.87	1.83	1.93	1 841 899
Norway <sup>4</sup> .....	1.83	1.83	1.88	1 736 460
Foreign countries in total .....	2.57	1.88	2.68	105 438
Nordic countries .....	2.15	1.67	2.18	19 494
Rest of Western Europe excluding Turkey .....	1.88	1.25	1.93	10 684
Eastern Europe .....	2.29	1.26	2.46	16 300
North America and Oceania .....	1.77	1.01	1.77	4 629
Asia, Africa, South and Central America and Turkey .....	2.93	2.16	3.06	54 330
Western countries <sup>5</sup> .....	2.02	1.47	2.05	34 807
Non-Western countries .....	2.79	2.02	2.93	70 631
Selected groups				
Pakistan .....	3.60	2.94	3.75	7 337
Sri Lanka .....	3.50	-	3.55	3 636
Yugoslavia .....	3.09	1.56	3.56	3 731
Turkey .....	2.83	2.37	3.03	3 837
Vietnam .....	2.75	1.70	2.79	6 956
Philippines .....	2.34	-	2.50	4 922
Sweden .....	2.28	2.01	2.32	7 678
Bosnia-Herzegovina .....	2.19	0.33	2.35	5 001
Denmark .....	2.16	1.61	2.17	7 542
Chile .....	2.10	3.97	2.20	3 041
United Kingdom .....	2.05	-	2.16	3 477
Poland .....	1.97	-	2.08	4 305
Iran .....	1.85	-	2.13	3 422
Norway .....	1.83	1.83	1.88	1 736 460
USA .....	1.80	-	1.80	3 599

<sup>1</sup> Total fertility rate here is the sum of 5-year age-specific fertility rates, for females between 15-44 years, multiplied by 5. <sup>2</sup> Country of background is the mother or father's country of birth if this is abroad, otherwise Norway. <sup>3</sup> Age by the end of the year of event. <sup>4</sup> For persons with Norway as country of background, only age is considered, not age at immigration.

<sup>5</sup> Western Europe excluding Turkey, North America and Oceania.

variations, TFR should not be calculated for small groups.

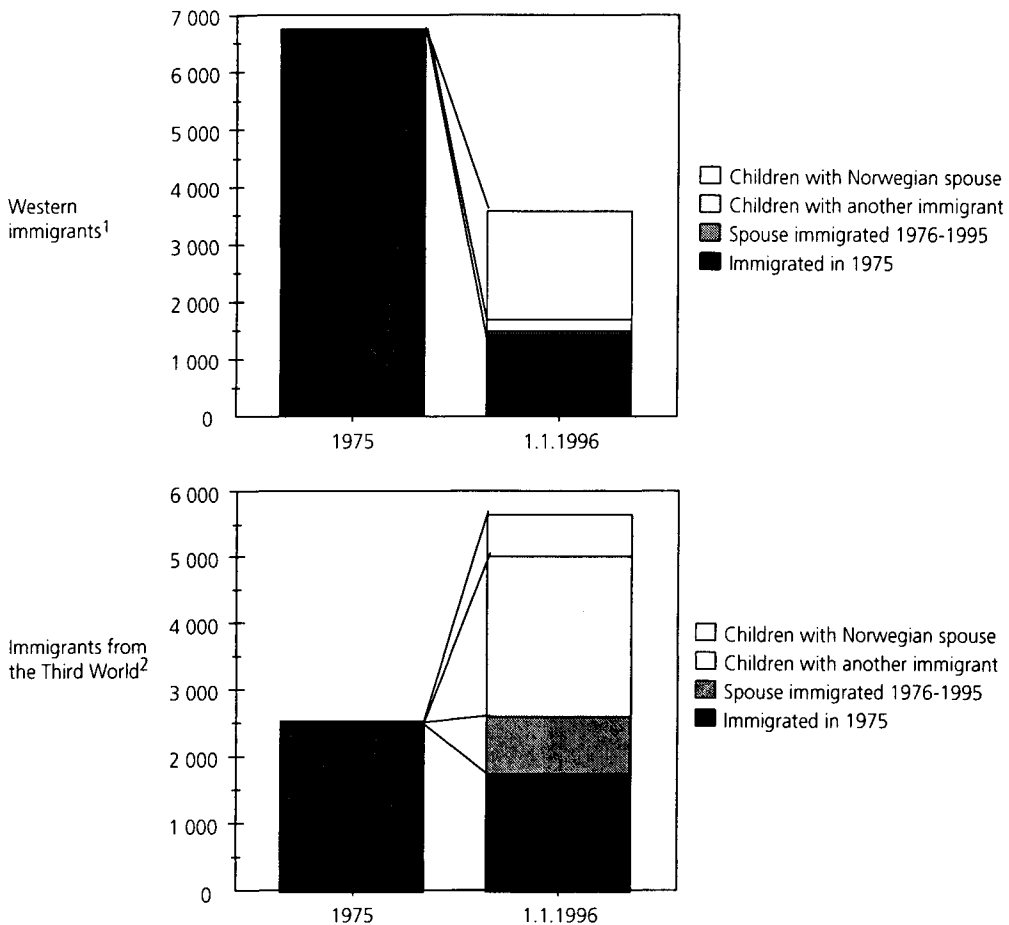
We combined 1994 and 1995 in order to have groups that were large enough to be calculated. The TFR of the entire population for both years was 1.87. For

first-generation immigrants without Norwegian background, TFR was 2.57 while it was 1.83 for the rest of the population. Female immigrants thus raised TFR for the country as a whole by about 0.04.

Strictly speaking, the TFR figures do not reflect more than the fact that immigrant women are in a situation where bearing several children is a matter of course. At the same time however, the figures do mirror real differences between nationality groups. If we were to consider only persons that immigrated as children (i.e. below 18 years), this would nullify the special effects produced by immigrating at an adult age.

Unfortunately the basis of figures become slightly weaker thereby. However, we can see that in any case TFR, for those who immigrated as children is only 1.88, almost the same as for the Norwegian part of the population. For women from the Third World, the figure is now 2.16 (versus 3.06 for adult immigrants), while that of Western European women is as low as 1.25. Out of the few individual groups with enough women on which we

**Figure 2.3. First-generation immigrants immigrated in 1975. Of these, those resident by 1 January 1996, including spouse who immigrated after 1975 and children born in Norway**



<sup>1</sup> Western Europe excluding Turkey, North America and Oceania.

<sup>2</sup> Asia, Africa, South-America, Central-America and Turkey.

can base our calculations, the Pakistani «children immigrants» have a TFR of 2.94, the Turkish 2.37 and the Vietnamese, only 1.70. Even if we consider incidental deviations, it appears to be that Pakistani girls follow in the footsteps of their elderly fellow Pakistani women, while Vietnamese girls follow a pattern that is almost Norwegian.

As mentioned before, TFR was 2.16 for women from the Third World with an immigration age below 18, versus 3.06 for those that came as adults from the same countries. Part of this difference could probably be considered as expressing an adjustment of immigrants' fertility rates to the host country's (while the remaining difference has more to do with the special situation of immigrated adult women). Adjustment of fertility to that of the host country is generally documented in international literature (Coleman 1994, Kahn 1988 and 1994). Most surveys are however built upon TFR from different points in time for whole groups of the population, as they were composed at each of these times. Hence we cannot always determine whether adjustment is presumed to take place in every individual, in the next generation or in the population group as a whole.

### **The growth of immigrant groups, including spouses and children**

A group of migrants in one year may become a larger group in subsequent years because of re-unifications or establishments of families and childbirth. The group may also be reduced in size because of emigration and deaths. We can study each immigration cohort to see the development for different nationality groups.

In a year like 1975, 9 600 first-time immigrants came to Norway. Up to 1995

inclusive, 1 200 of them had married other immigrants that came after 1975. In the same twenty-year period, the 1975 cohort had 3 300 children in Norway with other immigrants (and an additional 2 900 with non-immigrants). Taking into consideration immigrated spouses and Norwegian-born children with two immigrant parents, the original 9 600 persons grew to 14 000 in 20 years. However, there was also a considerable departure in this period so that by 1 January 1996 only half of the 14 000 were still resident in Norway (7 000 persons). Even counting family additions, the 1975 cohort at the beginning of 1996 only constituted almost three-fourths of the original immigrants.

The development of figures for the various nationality groups is however quite different. 20 years later, the 1 700 immigrants from North America/ Oceania had dwindled to a group of only 173 persons (10 percent) even including spouses and children (excluding the 200 children they had with non-immigrants). After 20 years, the Nordic and West European immigrants had been reduced to a group that was 30 percent of the original 1975 cohort, while the equivalent proportion for East Europeans was 83 percent. This development was different for the 2 500 1975-immigrants from the Third World, whose figure had been doubled by 1 January 1996. The largest individual nationality of these were Pakistanis; the 1 000 persons in the 1975 cohort had become thrice as many (3 200) per 1 January 1996, including additions of spouses and children. The Indian and Turkish groups were also doubled in the same period.

**Immigrants' part of the population growth in Norway**

A population grows when there are more births and immigration than deaths and emigration. In a year such as 1995, the immigrant population grew by 8700 after a total of 10 800 emigrations and deaths were replaced by 16 300 immigrations and 3 300 births. That same year, the population of Norway increased by 21 500 persons. The immigrant population stood for 41 percent of the total population growth in 1995 even though 1995 was not a year in which there was particularly great immigration. To sum up one could say that immigrants roughly stand for half of the population growth in Norway today.

**Duration of stay in Norway**

There is gradually going to be a clear correlation between duration of stay and integration in the Norwegian society. It would take much for a person with a very short duration of stay to become as well integrated into the society as persons that have been here for a generation or more. However, integration is dependent on several other factors than duration of stay alone. For example, immigration at a young age is perhaps as important for integration as would be living in Norway for 20 or 30 years.

The figures showing duration of stay for first-generation immigrants without Norwegian background show that half of them have lived in Norway for 8.4 years or less (the median duration of stay). As much as one-third or 61 700 have been here for less than 5 years. What is typical of immigrants living in the country at any time is that they are relatively newcomers in Norway. However, there is also a certain proportion of immigrants (12 percent or 23 500 persons) with duration of stay of at least 30 years. We therefore

have the impression of a rather great dispersion in the duration of stay of immigrants. Half of the Western immigrants have lived in Norway for 16 years (i.e. since 1979), while the equivalent figure for non-Western immigrants is 7 years (i.e. since 1988). The Hungarian group has the longest duration of stay, the majority of whom came just after the revolt in 1956. Of the groups from the Third World, the Pakistanis and Indians have stayed longest in Norway, with a median duration of stay of over 12 years. Four major groups with particularly short duration of stay in Norway are Bosnians, Yugoslavians, Iraqis and Somalians. They are the immigrant groups of the 1990's.

**Many are married**

44 percent of Norwegian women in the age group 20-39 years are married, while for men this percentage is 33 percent. Roughly 20 percent co-habit, hence the proportion living together as a couple increases respectively to 60 and 50 percent. The immigrant population in the same age group has much higher figures with regard to the proportion married, with 66 and 51 percent respectively for women and men. Although few immigrants cohabit, this shows that there is a high proportion of immigrant couples living together. When considered as a whole, this proportion is perhaps slightly higher than that of the rest of the population.

**The constitution and contracting of marriages**

Here we shall make the distinction between immigrants and Norwegians by comparing first-generation immigrants with the rest of the population. Descendants of immigrants must be considered as having more freedom to form patterns of marriage that are different from that



**Table 2.3. Median duration of stay<sup>1</sup> in first-generation immigrant groups without Norwegian background, by sex and country of background. 1 January 1996**

Country of background	Median duration of stay in number of years			Number		
	All	Men	Women	All	Men	Women
First-generation immigrants, total .....	8.4	8.3	8.4	191 945	96 128	95 817
Nordic countries .....	15.5	13.2	18.5	39 297	17 015	22 282
Rest of Western Europe excluding Turkey .....	16.1	13.3	20.3	27 502	14 130	13 372
Eastern Europe .....	2.9	3.0	2.8	29 809	14 442	15 367
North America, Oceania	15.6	11.6	19.2	9 688	4 130	5 558
The Third World .....	7.7	8.1	7.2	85 649	46 411	39 238
Western Europe <sup>2</sup> .....	15.7	13.1	19.2	76 487	35 275	41 212
Non-Western countries ..	7.0	7.5	6.3	115 458	60 853	54 605
Selected groups						
Germany .....	21.8	17.4	26.2	6 897	2 884	4 013
Denmark .....	21.1	19.0	23.8	16 992	7 775	9 217
USA .....	17.1	13.1	20.6	7 832	3 344	4 488
Finland .....	15.3	12.9	17.6	4 353	1 797	2 556
United Kingdom .....	14.9	12.1	21.2	10 180	5 592	4 588
Pakistan .....	12.5	17.9	10.5	11 778	6 452	5 326
India .....	12.3	12.8	11.3	3 746	2 031	1 715
Sweden .....	11.9	9.4	15.0	14 614	5 904	8 710
Morocco .....	9.0	9.1	8.6	3 090	2 045	1 045
Poland .....	8.9	11.4	7.6	5 117	1 841	3 276
Turkey .....	8.4	8.9	7.5	6 062	3 405	2 657
Philippines .....	8.2	10.0	7.8	4 092	971	3 121
Vietnam .....	8.1	9.4	7.3	10 684	5 715	4 969
Chile .....	8.0	8.2	7.9	5 043	2 763	2 280
Sri Lanka .....	7.2	8.2	5.6	6 094	3 688	2 406
Iran .....	7.1	7.3	6.6	7 205	4 486	2 719
Yugoslavia .....	4.8	4.9	4.6	7 932	4 570	3 362
Somalia .....	4.1	4.5	3.5	3 641	2 146	1 495
Bosnia-Herzegovina .....	2.1	2.1	2.1	10 825	5 357	5 468

<sup>1</sup> Duration of stay of which half the group are above it and the other half are under. <sup>2</sup> Western Europe excluding Turkey, North America and Oceania.

of their parents. In any case, they represent few persons in our data.

### **Less than half have a Norwegian spouse**

Over 100 000 first-generation immigrants in Norway are married. 57 percent of

them are either married with a first-generation immigrant or in certain cases with someone who is not resident in Norway<sup>2</sup>. The remaining immigrants, 43 percent, are married to Norwegians. There are more couples of Norwegian man and immigrant woman than the

<sup>2</sup> For the sake of simplicity, in the following we let the word immigrant also cover foreigners that have not yet come to Norway.

opposite. 90 percent of immigrants that are married to other immigrants are married to a person from the same country.

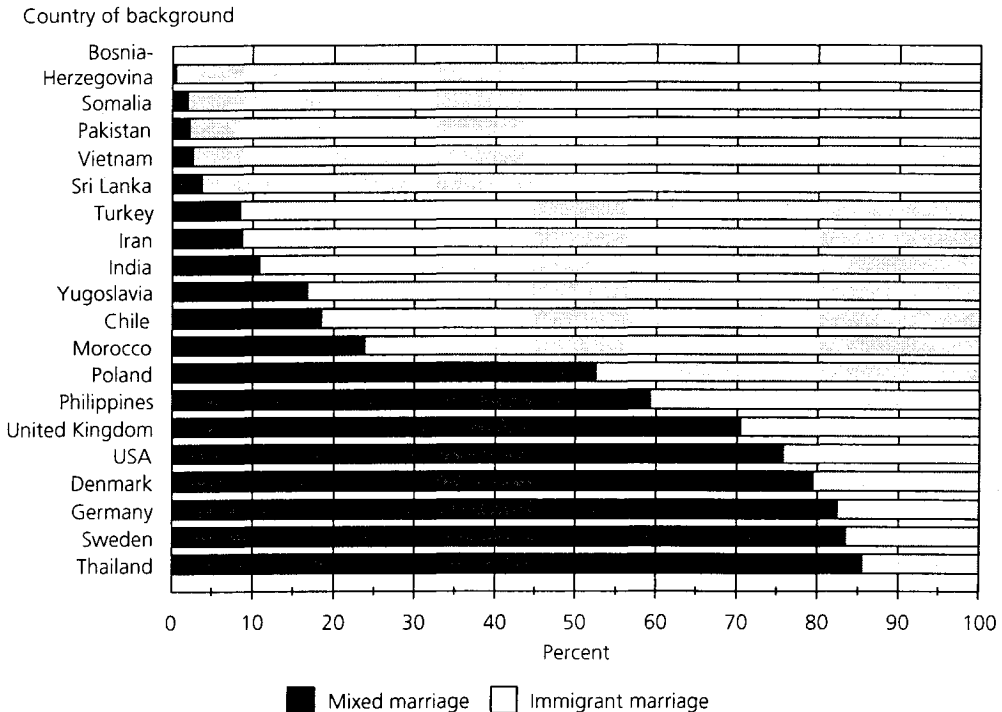
The constitution of marriages roughly follows the common pattern, which is that Western immigrants find themselves in one class and non-Western immigrants, in another. A clear majority (three-fourths) of Western immigrants is married to a Norwegian, while only 20 percent of non-Western immigrants have a Norwegian spouse.

The 20 percent of non-Westerns, is however only an average because there are extremely great differences between the

various nationality groups. Whereas 86 percent of married Thais in Norway have a Norwegian spouse, the equivalent figure for Bosnians is only 0.4 percent (see figure 2.4.).

One characteristic of many immigrants in mixed marriages is that they are from countries neighbouring Norway or from countries that are culturally and economically similar to Norway. Moreover they are also from particular Third World countries where Norwegian men have found spouses, e.g. Thailand. 90 percent of East Asians in mixed marriages are women, while 90 percent of North Africans in such marriages are men.

**Figure 2.4. Proportion in mixed marriages of all married first-generation immigrants. 1 January 1996**



**More explanations to why there are few mixed couples**

Generally, we know little about whether Norwegians are the ones that do not marry certain immigrant groups or whether the immigrants themselves keep away from Norwegians.

The nationality groups that hardly intermarry with Norwegians have one common feature; many came as married refugees (e.g. Bosnians and Somalians). It is however clear that this does not explain why only 2.7 percent of Pakistanis are married to Norwegians. It is very unlikely that family reunification is the sole reason why not more than 2.6 percent of the Vietnamese are married to Norwegians, by the beginning of 1996, 20 years after the first Vietnamese arrived in Norway.

Otherwise a common feature of the groups with lowest percentages of mixed marriages is that they are relatively large groups, thereby making it possible and natural to find a spouse within one's own circle. Some nationality groups such as the Pakistanis have good contact with their country of origin and can therefore find spouses there.

Tor Jørgensen

### 3. Education

#### **It is difficult to survey the educational level of immigrants**

The level of education among immigrants varies according to country of birth. However, since we lack information about highest completed education for relatively many, it is difficult to do comprehensive comparisons of educational levels between immigrants from different countries or groups of countries. It is also important to emphasise that the age profiles of the Norwegian-born and the foreign-born part of the population are different. Immigrants are over-represented in the age groups with the highest level of education and under-represented in the age groups with the lowest level (the oldest age groups). The proportion with unknown education greatly varies between groups of countries. Whereas we lack such information for only 1 percent of the Norwegian-born population, this applies to almost 60 percent of those with country of birth in Eastern Europe.

It is hard to say with certainty whether there are systematic differences in the level of education between the part of the population for which we have regi-

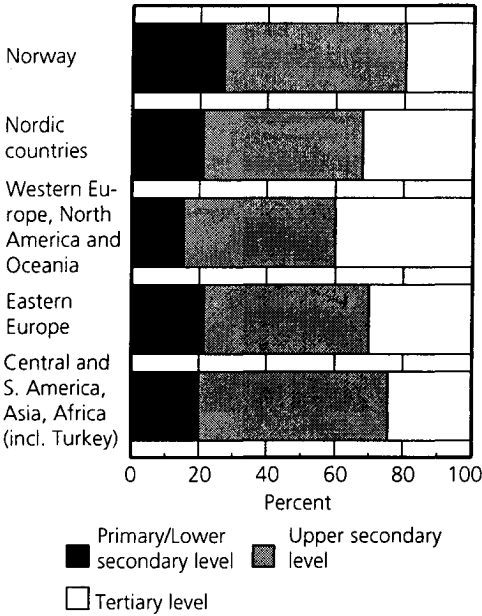
stered the level of education and the other part for which we lack information. Probably, the average level of education of the group with unknown education may be relatively low but there may be great differences between groups of countries.

#### **Highest education among immigrants from Western countries...**

Irrespective of how we group those with unknown education, we find the highest level of education in the part of the population from Western countries. The level of education is respectively low among Eastern Europeans, and lowest among people born in the Third World. Immigrants from Nordic countries have a level of education that is slightly lower than the average for immigrants from the remaining European countries, while the level is even lower among the Norwegian-born.

Among those for whom we have educational information, 40 percent of immigrants from Western countries had university and college level education in 1995. Immigrants from Eastern Europe and Nordic countries have a slightly lower educational level, while there are

**Figure 3.1. Persons 16 years and above with specified education, by highest completed education and country of birth. 1995. Percent**



Source: Education statistics, Statistics Norway.

fewest with education at tertiary level among immigrants from the Third World.

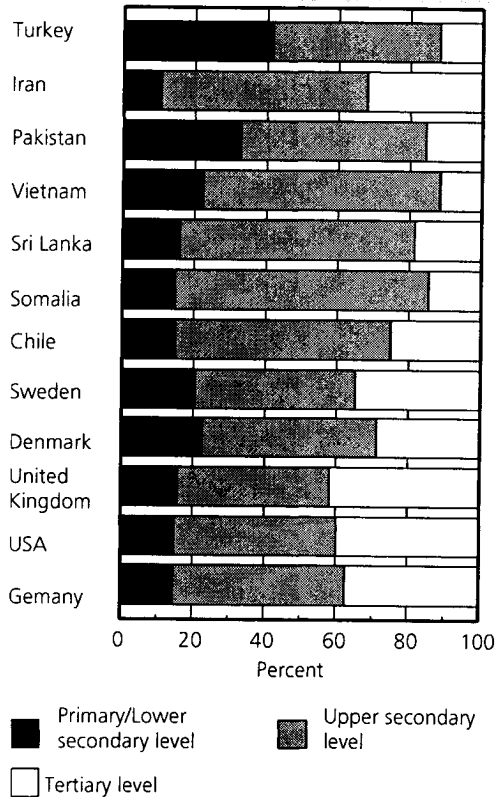
When we consider persons with unknown education as a separate category, we can estimate the least proportion in every country group with respectively primary/lower secondary education, upper secondary education, or tertiary education as highest completed education. The proportion of immigrants from Western countries with tertiary education was 29 percent in 1995 and 23 percent among immigrants from Nordic countries, where as only 12-15 percent of immigrants from Eastern Europe or the Third World had education of this level. The equivalent percentage among the Norwegian-born was just below 20, also by using this calculation, since there is hardly any lack

of information on this group. It is therefore clear that the proportion with college and university level education is lower among the Norwegian-born part of the population than among immigrants from other Western countries. The greatest differences are among women.

**...However Iranians also have high education**

What is the educational level of the largest immigrant groups in Norway? Among the Turks and Vietnamese for whom we have education information,

**Figure 3.2. Persons 16 years and above with specified education, by highest completed education and country of birth. 1995. Percent**



Source: Education statistics, Statistics Norway.

**Table 3.1. Persons 16 years and above, by highest completed education, sex and country of birth. 1995. Percent**

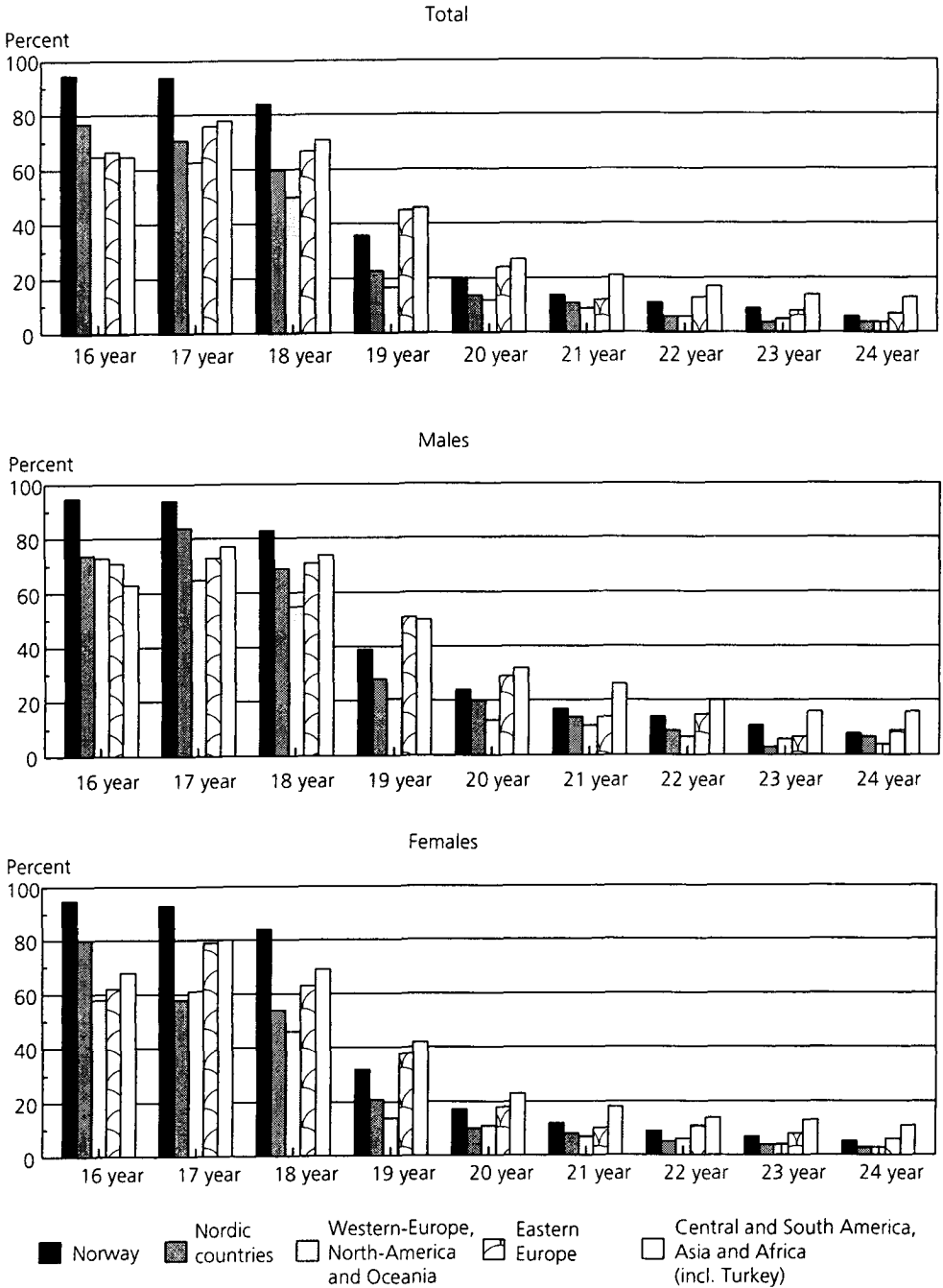
Sex and country of birth	Total	Primary/ lower secondary level	Upper secondary level	Tertiary level	Unspecified or no completed education
			Percent		
Both sexes .....	100.0	26.1	51.4	19.6	2.9
Norway .....	100.0	27.0	52.5	19.6	1.0
Nordic countries .....	100.0	15.2	33.6	23.2	28.0
Western Europe, North America and Oceania .....	100.0	10.8	32.0	28.6	28.6
Eastern Europe .....	100.0	8.8	19.9	12.4	58.9
Central and South America, Asia and Africa (including Turkey) .....	100.0	12.5	35.0	15.3	37.1
Males .....	100.0	23.2	53.3	20.5	3.0
Norway .....	100.0	24.0	54.5	20.6	1.0
Nordic countries .....	100.0	15.2	33.8	20.0	31.0
Western Europe, North America and Oceania .....	100.0	9.1	31.0	27.4	32.5
Eastern Europe .....	100.0	9.3	21.3	11.9	57.5
Central and South America, Asia and Africa (including Turkey) .....	100.0	11.7	39.1	16.6	32.6
Females .....	100.0	28.9	49.5	18.7	2.9
Norway .....	100.0	29.9	50.6	18.6	0.9
Nordic countries .....	100.0	15.2	33.5	25.8	25.6
Western Europe, North America and Oceania .....	100.0	12.5	32.9	29.8	24.7
Eastern Europe .....	100.0	8.3	18.7	12.8	60.2
Central and South America, Asia and Africa (including Turkey) .....	100.0	13.5	30.3	13.8	42.3

Source: Education Statistics. Statistics Norway

less than 12 percent have education at tertiary level. More than 40 percent of the Turks and half of the Turkish women only have primary school education. Far more Vietnamese persons have upper secondary level of education. Almost 16 percent of Pakistanis with educational level given have tertiary education. There are far more Pakistani women than men with only primary school education and fewer with university or college level education.

The part of the population from Iran has a very high level of education, thus clearly distinguishing themselves from those born in other non-Western countries. One out of three Iranians has education at tertiary level and only 10 percent have primary school level. The level of education is high among both women and men and it is worth noting that the educational level is particularly high among men in the age group 50 and above.

**Figure 3.3. Pupils in upper secondary education in percentage of registered cohorts, by sex and country of birth, 1995**



Source: Education statistics, Statistics Norway

**1 out of 20 pupils and students is an immigrant**

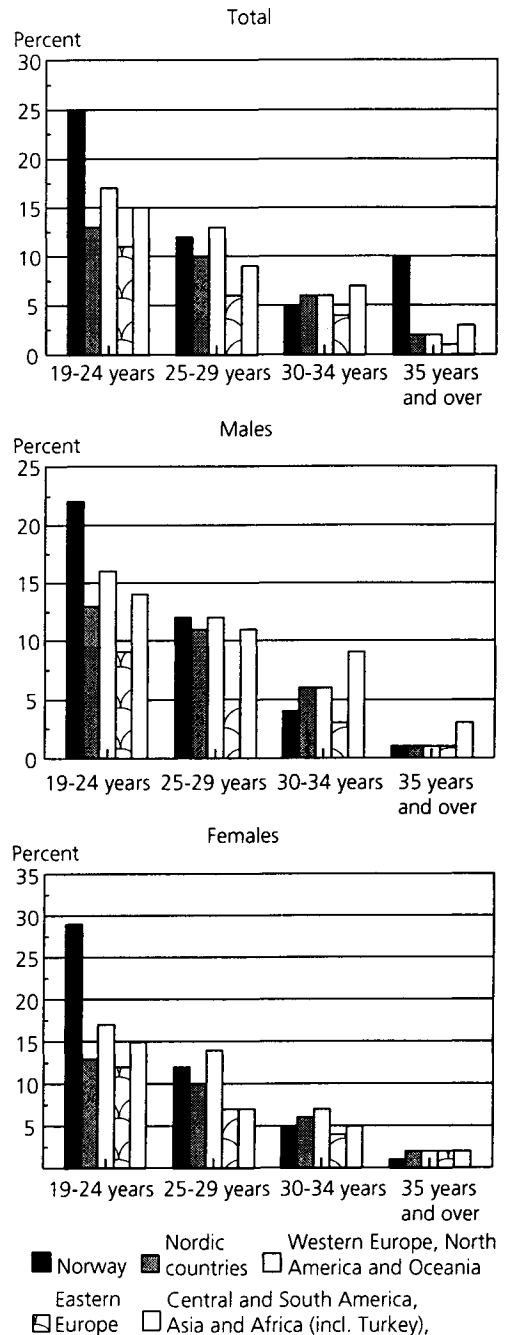
Immigrants represented over 6 percent of pupils in upper secondary school education in 1995. More than two-thirds of these pupils were from the Third World. This proportion has increased from over 20 percent in 1980. Less than 9 percent of immigrants in upper secondary education in 1995 were born in one of the other Nordic countries and about just as many came from other Western countries. The number of pupils from Eastern Europe has increased strongly in recent years and in 1995, this group of pupils constituted 15 percent of all foreign-born pupils under upper secondary education, double the figure of 1994.

There were more than 9600 foreign-born students registered at Norwegian universities and colleges in 1995. They represented just over 5 percent of the total student population. Over half of the foreign-born students were from the Third World, i.e. a much lower proportion than equivalent figures for upper secondary education. One out of five foreign-born students was born in Nordic countries and about just as many in a Western country. This is about twice as high a proportion when compared with upper secondary education. Slightly more than 8 percent of university and college students were from Eastern Europe.

**Norwegian-born have the highest proportions both in upper secondary education and in universities and colleges**

There are relatively great variations in percentages of the population in upper secondary school, between those born in Norway and those born abroad. Whereas 94-95 percent of the Norwegian-born 16 and 17-year olds were in upper secondary school in 1995, equivalent figures

**Figure 3.4. Students at universities and colleges in percentage of registered cohorts by sex and country of birth. 1995**



Source: Education statistics, Statistics Norway



for those born in other Nordic countries were respectively 77 percent for 16-year olds and 71 for 17-year olds. Only two out of three 16-year olds from the other country groups were registered in upper secondary education, while the proportions varied slightly for 17-year olds.

The reason why the proportion in upper secondary education is much higher among the Norwegian-born than among those from other Western countries could be because some of the people from these countries take upper secondary education outside Norway.

### **General subjects are most popular among foreign-born pupils**

The largest fields of study within upper secondary education are general subjects, administration and economics as well as industry, crafts and engineering. About 76 percent of all pupils in upper secondary education including apprentices, choose education within one of these fields of study.

There are however great variations between the country of birth groups in terms of distribution of the different fields of study. Those born in Norway or Nordic countries, choose a vocational line to a large degree. They choose general subjects to a lesser degree than those born in other countries. Almost 55 percent of those born in the Third World and 65 percent of those born in Eastern Europe were enrolled in general subjects in 1995, whereas for Norwegian-born and Nordic-born the figure was just above 40 percent. In broad outline, both Norwegian-born and foreign-born girls and boys make relatively traditional choices. More girls than boys choose general subjects and some more choose administration and economics subjects. Girls dominate the social subjects,

irrespective of whether they are born in Norway or abroad. Industry and craft subjects are mainly the domains of boys, irrespective of country of birth. However, apprenticeship figures show that there are particularly many girls among apprentices from non-Western countries (E. Vassenden 1994).

### **What is the level of performance of pupils with immigrant background in Norwegian schools?**

In 1992, UNGFORSK carried out a relatively comprehensive survey among 10 000 pupils from grade 7 in primary school to second year in upper secondary school. Over 4 500 pupils in this survey gave information about their last grades registered in their report books (Lauglo 1996). The pupils were classified on the basis of information they themselves gave about their mother and father's country of birth. The groups of countries used were Norway, developed countries, developing countries, the combinations Norway/ developed countries and Norway/ developing countries and Confucian countries i.e. China, Japan, Taiwan, South Korea and Vietnam. Besides the usual sources of error in this type of survey, an additional problem was that some pupils had such great language problems that they were unable to respond to the questions in the survey. There is however no reason to believe that the quality of the responses should vary with parents' country of birth.

Not surprisingly, the main conclusion of the survey is that pupils with immigrant background emerge as a very heterogeneous group in terms of performance in school. The relation between parents' country of birth and pupil's performance is very weak.

Morten Kjelsrud and Jan Erik Sivertsen

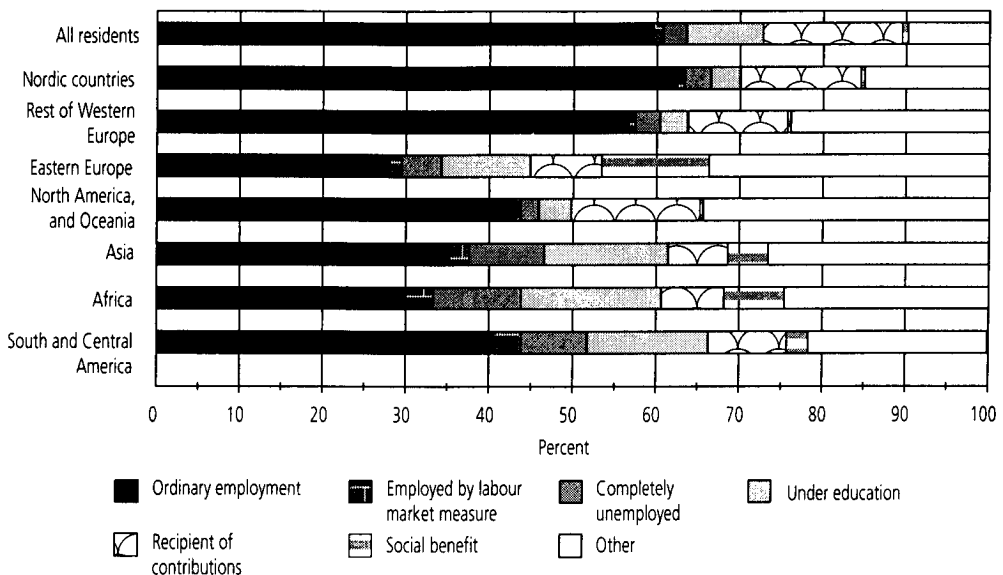
# 4. The labour market

## Immigrants' and the labour market - a general overview

The population's connection to the labour market varies a great deal with persons' country of background. Figures from Statistic Norway's current version of the Social Data System give a general overview of this (figure 4.1). The statistics

cover all persons aged 16-74 registered as a resident of Norway in November 1994. These persons are distributed by various activities and income sources, which we refer to here as «statuses». We received this status information from a number of administrative registers. Here, «immigrants» refers to *first-generation immigrants*, that is to say, persons with

**Figure 4.1. Persons aged 16-74 years, by region of birth and status within and outside the labour force. November 1994**



Source: Current system for social data

foreign country of birth and foreign-born parents.

Immigrants from non-Western countries distinguish themselves by having a smaller proportion that are ordinarily employed (wage earners, salaried employees and self-employed) than Western immigrants and the rest of the population. At the same time, a greater proportion of non-Western immigrants are employed by labour market measures, completely unemployed, under education and recipients of social benefit allowances. East Europeans are the group with the lowest proportion of persons in ordinary employment and the highest proportion of recipients of social benefit allowances. The principal reason for this is that in November 1994, relatively many of them were newly arrived in Norway as refugees from former Yugoslavia. For newly arrived refugees, social welfare is often the only possible source of income.

Africans have the highest proportion employed by labour market measures, completely unemployed and under education. The concept «under education» is used here as a collective term to describe ordinary educational activity and training measures under the direction of the Labour Market Service. In both types of ongoing education, the proportion of non-Western immigrants participating is greater than Western immigrants.

Immigrants from Western countries have a greater proportion in ordinary employment than non-Western immigrants and a greater proportion of old age and disablement pensioners. The Nordic group is the only group of immigrants with a greater proportion in ordinary employment than Norwegian-born. At the same time, there is a greater proportion of disablement

pensioners among the Nordic group than in the other immigrant groups. North America is the only group with a greater proportion of old-age pensioners than among the Norwegian-born. Among recipients of allowances otherwise, a greater proportion of non-Western immigrants receive transitional allowances as single breadwinner or rehabilitation, than Western immigrants and the whole population.

### **Important factors for immigrants in the labour market**

With regard to immigrants and the labour market, there are many reasons why there are differences between immigrant groups and between immigrants and Norwegian-born people. The differences are clearly related to age and sex distribution, educational level, residence pattern, duration of stay and time of settling in Norway. Duration of stay in Norway is of particular importance for many immigrants in the Norwegian labour market. The newly arrived immigrants, especially refugees, are in a first phase of adjustment to the Norwegian society and economic life. In this phase, many are busy learning the Norwegian language and a relatively great proportion participate in various labour market measures. For example, the figures show that the proportion of non-Western immigrants in employment is very low. However, this proportion increases relatively fast the first years after arrival in Norway. On the other hand, the proportion of non-Western immigrants receiving social benefit is very high but declines relatively quickly after a few years duration of stay in Norway.

### **Most foreign employees are from Nordic countries**

In 1995, most of the foreign employees resident in Norway were from Denmark,

Sweden, Great Britain and Pakistan. Here in Norway, persons from Nordic countries and other Western countries represent over half of all foreign employees. Their proportion of all immigrants is still only just above 40 percent. Immigrants from Sweden, Finland and the Netherlands (57-60 percent) had the highest level of employment participation. Immigrant groups with the lowest employment rates were from Bosnia-Herzegovina (14 percent), Somalia (14 percent), and Iraq (17 percent). Most immigrants from these three countries came as refugees. All the same it is not true that all immigrants from the Third World and Eastern Europe have low employment participation while all immigrants from Western Countries have high employment participation. For example, immigrants from Sri Lanka, India and the Philippines are just about as economically active as Norwegian-born persons, whereas those from USA, Canada and Japan have an employment rate that is below the average.

There are great differences between individual immigrant groups in terms of how they are connected to the labour market. For example, the difference in employment participation between Sri Lankans and Somalians was 42 percentage points in 1995. We cannot explain this only by saying that these two groups are differently constituted in terms of sex and age or that they have different duration of stay, education and knowledge of Norwegian. Other reasons could be that they have different cultural features, or that Norwegian employers relate differently to these two immigrant groups. In a survey on the living conditions of immigrants in Oslo, Djuve and Hagen (1995) conclude that possible causes of the great differences between some refugee groups may be that they have different economic incentives,

traumas and psychological problems. Furthermore, other reasons may be different social networks, discrimination, cultural refusal to do certain types of work (eg. cleaning), at the same time as there have been widely differing plans implemented by the authorities in their attempts to integrate refugees into the labour market.

### **Lowest employment participation among immigrants compared with Norwegian-born in the age group 25-46 years**

Employment participation among immigrants is highest for those between 25 and 54 years, just as it is for the Norwegian-born part of the population. In 1995, 49 percent of all immigrants in this age group were in employment. The equivalent figure for the entire population was 72 percent. The percentage employed in this age group was lower than among Norwegian-born within all immigrant groups. Immigrants from Eastern Europe and Africa had the lowest employment rates within the age group 25-54 years. The population of immigrants in working age is concentrated to the age group 25-46 years, to a greater degree than the Norwegian-born. A comparison within this age group would strengthen the impression that there is lower employment participation among immigrants than among Norwegian-born.

### **Employment increases with years of residence in Norway**

The number of years of residence in Norway plays a very important role with regard to how immigrants are connected to the labour market. Generally, the level of employment increases with the number of years the immigrant is resident in Norway. There are lesser differences between immigrants and Norwegian-born in terms of percentage employed if we

start out with immigrants that have been living here for many years. For immigrants with between seven and ten years of residence in Norway the percentage employed was 49 percent in 1995, only 8 percent lower than for the Norwegian-born. In comparison, only 29 percent of those with one to three years of residence were employed.

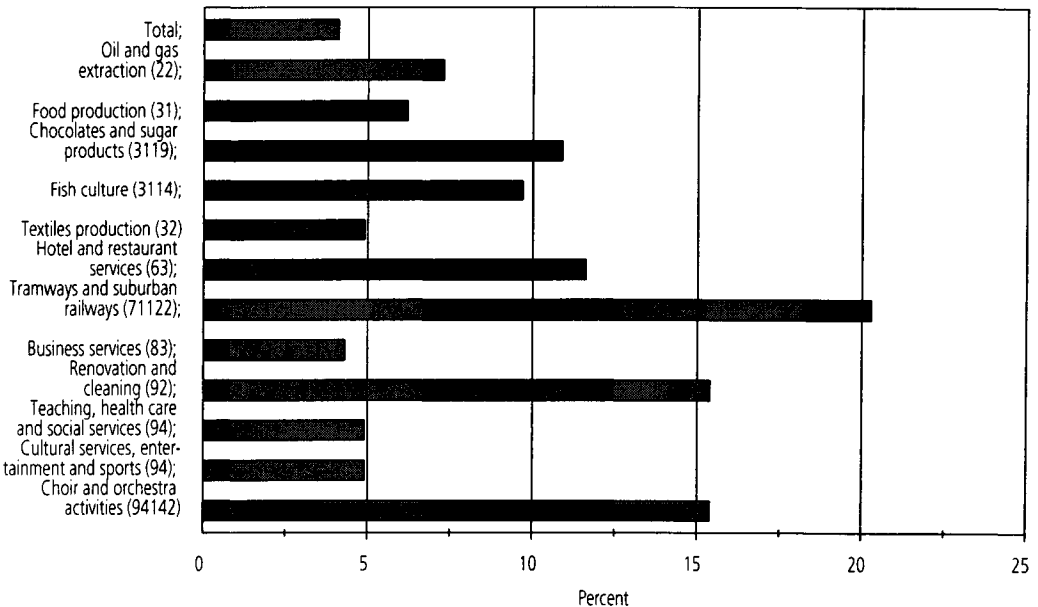
Previously, it did not take such a long time for immigrants to attain about the same level of employment as Norwegians. However, after the labour market situation began to worsen towards the end of the 1980's, immigrants have had greater problems in finding work (or remaining employed). The situation has been particularly difficult for immigrants who came to Norway after 1985. The situation appears to be changing for the better, so that even the newly arrived

immigrants may participate in the employment growth that Norway has been experiencing since 1993.

**Immigrants are typically employed within cleaning work, oil drilling, and hotel and restaurant services**

Employed immigrants are more concentrated within specific fields of trade and industry than Norwegian-born. One can generally say that many employees from the Third World and Eastern Europe are over-represented in labour-intensive industries where many unskilled workers are usually employed. Based on a rough distribution of industries, it appears that non-Western immigrants constitute a great proportion of employees within cleaning work and hotel and restaurant services. Many of the male employees from these countries work in typically female dominated in-

**Figure 4.2. Immigrant employees as percentage of all employees. Selected industries (ISIC industrial code). 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 1995**



Source: Employee registers

dustries. For example, within hotel and restaurant services, every fifth male employee is an immigrant. Western immigrants on the contrary, are over-represented in industries to a large extent demanding a specialised and highly educated work force. Western immigrants are over-represented within the petroleum sector, and business services. Other industries with relatively many immigrants are the manufacturing industry, culture and sports, teaching and health care and social services.

### Lower economic activity among immigrants irrespective of educational level

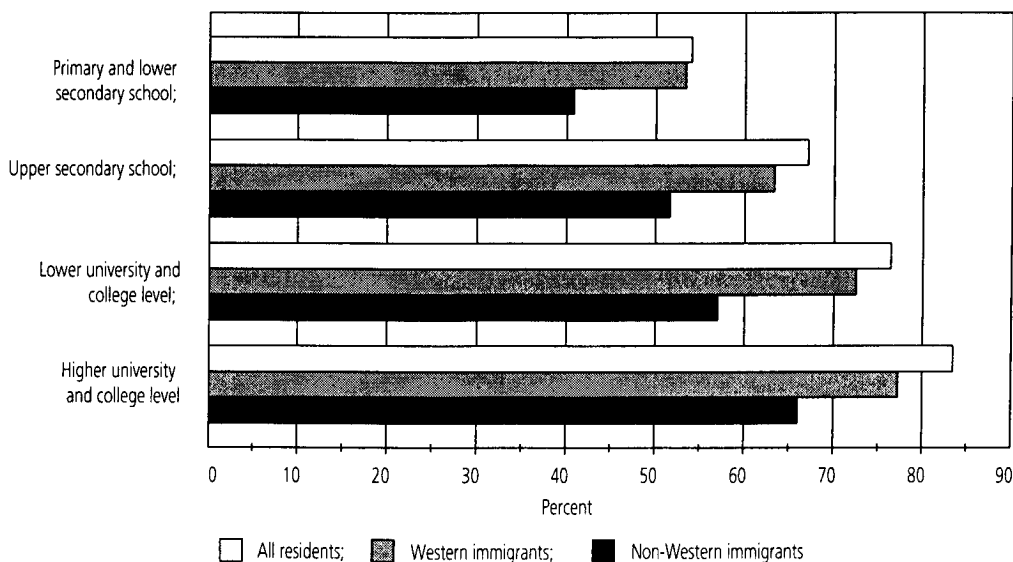
Although several immigrants are highly educated when compared with the Norwegian-born, it is evident that a smaller proportion of them is in employment. Economic activity increases with rising educational level, both for Norwegian-born and for immigrants (figure 4.3). All

the same, economic activity is lower and registered unemployment is higher among immigrants, regardless of educational level.

The differences in economic activity between immigrant groups and between Norwegian-born and immigrants, must be seen in the context of several factors. Among other things, immigrants have various problems of adaptation dependent for example on cultural background, language skills, reason for immigration and social network. We could also consider differences in work experiences to be of importance. Moreover, discrimination by employers, uncertainty and inadequate information about the competency of immigrants may affect recruitment into the Norwegian economic life.

Furthermore, figures from 1992 indicate that both Western and non-Western immi-

Figure 4.3. Employee percentages, by education and country of background. 2 quarter 1995



grants with highest university and college education (at least Masters Degree level), have lower average earned income than Norwegian-born with equivalent education. Among persons with education below Masters level, Western immigrants have higher earned income than Norwegian-born. In comparison, earned income of highly educated non-Western immigrants is about 20 percent lower than for highly educated Norwegian-born.

### **Large increase in unemployment**

For every year in the period 1988 to 1993, there was a stronger increase of registered unemployment at the employment offices for foreign-born persons than for Norwegian-born. In 1994, there was a slight decrease in unemployment among the Norwegian-born whereas it continued to rise among immigrants. However, in 1995, there was a decrease in the unemployment percentage as compared with the previous year, within most immigrant groups except those from Eastern Europe. Much of the growth in unemployment among immigrants during 1993 and 1994 was due to a relatively strong increase in the number of unemployed refugees from Bosnia-Herzegovina and former Yugoslavia.

Although the figures of persons registered as unemployed in percentage of the work force now seems to be decreasing for immigrants from the Third World, this group still has four times as high unemployment as Norwegian-born and immigrants from the West. Unemployment is particularly high among African men. Among immigrant women, unemployment is particularly high among those from Asia. Unemployment among immigrants from Nordic countries, the rest of Western Europe, North America

and Oceania, is at about the same level as for Norwegians.

### **Unemployment decreases with years of residence in Norway**

The labour market situation is most difficult for immigrants that have been living in Norway for a short period of time (cf. the large number of unemployed from Bosnia). In the autumn of 1995, more than 10 percent of all immigrants of working age with four to six years of residence, were registered as completely unemployed. For those resident seven years and over, unemployment was half of this level. This means that unemployment affects newcomers in the labour market strongest. As far as it goes, this also affects Norwegians, such as the high unemployment among youth that we had at the beginning of the 1990's. Besides years of residence in Norway, the general business cycle situation also plays an important role in the level of unemployment. This was the case for those that immigrated to Norway in 1987-88. Unemployment was much lower among this group than for those who came later when the general unemployment level was higher.

### **Many unemployed immigrants have high education**

Unemployment is generally highest among persons with a low educational level and it decreases with increasing educational level. In 1995, 18 percent of registered unemployed immigrants had college or university education, while the equivalent proportion for Norwegian-born was 11 percent. The Nordic immigrants have the least proportion of highly educated among those registered as unemployed. Immigrants from Western Europe excluding Nordic countries have about the same proportion of persons with higher education as immigrants

from Africa and Latin America. Among persons registered as completely unemployed, we find the most highly educated among those from North America and Oceania.

Unemployment is also higher among immigrants than Norwegian-born when we look at those educated in Norway. Figures from the project «From education to employment» (Tuveng and Vassnes 1996) show that unemployment among non-Western immigrants that had completed higher education in May/June 1994 was almost twice as high as for Norwegian-born and Western immigrants. This was the state of affairs when we compared the labour market situation for these groups six months later.



**Mads Ivar Kirkeberg**

## 5. Income

### Some main figures

In 1994, Statistics Norway's income statistics (table 5.1) showed disposable income for the entire resident population to be NOK 395 117 million. Families with a first-generation immigrant as head of the family, had NOK 16 979 million or 4.3 percent of this income at their disposal. For these immigrant families, this represented an average disposable income of NOK 150 400. The equivalent figure for the rest of the population, hereafter referred to as Norwegian families, was NOK 191 200 or about 27 percent higher.

Like Norwegian families, income from employment is the most important source of income for immigrant families as a whole. In 1994, immigrant families had a total income from employment of NOK 17 779 million. The concept of wages also includes unemployment benefit of NOK 746 million. Average income from employment among immigrant families was NOK 157 300 compared with NOK 201 800 among Norwegian families.

The same immigrant families received transfer payments of NOK 5 189 million.

Here, transfer payments are defined as social security benefits from the National Insurance Scheme, service pensions, alimonies, family (children's) allowances, dwelling rent supports, scholarships, parent's tax deductions, basic and additional amounts and social assistance. The most important transfer payments for immigrant families are respectively social security benefits from the National Insurance Scheme (NOK 2 000 million) and social assistance (NOK 1 242 million). On average, each immigrant family received various transfer payments of NOK 46 000. Norwegian families received an average of NOK 56 700 in transfer payments the same year. One of the reasons why Norwegian families receive more transfer payments, is larger payments in the form of retirement, disablement and service pensions, because the average age is higher among Norwegians than among several immigrant groups.

In 1994, immigrant families paid NOK 5 541 million in the form of taxes, rates and contributions to municipality, county, government and the National Insurance Scheme. A small calculation shows that tax assessments, rates and dues to public authorities exceeded transfer payments

**Table 5.1. Income accounts for families. First-generation immigrants and the rest of the population. Total amount. 1994. NOK Million**

	Total	First-generation immigrants	The rest of the resident population
Employment income .....	416 874	17 779	399 095
+ Wages and salaries .....	372 606	16 492	356 114
Thereof unemployment benefit ....	10 796	746	10 050
+ Net entrepreneurial income .....	44 268	1 287	42 981
+ Property income .....	- 5 355	- 448	- 4 908
+ Imputed rents of owner-occupied dwellings .....	4 461	151	4 309
+ Interest received .....	11 452	290	11 162
+ Other capital incomes .....	20 274	652	19 622
- Interest paid .....	39 439	1 395	38 044
- Share of deficit of building society	2 103	146	1 957
+ Transfers received .....	117 326	5 189	112 137
+ Social security benefits .....	73 127	2 000	71 127
Thereof			
Retirement benefit .....	43 939	809	43 130
Disability benefit .....	18 404	643	17 761
+ Service pensions .....	18 052	486	17 566
+ Alimonies .....	3 108	160	2 948
+ Family (children's) allowances .....	11 717	824	10 893
+ Dwelling rent supports .....	681	87	594
+ Scholarships .....	2 812	193	2 619
+ Parent's tax deductions .....	1 960	134	1 826
+ Basic and additional amounts .....	1 965	63	1 902
+ Social assistance .....	3 904	1 242	2 662
= Total family income .....	528 845	22 520	506 324
- Total assessed taxes .....	133 728	5 541	128 187
= Disposable income .....	395 117	16 979	378 137
Number of resident families .....	2 090 781	113 035	1 977 746

received by about NOK 350 million for this population group.

### **Immigrants from Western Europe have highest income**

A general overview of the average disposable income of families by head of family's country of background shows a clear distinction between different immigrant groups (table 5.2). Not surprisingly, families from Western Europe excluding Turkey (NOK 190 200) and North Ame-

rica and Oceania (180 500) have a clearly higher average disposable income than families from the rest of the world.

Immigrants from Eastern Europe have the lowest incomes. In 1994 families from this region had to make do with an average disposable income of NOK 116 700. This low average has to be seen in the context of the refugee immigration in the years 1992 to 1994 from Bosnia-Herzegovina. Immigrants staying in

**Table 5.2. Income account for families by head of family's country of background. First-generation immigrants. 1994. Average sum in NOK**

	Nordic countries	Western Europe (without Turkey)	Eastern Europe	North America and Oceania	Asia, Africa, Central and South America and Turkey
Employment income .....	196 900	238 600	98 500	193 800	114 100
+ Wages and salaries .....	178 300	220 700	92 100	179 000	108 500
Thereof unemployment benefit .....	5 600	5 600	4 700	3 400	8 600
+ Net entrepreneurial income	18 600	17 900	6 400	14 800	5 600
+ Property income .....	- 2 900	- 1 800	- 4 400	8 900	- 7 100
+ Imputed rents of owner- occupied dwellings .....	1 700	2 100	900	1 700	900
+ Interest received .....	3 500	4 000	1 700	7 100	1 100
+ Other capital incomes .....	9 100	11 000	1 900	11 100	2 100
- Interest paid .....	16 300	17 900	7 800	10 200	9 500
- Share of deficit of building society .....	900	1 000	1 100	800	1 700
+ Transfers received .....	39 300	36 900	51 400	55 600	50 300
+ Social security benefits .....	23 500	18 700	15 500	33 300	12 300
Thereof					
retirement benefit .....	11 900	9 400	6 600	25 200	1 100
disability benefit .....	7 500	5 700	5 300	5 600	4 800
+ Service pensions .....	5 900	6 600	2 800	14 000	1 500
+ Alimonies .....	1 300	1 300	1 100	1 000	1 700
+ Family (children's) allowances .....	4 600	5 600	7 800	4 000	9 800
+ Dwelling rent supports .....	200	200	700	200	1 500
+ Scholarships .....	900	1 400	800	900	2 700
+ Parent's tax deductions .....	800	1 000	1 300	600	1 600
+ Basic and additional amounts .....	600	600	500	600	500
+ Social assistance .....	1 500	1 500	20 900	1 000	18 700
= Total family income .....	233 300	273 700	145 500	258 300	157 300
- Total assessed taxes .....	62 100	83 500	28 800	77 800	29 400
= Disposable income .....	171 200	190 200	116 700	180 500	127 900
Number of resident families .....	26 450	18 896	13 726	6 931	47 032

asylum centres have very low registered incomes.

For families from Asia, Africa, Central and South America and Turkey (hereafter referred to as the Third World), the

situation is more complex. Average disposable income for this region as a whole was NOK 127 900 per family. There are however great differences between the various countries.

### **Wages and salaries are the most important sources of subsistence**

Among almost all immigrants in Norway, income from employment is the most important source of subsistence. In Norwegian families, wages and salaries represent in average 70 percent of the family's total income. For immigrants from the rest of Western Europe, wages and salaries (81 percent) are of even greater importance for the financial situation of the family. It is slightly surprising that this type of income is as important for immigrants from the Third World as for those from North America and Oceania. For both these groups, wages and salaries make up an average of 69 percent of total income, about the same as for Norwegian families.

### **Social security benefits from the National Insurance Scheme most important for immigrants from Western Countries...**

Various transfer payments are of great significance for the family's total income, especially for immigrants from Eastern Europe and the Third World. Both groups receive about a third of their income in the form of transfer payments. Among Norwegian families, these sources of income constitute 22 percent of total income. Immigrants from Nordic countries and the rest of Western Europe receive least in the form of transfer payments. For these groups, transfer payments make up respectively 17 and 13 percent of their income. It must be emphasised that the concept "transfer payments" covers a wide spectrum of payments from pure social security benefits built up by the recipient to purely financial support for the least-privileged. The latter is in the form of dwelling rent supports and social assistance. There are great differences among different immigrant groups in

terms of which types of payments are most significant.

The largest transfer payments to Norwegians and immigrants from Europe, North America and Oceania are social security benefits from the National Insurance Scheme. These payments include among others, retirement and disablement pensions, rehabilitation allowances and transitional support allowances for single parents. Retirement pensions clearly make up the largest amount. For Norwegian families, pensions and allowances from the National Insurance Scheme represented in average 14 percent of total income compared with 10 percent for families from the remaining Nordic countries, 7 percent for the rest of Western Europe and 13 percent for North America and Oceania.

### **...whereas family allowances and social assistance are of greatest importance for the remaining immigrants**

All transfer payments, excluding social security benefits from the National Insurance Scheme and service pensions are to a larger extent made to immigrants from Eastern Europe and the Third World than for immigrants from other parts of the world. Family (children's) allowances and payments from municipal social services are of greatest significance for income. Immigrant families from the Third World receive an average of NOK 9800 in family allowances or about 6 percent of their total income. Family allowances is also a relatively important source of income for families from Eastern Europe with an average payment of NOK 7 800. In comparison, Norwegian families receive an average of NOK 5 500 in family allowances. These differences are of course due to the fact that certain immigrant groups have more children than Norwegians.

Social assistance, both in the form of pure contributions and loans, is a very important source of income for certain immigrant groups. For families from the Third World, social assistance made up NOK 18 700 or 12 percent of the family's total income.

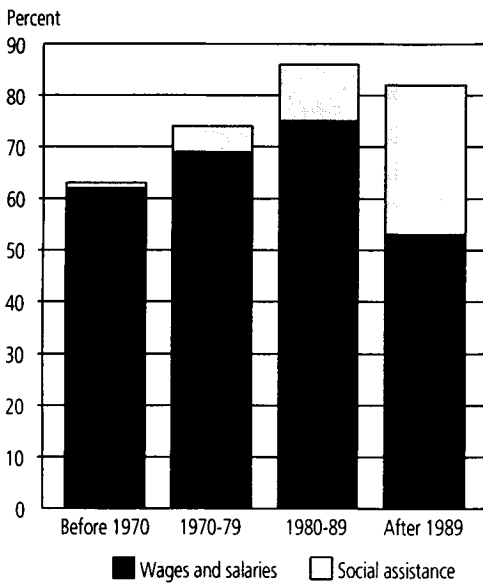
### Social assistance of less significance as duration of stay increases

The composition of a family's income always changes over time. As the years elapse, employment income is replaced by pensions. Family allowances ceases and many people experience increasing capital income. For immigrants particularly from the Third World, it is most interesting to see if recipients of social assistance will replace this with other sources of income. Social assistance is paid out to those that are unable to

provide for their own subsistence. One question that constantly comes up in the debate about immigrants in Norway is: «to what extent do certain groups become permanently dependent on social assistance or do most immigrants gradually manage to become self-sufficient?»

Figure 5.1 indicates that the incomes of families from the Third World changes with duration of stay. For families from the Third World that immigrated to Norway in the 1990's, social assistance represented on average 29 percent of total income in 1994. For immigrants that came to Norway in the 1970's and 1980's, the equivalent figures are 5 and 11 percent. Just below half of the families that came to Norway in the 1990's, received social assistance in 1994. Among families that settled here in the 1970's, almost one-fourth of them received such financial support in the same year. It therefore appears that many immigrant families are gradually able to manage by themselves. However, a relatively large group also appears to become more or less dependent on social assistance. It is first and foremost among immigrants that came here as refugees that we find that many remain clients of social assistance over several years.

**Figure 5.1. The proportion of wages and social assistance of average total income for families from the Third World, by year of immigration. 1994. Percent**



### Reason and time for immigration – of great significance for income

There are many factors influencing the income situation of immigrant families. One factor is duration of stay. However, there is also reason to believe that reason for immigration, that is to say whether one came to Norway as a person seeking employment or as a refugee, and the actual time of immigration are of considerable importance. One could say that immigration to Norway from the end of the 1960's until today has evolved from

being an import of labour to refugee immigration. Immigrants that came to Norway in the 1970's were mostly persons in search of employment. They found a country with practically no unemployment. Many jobs were vacant and it was relatively easy to find paid employment. The situation was however completely different for immigrants who came at the end of the 1980's and the early 1990's. About half of the immigrants that came in the 1990's were refugees. Most refugees have come from Eastern Europe, Asia and Africa. They have experienced a difficult labour market with competition from Norwegians for most jobs. Even immigrants with higher education from their home country have been unable to find jobs. Without work they are unable to earn social security rights. Consequently, even after several years in Norway, several immigrant families still remain dependent on social assistance.

Svein Blom and Agnes Aall Ritland

## 6. Living conditions

### **About the survey «Living conditions among immigrants 1996»**

In the spring of 1996, a sample of non-Western immigrants aged 16-70 years with a duration of stay of at least two years, were interviewed about education, employment, financial situation, housing, social contacts, health, discrimination, activities, etc. Immigrants are defined as persons with two foreign-born parents.

For the survey «Living conditions among immigrants 1996», the sample is drawn in such a way as to be representative of eight immigrant groups in Norway. It includes persons with a background from former Yugoslavia (excluding Bosnia-Herzegovina), Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Somalia and Chile, making up a population of almost 48 000 persons aged 16-70 years.

Altogether 2 561 persons were interviewed, most of them in their own mother tongue. Non-response was 33.2 percent, greatest among persons from Turkey and Pakistan (46 and 38 percent, respectively). The average non-response is two percent higher than in Statistics Norway's quarterly omnibus surveys in 1996.

The sample was drawn with about as many people from each group, while the groups are of very different sizes in reality (from 10 900 of Pakistani background to 2 100 of Somalian background aged 16-70 years). This is why the figures are weighted when we present a joint result for the sample, such that the largest groups have a stronger influence on the figures than the small groups.

### **How do we compare immigrants with Norwegians?**

Results for immigrants are compared with results for Norwegians based on the 1995 Survey on Living Conditions and some other sample surveys that are representative for the country (among others, the 1995 Housing Conditions Survey and Statistics Norway's omnibus survey, 1 quarter 1996). Here, Norwegians are defined as persons with at least one Norwegian-born parent. Since there are relatively younger persons, more men and metropolitan residents among the immigrants than in the Norwegian sample, the values are weighted for these groups of Norwegians before we make comparisons. This is what the term «values weighted» in the text refers to. In this way any differences between

Norwegians and immigrants cannot arise from differences with respect to age, sex and place of residence. Differences between the immigrant groups may, however, be caused by differences along the lines of these three dimensions.

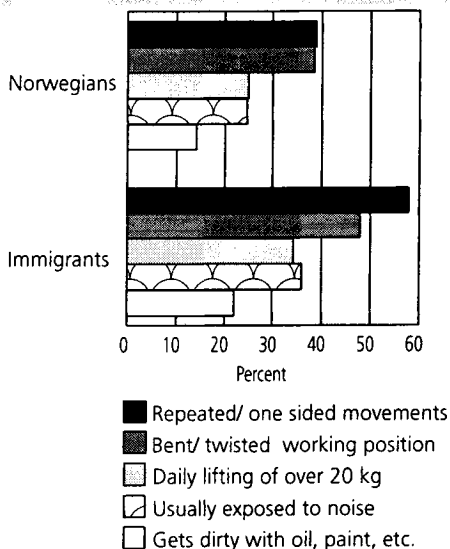
**More strains in the working environment**

Although being employed is a central social asset giving access to other assets of social welfare, paid employment also involves strains and disadvantages. Other statistics show that immigrants from non-Western countries usually work within employment fields such as cleaning, hotel and restaurant services (Statistics Norway 1995b: table 19). Here, there is a great element of manual and routine work in categories of low employment

positions. Our sample of immigrants also reports more strains in the working environment than Norwegians with equivalent profiles of age, sex and place of residence.

Almost six out of ten employed<sup>1</sup> immigrants report that their work involves many repeated and one-sided movements (figure 6.1). One out of two immigrant mentions problems of bending, twisting or other working positions that are a strain. The corresponding figures for Norwegians are four out of ten in both cases. The proportion reporting daily lifting of over 20 kg and exposure to noise is furthermore 10 percent higher among immigrants than among Norwegians (about 35 versus 25 percent). Whereas only 12 percent of employed Norwegians consider work obligations to be little varied, this proportion is almost four times as high among immigrant employees. The proportion that considers their work to be psychologically stressful to some extent or to a great extent, is 35 and 18 percent among immigrants and Norwegians, respectively.

**Figure 6.1. Strains in the working environment for Norwegians and immigrants from eight non-Western countries. Proportion where work includes... Percent**



**More live in flats**

Housing expenditure usually represents the largest single investment in the household. The standard of the dwelling, size and location must therefore be considered as being closely connected to the household's income and capital. Six out of ten immigrants live in blocks of flats. In comparison, only three out of ten Norwegians with the same age, sex and residential distribution as immigrants, live in blocks of flats. Only just over one out of ten immigrants live in a detached house, while this applies to almost four out of ten Norwegians (values weighted).

Source: Living conditions among immigrants 1996 and 1995 Survey of living conditions.

<sup>1</sup> Employed is defined here on the basis of interview information about employment, excluding persons under training for qualification per 1 quarter 1996.



There are no great variations between the different immigrant groups, however, Pakistanis have the highest proportions living in blocks of flats. Three out of four Pakistanis live in blocks of flats. Out of the eight immigrant groups, Pakistanis are the ones with the largest proportion living in Oslo.

When asked about what type of dwelling immigrants and Norwegians opt for if they had the choice, six out of ten immigrants responded that they would prefer to live in a detached house. The proportion is about the same among Norwegians. Only just below one out of five Norwegians and immigrants, would choose blocks of flats if they had an unlimited choice.

### **More immigrants rent their housing**

During the period of growth of the welfare state, a housing policy was developed here called «the Norwegian model». Contrary to other North European countries, the aim was declared to be that everybody should own his or her own residence (Hansen 1995). Seven out of ten Norwegians belong to a household that owns its residence, either as owner occupant (five out of ten) or through a housing co-operative (two out of ten) (values weighted). Similar figures among immigrants are far less. Two out of ten live in owner-occupied residences, while three out of ten live in housing co-operative residences. More than three out of ten immigrants live in residences that are rented without premiums, versus more than two out of ten Norwegians. However if they had the «free choice», nine out of ten immigrants and Norwegians would prefer to own their housing, either as owner occupant or as a part owner in a housing co-operative.

When asked about why they rent rather than own their housing, half of the immigrants responded that they wished to buy but had problems obtaining a loan. The most usual reason given for renting among Norwegians is that the place of residence is temporary.

### **Housing standard is not particularly lower...**

The 1983 Survey of Living Conditions indicated that foreign citizens tended to live in poorer housing than Norwegians. At that time almost every fifth Turk and Pakistani lived in housing without bathroom or WC. In comparison, this only applied to 6 percent of Norwegians (Støren 1987). This situation has changed radically during the last 13 years. Today, almost everybody (99 percent of immigrants as well as Norwegians) has housing with bathroom and WC. The proportion with housing with warm water and central heating/fixed electric heaters is also the same among immigrants and Norwegians. The proportion with a kitchen of at least 6m<sup>2</sup> or terrace/sitting-out area is however just a little bit lower among immigrants (5-7 percentage points). Altogether, the housing of immigrants today is not of particularly poorer basic standard than that of Norwegians. The principal reason for this is that many of the poorest housing have been demolished or improved through city renovation.

### **...however more live in close quarters**

However three out of ten immigrants consider their housing to be too small in size. This view is shared by 23 percent of the Norwegian population (values weighted). According to an objective definition, a person lives in close quarters if he or she (a) lives alone and has one room or (b) belongs to a household of

more than one person, with less than one room per person. Kitchen, bathroom, entrance hall or rooms smaller than 6m<sup>2</sup>, are not considered as living quarters. According to this definition, 53 percent of immigrants live in close quarters. This applies to only 13 percent of the Norwegian population. This is to say that there are fewer immigrants who subjectively consider their housing to be too small than what is indicated by the objective standard, whereas the situation is the opposite among Norwegians.

**Discrimination against one out of five in the housing market**

One out of five immigrants claim to have experienced at some time, refusal to rent or buy housing because of their immigrant background (figure 6.2). Most of these persons (three-fourths) are absolutely sure of this. The proportion that believe they have been discriminated

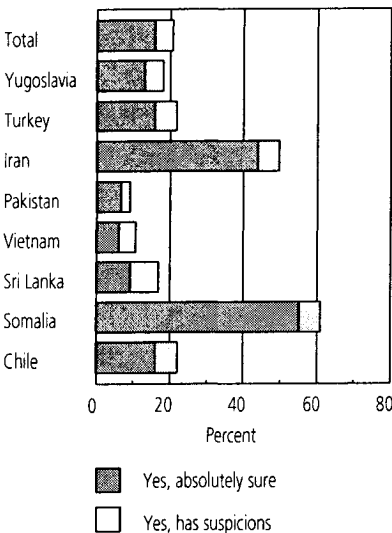
against in this way, is particularly high among immigrants from Iran (five out of ten) and Somalia (six out of ten). In both groups, there is a high proportion renting their housing. Only one out of ten Pakistanis and Vietnamese report discrimination in the housing market.

These figures are substantially lower than equivalent figures from FAFO's (The Labour Union's Research Institute) survey on living conditions among refugees in Oslo. The FAFO survey found that almost half of those interviewed considered discrimination in the housing market («Norwegian owners prefer to rent to Norwegians»), could explain why refugees live in poorer housing than Norwegians (Djuve and Hagen 1995).

**One out of seven pestered at the workplace**

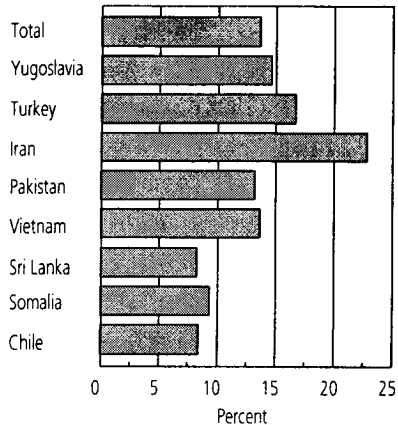
We also asked a question about pestering at the work place. Altogether one out of seven (14 percent) of those in employment reported that during the last year,

**Figure 6.2. Proportion that has been refused renting or buying housing because of immigrant background, by country of background. Percent**



Source: Living conditions among immigrants 1996

**Figure 6.3. Proportion employed that have experienced pestering at work during the past year, because of their immigrant background, by country of background. Percent**

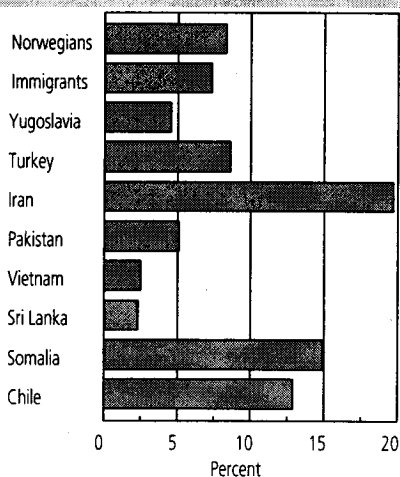


Source: Living conditions among immigrants 1996

they had experienced pestering at work or in connection with their work, because of their immigrant background (figure 6.3).<sup>2</sup> People from Iran report particularly about this situation.

Employed persons from Sri Lanka and Chile have the fewest persons (8 percent) reporting such experiences. Here again, the FAFO survey figures are far higher than ours. Almost every third refugee agreed that «immigrants were treated worse than Norwegians at work places», and a further 40 percent partly agreed with this. It is probably easier to agree with such a general statement that does not necessarily affect oneself than to personally report pestering at work. The difference with the FAFO survey can neither here nor in the question of discrimination in the housing market, be attributed to the fact that the FAFO survey was done in Oslo.

**Figure 6.4. Proportion that has been exposed to violence or serious threats during the past year, by country of background. Percent**



Source: Living conditions among immigrants 1996 and 1995 Survey of living conditions.

### One out of fourteen exposed to violence or threats

Discrimination of immigrants may also be in the form of physical attack. Altogether one out of 14 (7 percent) of our immigrants reports that he/she has been exposed to violence or serious threats during the past year (figure 6.4). The proportion is greatest among Iranians (20 percent), Somalians (15 percent) and Chileans (13 percent).

On the contrary, 3 percent (or less) persons from Vietnam and Sri Lanka report such events. Among Norwegians of approximately the same age, sex and residence structure as the immigrants, altogether 8 percent say they have been exposed to violence or serious threats during the past year. On average, this means that there are not more immigrants than Norwegians reporting that they have been exposed to violence or threats.

### Immigrants with more resources do not experience more discrimination

It is also interesting to examine whether the same effect pointed out in the FAFO survey could also be proved in ours. That «the tendency to feel discriminated against is greatest among those with a good knowledge of the Norwegian language and high education» (Djuve and Hagen 1995). This was interpreted as expressing that «resourceful persons are to a greater extent than others aware of the social mechanisms affecting them». We cannot find this in our data. Experiences of discrimination in the housing market, at the work place or in the public health service, or exposure to violence or threats, are not significantly

<sup>2</sup> All persons that responded to the question are included as well as persons under training for qualification. As a result, the proportion reporting discrimination at the work place is slightly higher than if persons under training for qualification had been excluded.

related to a person's educational level or proficiency in the Norwegian language. Instead it appears that those who are least privileged in terms of housing and physical work environment, most often report discrimination respectively in the housing market and at the work place. With regard to violence and threats, the youngest (16-24 years) most often report this experience.

### **Six out of ten have a good Norwegian friend**

Having Norwegian friends expresses contact with the Norwegian society. A lack of Norwegian friends may signalise exclusion or isolation. In the FAFO survey, every fourth refugee said they had a Norwegian friend. In our survey, six out of ten immigrants respond that they have a good Norwegian friend. The greatest proportion is among persons with a background from former Yugoslavia (eight out of ten) and lowest among persons from Vietnam and Somalia (about four out of ten). Furthermore, it is easy to find a background factor that is clearly related to chances of having a good Norwegian friend: language skills. The causal direction may, however, work both ways: Proficiency in the Norwegian language makes it easier to establish and maintain friendships with Norwegians at the same time as the friendship itself makes it easier to be better at the language.

### **More lonely persons**

The proportion of lonely persons is all the same greater among immigrants than among Norwegians. More than four out of ten immigrants say that they often or sometimes feel lonely, while barely two out of ten Norwegians are of the same opinion. The proportion of lonely persons is more than 50 percent among Iranians and Somalians. One of the reasons why

immigrants more often say they are more lonely than Norwegians is that they miss their parents and siblings in their home country. They also often live alone as newcomers. For example, more than one-fourth of Iranians and Somalians live alone.

### **Lower organisational participation**

The eight immigrant groups are to a smaller degree than Norwegians, members of organisations. Whereas for instance 49 percent of employed Norwegians are members of a trade union (values weighted), this applies to 36 percent of employed immigrants. The proportion that is a member of athletic associations and associations is 20 percentage points lower among immigrants than among Norwegians. There is however one area where the proportion of organisational members is greater among immigrants than among Norwegians: the religious organisations. Whereas only 6 percent of Norwegians say they are members of a religious organisation, this applies to 26 percent of immigrants. It is clear that Norwegians generally omit mentioning membership in the Church of Norway.

All the same the responses seem to indicate that immigrants that are members of an organisation are often just as active as Norwegians. A greater proportion among the immigrants report that they are «very active» members than among Norwegians, in terms of athletic clubs/associations, youth clubs and residents' associations. The exception here is the members of religious organisations. One-third of Norwegian members of such organisations consider themselves as «very active» members while only slightly more than one out of ten immigrants do so.

**More immigrants use libraries**

Immigrants participate less often than Norwegians in what we consider normal leisure activities. For example, at least eight out of ten Norwegians reported that they had gone for walks or gone skiing in the woods, fields or in the mountains during the past twelve months. This only applies to slightly more than half of the immigrants. Likewise, fewer immigrants have been to a restaurant or café, cinema, dance or discotheque, museum or been exercising or doing some sporting activity. On the other hand there are more immigrants than Norwegians that say they use the library (six versus four out of ten, respectively) or have been to a religious meeting during the past year. A similar tendency was found in 1983 (Støren 1987). The libraries often have newspapers and literature in the mother tongue of the immigrants. The fact that the library service is free should not be underestimated. Likewise, there is a greater proportion of immigrant children that visit the library or participate in religious activities for children than children of non-immigrants.

## 7. Crime \*

An «accused» is a person considered by the prosecuting authority as being guilty after police investigation of the offence. The case may be dropped without instituting criminal proceedings because the accused is not considered to be criminally liable or for other reasons specified by law. The case may also be decided by the accused accepting a fine, i.e. a fine with no sentence. In cases where criminal proceedings are instituted, the accused may be acquitted by the court. An accused person that has come under charges several times during the year, is counted as accused only once, in connection with the most serious offence.

The data is based on the definition «immigrant population» (generally first-generation immigrants without Norwegian background). As a simplification, the word immigrant is used to refer to all persons of the immigrant population in this chapter.

Accused persons that are considered by the police as foreign citizens but are however not registered as residents of Norway, are referred to as «unregistered foreigners» in this chapter.

In crime statistics, the minimum age for registered accused persons is 5 years and in calculations involving relative figures, inhabitants of 5 years and above are included.

### **More immigrants accused**

Out of 68 200 persons accused for one or more offences in 1995, 5 100 or 7.5 percent belonged to the immigrant population. In proportion to the population by the end of 1995, this constitutes 24 accused per 1 000 immigrants in the country. In comparison, the proportionate figure was 16 accused per 1000 of the Norwegian population. In the total population, immigrants raise the rate from 16.1 to 16.5 per 1 000, so the influence of immigrants on crime is almost negligible.

With relation to the population, there was relatively most accused immigrants with a background from the Third World, 33 accused per 1 000 residents. Eastern Europe was next with 26 accused per 1 000, Nordic countries with 15 per 1 000, ie. slightly lower than in the total population and the rest of Western Europe with 11 per 1 000. Among the relatively few immigrants from North

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\*This chapter is based on Haslund (1995). The information is updated. Adjustments and improvements are done by Kåre Vassenden.

**Table 7.1. Accused by country of background. Foreign background applies to the immigrant population. Percent. Number of accused per 1 000. 1995**

	Total	Proportion	Per 1 000
The whole population .....	68 208		17
Norway .....	63 084		16
Foreign countries ...	5 124	100	24
Nordic countries ....	619	12	15
Western Europe .....	323	6	11
Eastern Europe .....	813	16	26
North America and Oceania .....	66	1	7
The Third World ....	3 303	65	33

America and Oceania, only 7 out of 1 000 incurred charges in Norway in 1995.

### **The age configuration among immigrants explains a considerable part of these figures**

Criminal activity varies with age. Youth and young adults violate laws more often than children and older people. Every fifth accused person in 1995 belonged to the age group 15-19 years and almost three-fourths were in the age group 15-39 years. The fact that there are relatively fewer older persons in the immigrant population should explain some of the high frequency of crime among immigrants.

Accused persons aged 20-39 represent over half of all persons accused. 39 percent of the immigrant population belonged to this group versus only 30 percent in the total population. If the age configuration of the immigrant population had been the same as for the total population, the proportion of accused persons would be 22 and not 24 per 1 000.

### **High proportion of males among immigrants could explain higher crime**

Females represented a very small minority among the total number of accused persons and accused immigrants. Almost two-thirds of all accused persons in 1995 were males aged 15-39 years. This is evidently of great significance for crime among immigrants if this population group has an age configuration that is generally different from the rest of the population.

At the turn of the year 1995-96, there was a surplus of men in the immigrant population, in the age group 30-35 years. In the total population however, there was a surplus of men in all age groups up to 55 years.

The surplus of males in the exposed age groups however only partly explains the higher frequency of accused persons among immigrants. When we consider males and females separately we find a higher frequency for both sexes in all age groups among the immigrant population.

The higher frequency can mostly be traced to accused persons from non-Western countries. Nordic immigrants are jointly considered to have about the same level of crime as the total population. For other Western immigrants, the crime rate for both sexes in most age groups is considerably lower than for the total population.

### **Higher crime could be explained by the fact that more immigrants reside in urban areas**

In addition to the sex and age configuration of a population, the residence pattern is also of significance for the scope of crime. More crime is registered in metropolitan areas than in rural areas

and registered crime increases with the degree of urbanisation. Therefore, the higher frequency of registered crime among immigrants has to be seen in the light of the fact that immigrants, more often than the rest of the population, live in densely populated areas. 37 percent of offences reported in 1995 were committed in the four largest cities: Oslo, Bergen, Trondheim and Stavanger. In comparison, 22 percent of the population lived in these cities whereas this applied to 47 percent of the immigrant population

### **Accused immigrants less often prosecuted than other accused persons**

In 1995, we find that cases of accused immigrants were concluded at the prosecution level, i.e. without court trial, slightly more often than accused persons in total. For all offences considered as a whole, the proportion of cases suspended on indictment was 38 percent for accused immigrants and 48 percent for accused persons in total.

Accepted fines were the result of 39 percent of the charges against immigrants and 35 percent of accused persons in total. The remaining cases, 23 percent of the charges against immigrants and 17 percent of total charges were dropped. We find the same tendency if we limit the information to certain types of offences.

We can examine most of the charges until they are concluded by court trial. Court trials of immigrants result more often in acquittal than for accused persons in total, respectively 7 and 5 percent of the cases.

### **Unregistered immigrants**

Crime statistics indicated that an increasing number of foreign citizens are found guilty of crime in Norway. In 1978, when statistics provided information about citizenship for the first time, less than 1 percent of guilty criminals were immigrants. Ten years later, the proportion had increased to 4 percent and after a further seven years in 1995, it was 7 percent.<sup>1</sup>

The increase must be seen in the light of the fact that the proportion of foreign citizens in the population was doubled in the same time period from 2 to 4 percent. The number of asylum seekers staying in Norway increased from a few persons to slightly more than 4 000 early in 1995. Furthermore, there was a considerable increase of tourist visitors, especially at the end of the period.

Statistical information about completed investigation of criminal offences for 1995 contained almost 2 800 accused persons that were foreign citizens according to police information. These persons were however not registered as resident in Norway.

**Table 7.2. Accused unregistered foreigners by citizenship**

Citizenship	Total	Percent
Total .....	2 782	100
Nordic countries .....	1 043	37
Western Europe .....	452	16
Eastern Europe .....	901	32
North America and Oceania	39	1
The Third World .....	266	10
Foreign countries, unspecified .....	81	4

<sup>1</sup> Sturla Falck (1992) has done a more detailed analysis of the statistical information of persons found guilty of crime in 1990.



Almost one-third of the unregistered foreigners was charged for a minor road traffic offence, making it probable that this was partly to do with tourists. Tourists were also probably part of the one-sixth that violated the customs law, where as those who were accused for violating the immigration act and the drugs act, respectively 11 and 9 percent, were not usual tourists. The last third was mainly accused of theft and other crimes committed for personal gain. Unregistered foreigners were seldom charged for violence or sexual offences, and if so, for less grievous offences.

**Karl-Eirik Kval**

## 8. Participation in election and voting

There is reason to expect foreign citizens to have a political pattern of action that is different from that of Norwegians. Most foreign citizens grew up in societies with a political culture very different from what is usual in Norway. This means that duration of stay and nationality, become important background factors influencing their pattern of political action. We would like to examine the differences between nationalities and sexes particularly in terms of election turnout and party voting. One question that is also examined in this article is whether foreign citizens choose other arenas for political activity than the traditional election channel.

All foreign citizens with a minimum of three years residence in Norway have the right to participate in local elections. This system was first practised in 1983. Starting with this election and every election since then, Statistics Norway draws a sample of persons that have been registered with regard to whether they voted or not. At the same time, we use register information to acquire some socio-demographic data for the sample. From the election of 1987, Statistics Norway sent the selected persons questionnaires about which party they voted for, and

why they did not vote if they gave such a response, as well as some other questions. About half of the sample drawn responded to the questionnaire in connection with each election.

In the 1995 election, for the first time Norwegian citizens with a foreign background were included in the sample drawn. Questionnaires were not sent to these persons. However we checked whether they voted or not and furthermore, we were able to acquire some socio-demographic information.

### **Election turnout**

There was a decline in election turnout of foreign citizens between 1983 and 1987. It has remained fairly stable since then. There was a strong decrease in participation interest of all electors between 1983 and 1995. By this we see that in the last three elections, foreign citizens and Norwegians have to a large extent acted differently.

### **Women have a higher election turnout than men**

Election turnout among foreign citizens in the elections of 1987, 1991 and 1995 was 39-40 percent. There was a stronger participation of women than men in

Table 8.1. Election turnout<sup>1</sup>, by sex and citizenship. 1983, 1987, 1991 and 1995

Citizenship	1983			1987			1991			1995		
	F	M	All	F	M	All	F	M	All	F	M	All
All .....	49	44	46	44	36	40	43	36	39	43	35	39
Denmark .....	57	45	52	58	49	53	53	42	47	55	37	46
Finland .....	57	31	47	48	25	37	51	30	43	49	23	39
Iceland .....				:	:	48	58	41	50	48	44	46
Sweden .....	58	46	54	56	41	50	53	36	46	52	38	46
France .....	47	39	43	32	23	27	43	32	37	49	41	44
Italy .....				:	35	42	:	:	21	:	33	34
Yugoslavia .....	33	31	32	20	29	25	28	26	27	17	20	19
Netherlands .....	63	54	58	50	46	48	61	49	55	53	50	52
Poland .....	47	32	42	37	28	33	37	22	30	28	12	22
Portugal .....							44	:	38	:	:	31
Spain .....				:	28	30	:	22	23	26	27	26
United Kingdom .....	52	46	49	48	31	37	36	31	34	49	28	37
Switzerland .....	50	53	51	57	65	61	62	:	59	68	64	66
Turkey .....	29	43	39	18	23	21	34	41	39	34	42	39
Germany <sup>2</sup> .....	60	46	54	55	44	50	53	44	49	51	45	49
Austria .....				:	:	44	:	:	33	:	:	54
Ethiopia .....				:	21	21	19	28	25	21	19	19
Gambia .....				:	:	47	:	29	28	:	29	35
Ghana .....							:	28	25	:	25	25
Morocco .....	28	42	37	22	20	21	31	28	29	21	30	27
Nigeria .....				:	44	46	:	35	29			
Somalia .....							:	24	29	29	32	31
Sri Lanka .....				:	24	27	23	41	37	39	40	40
Philippines .....	38	31	35	38	:	32	29	28	29	31	42	34
India .....	54	59	57	31	30	30	29	26	27	37	37	37
Iraq .....							:	31	30	28	33	32
Iran .....				:	:	35	28	32	31	33	38	36
Japan .....				:	:	42	:	:	41	:	:	35
China .....				:	:	7	:	2	5	23	10	16
Lebanon .....							:	:	22	:	12	19
Pakistan .....	50	65	61	43	47	46	40	48	44	48	48	48
Thailand .....				30	:	31	35	:	34	29	:	29
Vietnam .....	42	49	47	31	26	28	54	41	46	50	42	46
Canada .....				:	29	40	48	32	39	31	24	27
USA .....	28	24	26	28	28	28	37	31	34	34	39	36
Chile .....	57	55	56	53	39	45	43	40	41	41	32	35
Australia .....				31	44	39	:	:	36	:	:	36

<sup>1</sup> Only countries with at least 50 persons in the sample are specified in the table for the year 1983. For the other years, the cells contain figures only if the percentage basis is at least 25 persons. <sup>2</sup> West Germany before 1991.

these elections, with a difference of 7-8 percent. During this period there was a decline in the election turnout of all electors from 70.7 to 62.8 percent. There was little difference between the sexes, varying between a slight predominance in

participation among men in 1983 and a slight predominance among women in 1995.

There are great variations in election turnout between the nationality groups

and the sexes (table 8.1). However, the main feature of the figures in the last rows is stability. This is particularly true for the last three elections in which we have a difference between the sexes and an almost constant election turnout.

The difference in election turnout between the sexes is mainly due to the fact that Western women have about 10 percent higher election turnout than the three other groups (Western men and non-Western men and women).

### **Nationality differences result from underlying conditions**

Foreign citizens with Western backgrounds have an election turnout that is about 5 percent higher than that of non-Western foreign citizens. We also know that those with Western backgrounds have longer duration of stay, are often married and that the proportion of females is higher among Western foreign citizens in relation to the non-Western. The question is whether nationality – distinguished by Western/non-Western – operates as an independent factor contributing to decrease participation. Could it rather be that the contribution of nationality is created by other underlying factors? This has been examined through an analysis in which nationality, duration of stay, sex and civil status are brought in as factors to explain election turnout. In this way, the effect of nationality can be studied while examining the other independent variables. The result of the analysis indicates that the connection between the distinction Western and non-Western foreign citizens and election turnout is more than halved when we check duration of stay, sex and civil status. Moreover, the relation between nationality and election turnout is no longer significant, either at the level of 1 or 5 percent. The conclusion must there-

fore be that these three other independent underlying variables, are mostly responsible for creating the significant difference in election turnout between Western and non-Western foreign citizens.

### **Norwegian citizens with foreign background have higher participation**

Election turnout among those who have become Norwegian citizens is 19 percent higher than among foreign citizens (table 8.2). This difference is slightly greater for men than for women. Yet it is most remarkable that most of the difference between the sexes in election turnout, still remains even when they become Norwegian citizens (when we consider all the nationality groups as a whole).

Generally, Norwegian citizens with a foreign background, have an election turnout that is more similar to that of native Norwegians. However, the table indicates that this depends on nationality. On average, British persons who have become Norwegian citizens have 30 percent higher participation in election than those that are not. For Chileans, there is hardly any difference whether they change citizenship or not. There are also great variations between the nationalities in terms of sex differences. For Thais, there is no difference between the sexes, whereas change in citizenship particularly tips the scales for the British, in such a way as to make a remarkable difference between men and women, 34 percent. In other words, nationality is a very important factor in this context for persons who have become Norwegian citizens.

**Table 8.2. Election turnout<sup>1</sup> among Norwegian citizens with immigrant background<sup>2</sup>, among foreign citizens and the difference between foreign citizens and Norwegian citizens with immigrant background. 1995**

Country of background	Norwegian citizens			Foreign citizens			Difference		
	F	M	All	F	M	All	F	M	All
All .....	60	55	58	43	35	39	17	20	19
Denmark .....	75	74	74	55	37	46	20	37	28
Finland .....	80	:	63	49	23	39	31	:	24
Sweden .....	65	63	64	52	38	46	13	25	18
Yugoslavia .....	32	30	31	17	20	19	15	10	12
Netherlands .....	:	:	63	53	50	52	:	:	11
Poland .....	53	46	50	28	12	22	25	34	28
United Kingdom .....	62	75	67	49	28	37	13	47	30
Turkey .....	52	59	57	34	42	39	18	17	18
Germany .....	56	67	60	51	45	49	5	22	11
Hungary .....	:	48	49						
Morocco .....	:	44	39	21	30	27	:	14	12
Sri Lanka .....	:	:	50	39	40	40	:	:	10
Philippines .....	44	:	42	31	42	34	7		8
India .....	:	56	57	37	37	37	:	19	25
Iran .....	:	34	39	33	38	36	:	- 4	3
Pakistan .....	61	67	65	48	48	48	13	19	17
Vietnam .....	65	57	60	50	42	46	15	15	14
USA .....	53	77	62	34	39	36	19	38	26
Chile .....	:	:	37	41	32	35	:	:	2

<sup>1</sup> The cells contain figures only if the percent basis is at least 25 persons. <sup>2</sup> Persons in the immigrant population.

**Table 8.3. Difference in election turnout dependent on duration of stay for foreign citizens and Norwegian citizens with immigrant background. 1995**

Duration of stay	- 5 year	6-10 year	11-15 year	16-20 year	21-25year	26 + year
Have become Norwegian citizens .....	32	47	45	53	53	69
Foreign citizens .....	29	35	44	46	48	52
Difference in percent ....	3	12	1	7	5	17

### **Duration of stay of most importance for Norwegian citizens with foreign background**

There is a distinct relation between duration of stay and election turnout among persons who have become Norwegian citizens. In comparison, we find that among those that are still foreign

citizens, duration of stay does not have such an effect on election turnout. The difference varies a lot, dependent on the duration of stay of the electors (table 8.3). We find the greatest difference among those who have stayed longest in Norway (17 percentage points).

There is great variation in election turnout by duration of stay, present and previous citizenship. Norwegian citizens with a Western background start with a much higher level of participation than Western foreign citizens (47 percent). The highest election turnout is achieved by Norwegian citizens with a non-Western background and with over 26 years of stay (73 percent). This group also has the greatest difference between highest and lowest participation (28 percentage points).

**Most important reason for not voting: «Did not know what the parties stood for»**

In 1991, the two most important reasons for not casting a vote was either that one did not have the chance to vote or did not know what the parties stood for. These are still the two main reasons why people do not vote. Similar to 1991, the alternative is «I am generally not interested in politics» given as the third most important reason for non-participation. The responses give little reason to claim that political cynicism is what hinders foreign citizens from casting their votes. It is true that some people respond that they are generally not interested in politics (15 percent). On the other hand however, there was a very low proportion that responded that their vote is insignificant, because they do not trust the parties or because they are not interested in local politics.

The television is absolutely the most important source of information on

voting rights among foreign citizens. The next most important sources are other Norwegian media and family or friends. The municipality's Office for Immigrants or the refugee officer is least important here. In terms of sources of information about voting, the differences between the sexes are insignificant.

**Direct political activity**

Besides influencing politics by using the voting slip, there are other possibilities of exercising influence, for example by contacting politicians and government administration, signing appeals and taking part in demonstrations. These forms of activity often stem from particular cases<sup>1</sup>.

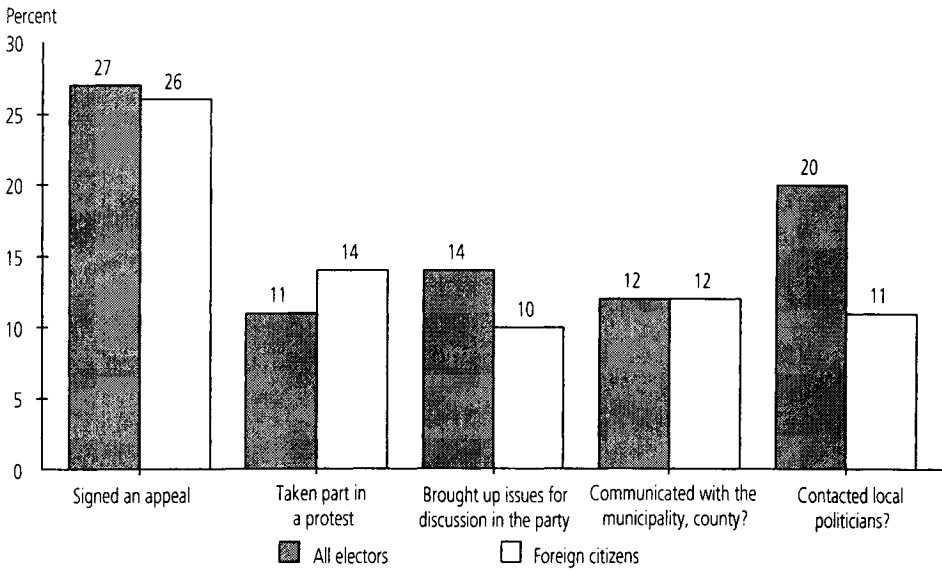
**Direct political activity appears to be quite similar for Norwegians and foreigners**

There are quite great differences between different types of activities in which foreign citizens have participated. Whereas 26 percent signed an appeal, only 10 percent brought up an issue in their political party or trade union (figure 8.1).<sup>2</sup>

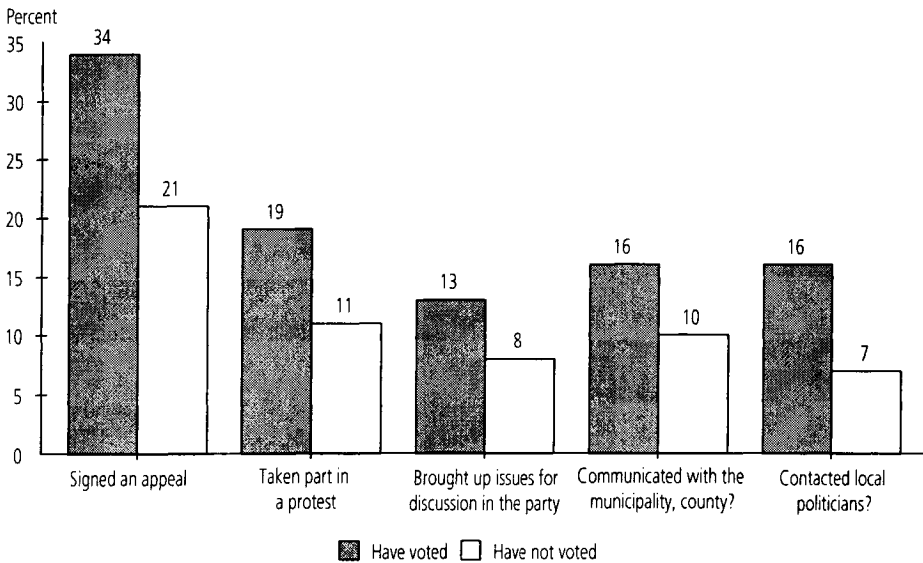
In relation to Norwegians, the question that distinguishes itself with varying response is first and foremost as to whether one contacted local politicians. For the remaining questions, it is remarkable that activity appears to be very similar. In four out of five forms of political activity, foreign citizens participate as frequently as Norwegian citizens in spite of an election turnout

<sup>1</sup> The questions asked refer to whether one tried to influence an issue in the local council during the past four years or the Fylkesting (chief administrative body of a county), by :«signing an appeal, or protest campaign?», «taking part in a protest», protest meeting, demonstration?», «raise an issue for discussion in the political party, trade union or other organisation?», «communicating directly with the municipal or county administration?», «Contacting local politicians?». <sup>2</sup> These questions are also asked in the «Survey of local elections 1995», thereby providing an opportunity to make direct comparisons between the entire electorate and foreign citizens in terms of what we may refer to as direct activity.

**Figure 8.1. Direct political activity among foreign citizens and among all electors. Percent. 1995**



**Figure 8.2. Election turnout and direct activity among foreign citizens. Percent. 1995**



that is lower by 20 percentage points. Not surprisingly, persons who participated in the election have a greater tendency of being more politically active than those that did not vote (figure 8.2). This applies to all forms of direct activity. All the same, perhaps what is most remarkable is that those who did not vote have such high direct participation in proportion to those who chose to cast their vote at the local elections. One may wonder whether these persons have consciously chosen other arenas than election participation, to express their political interest.

**For non-Western immigrants, direct political activity may be an alternative to participation in elections**

One way of measuring the extent of direct participation is to consider the various forms of participation as a whole. An index is constructed whereby non-participation is given the value 0, one form of participation is given the value 1 and so on up to 5. Most persons have not participated in any form of direct action and very few have participated in more than one of these political forms of expression. Compared to Norwegians, the pattern of action is remarkably similar especially when we consider that election turnout among foreign citizens is so low.

The relation between election participation and combined direct participation appears to be very dissimilar for the different groups of foreign citizens, grouped by nationality and sex. Surprisingly, non-Western men and women with more than three forms of direct participation have quite low election turnout. Western women with high direct participation lie above the other groups. This result suggests that it is among non-Western electors that direct

political activity can be considered to be an alternative rather than a supplement to participation in elections.



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