



**ENHANCING INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE**

# The Intercultural Workplace - Norway



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Education and Culture

**Leonardo da Vinci**



MANGFOLD I ARBEIDSLIVET

# Detailed Analysis of the Intercultural Situation in Norway and Case Studies at 7 Workplaces

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AID: Ministry of Labour and Integration

HOD: Ministry of Health and Care

IMDi: Directorate of Integration and Diversity

KD: Ministry of Knowledge (Education and research)

KKD: Ministry of Culture and Church

KS: Organisation of Municipalities

LO: National Labour Organisation

NHO: National Employers Organisation

UDI: Directorate of Immigration

SHD: Directorate of Social and Health Services

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Acculturation** – The modification of the culture of a group or of a single individual as a result of contact with a different culture. (<http://www.answers.com>)

**Asylum Seeker** – often an individual who leaves their own country for their safety, often for political reasons or because of war, and who travels to another country hoping that the government will protect them and allow them to live there: (<http://www.freesearch.co.uk/dictionary/asylum-seeker>). An asylum seeker applies to a State to be recognized as a Convention Refugee under the terms of the Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. Most European countries are signatories of the Geneva Convention. Asylum seekers have the right to remain in such countries while their applications for Refugee Status are being processed, and to continue to live there afterwards, if granted Refugee Status.

**Beneficiary** – a person, institution or other grouping of people that benefits from the actions described in a case. (<http://www.beep-eu.org/>)

**Bilingual** – a person who is competent in two languages

**Case (study)** – the description of and application of methods to a specific situation. A case study must involve one or more objectives and a description of the activities (methods and processes) carried out in pursuit of these objectives. (<http://www.beep-eu.org/>)

**Client** – the party for which services are rendered (e.g. by a research team). (<http://www.answers.com>). In traditional [commerce](#) and in the [marketing](#) and provision of [services](#), a client or customer consumes or benefits from a [product](#) or

service. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/>) Within the remit of the EIW project this can also apply to less traditional examples of a client such as school pupils, for example.

**Convention Refugee** – see Refugee below

**Cross-cultural** – the term cross-cultural is generally used to describe comparative data and studies of a limited number of cultures. For example, when examining attitudes towards work in the US and in Japan, then that is a cross-cultural study. It is sometimes used interchangeably with the “Intercultural” (see Intercultural).

**Cultural diversity** – variety and richness of communities with distinct systems of norms, beliefs, practices, and values. ([http://www.cadi.ph/glossary\\_of\\_terms.htm](http://www.cadi.ph/glossary_of_terms.htm))  
See Ethnic diversity

**Discrimination** – involves formally or informally classifying people into different groups and according the members of each group distinct, and typically unequal, treatments, rights and obligations without a rational justification for the different treatment. If there is rational justification for the different treatment, then the discrimination is not invidious. The criteria delineating the groups, such as gender, race, or class, determine the kind of discrimination. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/>)

**Education sector** – The education sector includes primary, secondary and third-level educational institutions such as colleges and universities which are organized on a regional / national basis or independently such as tuition companies.

**Equal opportunities** – two key elements of the general principle of equal opportunities are the ban on discrimination on grounds of nationality (Article 12 of the EC Treaty, formerly Article 6) and equal pay for men and women (Article 141 of the EC Treaty, formerly Article 119). It is intended to apply to all fields, particularly economic, social, cultural and family life.

The Treaty of Amsterdam added a new Article 13 to the Treaty, reinforcing the principle of non-discrimination, which is closely linked to equal opportunities. Under this new Article, the Council has the power to take appropriate action to combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. Adopted in December 2000, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union includes a chapter entitled "Equality" which sets out the principles of non-discrimination, equality between men and women, and cultural, religious and linguistic diversity. It also covers the rights of the child, the elderly and persons with disabilities. On the subject of non-discrimination, the Charter states that: "Any discrimination based on any ground such as sex, race, color, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation shall be prohibited." (EU glossary of terms)

**Ethnic background** – origin in an ethnic group (see below)

**Ethnic diversity** – diversity of people with different national backgrounds

**Ethnic group** – a group of people who identify with one another, or are so identified by others as a group who believe themselves to have a common historical origin. The



distinguishing features of the group may take any of a number of forms -- racial, cultural, linguistic, and religious -- and may be more or less porous. Because of these features, members of an ethnic group are often presumed to be culturally or biologically similar, although this is not in fact necessarily the case.

(<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/>)

**Foreigner** – a person born in or coming from a foreign country (OED)

**Good practice** – the use of a method, tool, technology etc. which is generally regarded as 'practices which are good (e.g. for learning)', i.e. practices which either achieve their own objectives and/or have a beneficial impact on their environment, or (and more important) provide useful learning experiences which are likely to stimulate creativity, ingenuity and self reflexivity on the part of the user. Contrast with best practice that has been shown to be the 'best' in a given situation as a result of benchmarking and other analyses. (<http://www.beep-eu.org/>).

**Immigrant** – a person who comes as a permanent or long-term resident to a country and intends to reside permanently, and not as a casual visitor or traveler.

(<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/>)

**Intercultural** – the term intercultural is sometimes used synonymously to “cross-cultural” (see above) to describe comparative data and studies of a large number of cultures, or studies that try to identify dimensions that are not culture specific. For example Hofstede's work is crosscultural, as it describes cultural dimensions applicable for all cultures. Intercultural is also used to describe interactional data arising in a situation where members of different cultural backgrounds.

**Intercultural communication** – communication between persons who have different cultural backgrounds.

**Intercultural communication education** – includes learning about different cultures, both culture general and culture specific information. The focus is not so much on habits and religious customs, but rather on cultural similarities and differences in communication patterns, including body language; as well as in attitudes, values and norms in areas such as relation to authority and showing respect and politeness; time orientation; gender roles; collectivism and individualism.

**Intercultural company** – an enterprise that employs people from different nationalities, cultures and/or racial backgrounds.

**Intercultural workplace** – a working environment in which people of different nationalities, cultures and racial backgrounds are employed. Also a work environment that deals with clients/customers from different cultures.

**International worker** – a term used by some organisations to refer to workers from minority ethnic communities, who have come from overseas to work in the country. This term is by some considered more interculturally sensitive than other terms such as terms 'non-national' or 'foreign national'.

**Institutional racism** – the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. (Lawrence Inquiry committee investigation of London Metropolitan Police)

**Life-long learning** – continuous acquirement of knowledge, skills and competencies (in an environment of constant change).

**Migrant Worker** – an economic migrant is a person who voluntarily leaves his or her country of origin (often for economic reasons). (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/>)

**Minority** – a group within a country that differs in culture, ethnicity, race, religion or national origin from the larger part of the population.

**Mother tongue** – usually the first language(s) acquired as a child or sometimes the language of the mother of the child

**Multinational** – a business organization which operates in many countries

**Multiculturalism** – Multiculturalism or cultural pluralism is a policy, ideal, or reality that emphasizes the unique characteristics of different cultures in the world, especially as they relate to one another in [immigrant](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/) receiving nations. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/>)

**Non-national** – a person who is not a citizen of the country they are residing in on a short or long-term basis. This term is commonly considered inappropriate nowadays, being both inaccurate and interculturally insensitive in implying a person has ‘no nationality’ – they are just nationals of a different country. The terms ‘foreign national’ or ‘international worker’ are considered preferable.

**On-job training** – the process of being taught a specific skill in the workplace

**Participant observation** – a research method where the researcher is both an observer of and a participant in a given communicative event such as a transaction in a retail shop. The observations can be made more or less systematically depending on the purpose of the study at hand.

**Prejudice** – false and negative belief about something (often people or groups of people)

**Private sector** - the part of the economy not under direct state control (OED)

**Public sector** – The Public Sector is the part of the economy concerned with providing basic government services. In most countries the public sector includes such services as the police, military, public roads, public transit, primary education and healthcare for the poor. The public sector might provide services that non-payers cannot be excluded from (such as street lighting), services which benefit all of society rather than just the individual who uses the service (such as public education), and services that encourage equal opportunity.

The Public Sector is made up of national government, local governments, government-owned or controlled corporations and government monetary institutions. Local, state, and federal government agencies and services, such as schools and libraries.

**Racism** – any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, color, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life. [http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/d\\_icerd.htm](http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/d_icerd.htm)

**Refugee** – The 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees defines a refugee as a person who is outside the country of his/her nationality and unable or unwilling to return to it, "owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion." (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights [www.unhcr.org](http://www.unhcr.org))

A person who, "owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it". (Article 1 of the Geneva Convention, 1951)

**Social capital** – possession of socially or socio-economically relevant immaterial resources (e.g. social networks, social skills with regard to creating social contacts, education or training in organizing and managing social/socio-economical groupings etc)

**SME (Small to Medium Size Enterprise)** – enterprises with less than 250 employees and a turnover of less than 40 million Euro. Divided into micro enterprises (less than 10 employees), small size (11-50 employees) and medium (51-250). (<http://www.beep-eu.org/>)

**Social inclusion** – inclusion in a social group – a policy of social inclusion could mean commitment to an ethos of fairness and equality within a given society. [www.inspire.edin.org/pages/glossary.htm](http://www.inspire.edin.org/pages/glossary.htm)

**Social justice** – right of all individuals and groups of individuals to equity, fairness and equality. ([http://www.cadi.ph/glossary\\_of\\_terms.htm](http://www.cadi.ph/glossary_of_terms.htm))

**Social partner** – a term used by the European Commission for employer and employee organizations who engage with the Commission in a dialogue with a view to developing a common approach to EU economic and social policies. It encompasses Trade Unions, Trade Associations, Chamber of Commerce, and (peripherally) Professional Associations. (<http://www.beep-eu.org/>)

**Sojourner** – a temporary resident; a person who stays for a short period of time in one place

**Study** – an analytical piece of work that may include surveys or analysis of a group of case studies. It is a more general concept than case study which is a study of a particular situation. (<http://www.beep-eu.org/>)

**Workplace education** – education in the workplace – e.g. systematic instruction to furnish or acquire further knowledge about the working environment and ways in which to apply good practice.

For other terms used in this report see:

<http://odin.dep.no/krd/english/doc/stort/016101-120002/dok-bn.html>

## **INTRODUCTION**

European workplaces are experiencing major transformation. Economic and political changes in Europe over the past decades have resulted in a vast increase in the cultural diversity of those living, working and being educated within its borders. The expansion of the EU coupled with labour shortages in many parts of the continent have brought about a steady increase in mobility both within and from outside the EEA. This trend is likely to continue and expand, as workplaces grow into microcosms of a culturally diverse society.

Cultural diversity is fast becoming the norm in most areas of life in Europe. Even for those with little interest in foreign cultures or in mixing with others culturally different from themselves, many everyday situations now necessitate intercultural interactions, whether in the workplace, public services or educational institutions. In this new

context, people at all levels of the workforce – managers, employees, customers – from host and migrant communities, find themselves in new roles with new challenges for which they have not necessarily been prepared or trained to deal with. Such interactions require a new mindset and a repertoire of skills beyond what was adequate for interaction within one's own cultural group. Organisations often need to re-think existing policies and procedures, in order to better meet the needs of and benefit from the opportunities offered by a new culturally diverse workforce. Questions of equality and racism, identity and values assume a new importance and urgency, as intercultural communicative competence becomes a vital priority in all areas of life.

So, how well are workplaces in Europe responding to this new reality? How similar are the challenges and opportunities presented in different sectors and states? What pitfalls to be avoided and examples of good practice can be shared between EU countries? What intercultural training needs exist and how best can these be addressed? These are some of the key questions that inspired the development of the *European Intercultural Workplace (EIW)* Project (2004-7). Originally conceptualised in DCU, Ireland, *EIW* was developed and expanded through a network of 10 European partners, and its implementation was made possible by funding granted by the EU Leonardo da Vinci Programme. A core outcome of the project is the establishment of an overview of work practice across Europe based on national situational analyses and workplace case studies. The identification of intercultural training needs and good practice responses will inform the production of effective intercultural training materials to a common European standard.

The *European Intercultural Workplace (EIW)* partnership draws together 10 institutions from northern and southern Europe, established EU members and more recent Member States, countries with a long experience of integrating foreigners into the workforce and others for whom this is a new situation. This complexity allows us to have a wide-ranging, experienced and fresh perspective on the issues involved.

The current publication is divided into two parts: (1) A National Situational Analysis and (2) Case Studies. The Situation Analysis examines the current intercultural workplace in Norway, investigating issues such as the history of immigration, areas

where immigrants are most likely to be employed, the status of asylum seekers and refugees, as well as government, business and civic responses to these changes. The Case Studies are designed to assess the situation and conditions on the ground. In Norway we have examined the areas of nursing and care, primary and secondary education, construction, transport, and production. We endeavoured to consider workplace issues from the perspective of Management, Employees and Customers.

The primary aim of this report is to identify examples of good practice and make recommendations that will assist policy makers and practitioners in their attempts to create a harmonious intercultural workplace and foster a culture of learning. It also aims to provide information for workers intending to move to Norway and Norwegian employers in need of foreign labour of the policies and steps that need to be taken for an easier and more effective process of integration into the workplace.

This report is by no means exhaustive; in the inevitable selection process we faced constraints that will have left a lot of relevant material unearthed. The EIW Project partners would like to hear feedback from you, the reader and final user, on the information presented. Please visit the European Intercultural Workplace website for further discussions and consultations ([www.eiworkplace.net](http://www.eiworkplace.net)).

## **PART 1: SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS**

### **1. GENERAL BACKGROUND - NORWEGIAN CONTEXT**

This analysis of the intercultural situation in Norway and case studies at 8 workplaces in Oslo give a glimpse of the situation at intercultural workplaces in Norway. Stiftelsen Mangfold i Arbeidslivet (MiA), The Foundation Diversity at Work, is a non-profit organisation whose aim is to actively promote diversity in the Norwegian labour market. MiA develops measures for private and public business in order to advance equal opportunities for all employees. Which we believe is a necessary condition in order to profit from diversity in a constructive manner. Amongst other activities we offer a benchmarking diversity tool to both private and public organizations, we do conflict management training, managing diversity training, language and vocational training in private and public firms and we give advice on recruitment and qualification based on diversity. The foundations activities dates back 16 years, trough different projects, but was first formally founded in 1999.

Some of our projects and measures originate from research done in the years previous of the founding. Most of our research is documented in published reports, books, articles and papers on many issues on ethnic diversity and intercultural activities, but mainly published in Norwegian. In 2000 MiA managed a 3-year LdV pilot project called “Improving Economic and Social Integration of Pakistani Immigrant Women in Health, Nursing and Care”, with partners from Norway, UK and Denmark. Later, from 2001 until 2004, we participated as partners in another LdV pilot project called “Improving Immigrants’ Access to Language and Society”, with partners from Finland, Germany, France and Greece.

## **1.1 The Context of Cultural Diversity in Norway**

### **1.1.1 The context of immigration**

Before the beginning of modern immigration in the 1970's, Norway had experienced small scale immigration, basically connected to its long standing tradition of trade and shipping. Although it would be only fair to say that its experience with emigration is rather larger, as almost 1 million people left for North-America in the last part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Norway, as a small country in the far-flung north, has a long history of being subordinated by neighbouring greater powers. The country was a Danish colony for about 500 years, and as a consequence of the power politics in Europe, it briefly gained independence in 1814, a period the elites used effectively, as they designed an own constitution and installed a parliament. The same year though, due to the settlement after the Napoleon wars, Norway was handed over to the Swedish monarchy. A situation that lasted until 1905, when after goodwill from the Swedes, a referendum tilted in favour of renouncing the union with Sweden, and Norway became an independent monarchy. Ultimately, during the Second World War (1940 – 45), Norway was occupied by Nazi-Germany, which provided the last puzzle of which to build Norway's national, ethnic identity. This history of subordination has created a strong national identity with an emphasis on the development of an own Norwegian language and building of welfare state and democratic institutions. At the same time the Norwegian language, basic ethnic tradition and social identity are nearly identical with the other Scandinavian countries, and there has been a free float of immigration and relations within the Nordic countries. From 1933 and particularly after 1945, the political development has, similar to Sweden and Denmark, mainly been ruled by a social democratic movement (the labour party), and the labour unions have had a strong influence on the political development.

### **1.1.2 The beginning of modern immigration**

Norway has traditionally been a poor rural country compared with other North European countries, but experienced a decent industrial and economical



development after the 2. world war, with good help from the Marshall plan of the USA. The real turning point for Norwegian economic development came however in the beginning of the 1970's when the detection of oil led to a rapid economic growth in the subsequent decades.

The history of the current immigrant situation in Norway started in the end of the sixties. Like in many other European countries, the rapid industrial development led to a need for unskilled labour, and Norway imported a number of labour migrants mainly from Pakistan, Turkey and North Africa. Later, in the late seventies and early eighties Norway received an amount of refugees primarily from Chile, Palestine and Vietnam. In the nineties the refugees came essentially from Iran, Iraq (both Kurds and Arabs), the Balkans and Somalia. Since 2000, most of the refugees have come from Somalia, Afghanistan and Iraq.

### **Table 1 Refugees**

Refugees, by country background.  
1 January 2005

<b>Country</b>	<b>1 January 2005</b>
Total	107 208
Iraq	14 335
Bosnia-Herzegovina	12 073
Somalia	11 534
Iran	10 628
Vietnam	10 577
Serbia and Montenegro	7 953
Sri Lanka	5 733
Afghanistan	4 715
Chile	4 643
Russia	2 504
Turkey	2 102
Croatia	1 821
Ethiopia	1 815
Eritrea	1 321
Pakistan	1 214
Poland	961
Rest	13 279

### 1.1.3 The statistics of immigration in Norway

The Norwegian society is in constant change with an immigration population of 8,3%, or 387 000 of a total population of 4.5 million. Note that all figures in this report are from 2006, unless it says otherwise. 319 000 are first generation, and 68 000 are second generation (born in Norway with two foreign-born parents). Note therefore that the statistics define the immigrant population as first and second generation immigrants and refugees. As much as 48 % of the immigrants live in the metropolitan area of the capital Oslo. This means that 23 % of the population in Oslo are defined as immigrants.

**Table 2**

The 15 largest immigrant groups

	1 January 2001		1 January 2006
1	Pakistan 23 581	Pakistan	27 675
2	Sweden 23 010	Sweden	23 489
3	Denmark 19 049	Iraq	20 076
4	Vietnam 15 880	Denmark	19 179
5	Yugoslavia 15 469	Vietnam	18 333
6	Bosnia-Herzegovina 12 944	Somalia	18 015
7	Iraq 12 357	Bosnia-Herzegovina	14 822
8	Iran 11 016	Iran	14 362
9	Turkey 10 990	Turkey	14 084
10	United Kingdom 10 925	Serbia and Montenegro	12 905
11	Sri Lanka 10 335	Germany	12 900
12	Somalia 10 107	Sri Lanka	12 560
13	Germany 9 448	Poland	11 864
14	USA 7 253	United Kingdom	11 031
15	Finland 6 776	Russia	10 351

Table 2 above, does not show the whole picture, but still we can see sign that show that approximately 66 % of the immigrant population comes from Africa, Asia, Eastern-Europe and Latin America. In absolute numbers, people with Asian background (Turkey included) had the largest population growth in 2005, with 8 500, followed by Eastern Europeans (6 800). In per cent, the increase was largest among Eastern Europeans (11.1 per cent) and Africans (8.4 per cent).

People with immigrant background from Poland had the largest population increase in 2005 with 2 900, followed by Iraqis (1 700), Russians (1 350), Somalis (1 200) and Germans (1 000). Among Iraqis and Somalis both the birth surplus and the

immigration surplus were large, while among those with Polish, Russian and German background the population increase was mainly due to a large immigration surplus. The population growth among people with Polish immigrant background was 33 per cent last year.

### 6.1 % of the population are from “the South”

A total of 285 300 persons in Norway had per 1.1.2006 immigrant background from a Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe and Latin America, which to 6.1 per cent of the total population. Persons with western immigrant background counted for 2.2 per cent of the total population. Five years ago, at the beginning of 2001, the total immigrant population counted for 6.6.per cent of Norway's population - 2.1 per cent had western background and 4.5 per cent had non-western background.

Almost half of those with Pakistani immigrant background are born in Norway Among the largest immigrant groups, Pakistanis is that immigrant group with the highest ratio of persons born in Norway with 45 per cent. Among people with background from Morocco, India, Sri Lanka, Turkey and Vietnam the proportion is more than 30 per cent. Among Thais, Americans and Swedes the proportion is less than five per cent. These differences are mainly explained by differences in length of residency in Norway, but also by the different group's marital patterns.

**Table 3 Employed from age, origin and generation**

	All	16-24	25-39	40-54	55-74
The whole population	69,4	59,5	79,7	82,1	48,6
1. generation immigrants	55,6	42,8	59,4	64,2	41,3
Nordic countries	71,5	66,9	80,7	80,6	50,5
West-Europe	66,8	39,9	73,9	77,8	51,4
New EU countries East-Europe	61,0	46,6	65,2	72,0	45,7
Other East-Europe	53,9	46,4	60,6	61,6	23,5
North-America o& Oceania	54,5	26,4	60,2	69,1	37,5
Asia1	48,6	40,1	52,4	54,4	26,1
Africa	40,3	29,7	43,3	46,1	27,2
South & Central America	56,9	43,6	58,2	66,1	43,5
Born in Norway by foreign born parents	57,9	49,6	70,9	78,8	59,8

	All	16-24	25-39	40-54	55-74
Nordic countries	74,0	60,6	79,9	80,9	45,5
West-Europe	69,0	50,0	77,6	77,4	76,3
New EU countries East-Europe	67,3	49,8	71,4	80,1	72,7
Other East-Europe	69,6	64,3	74,3	71,7	100,0
North-America o& Oceania	65,8	45,1	80,0	75,4	50,0
Asia1	51,9	48,3	65,3	75,0	100,0
Africa	52,1	51,2	57,3	50,0	-
South & Central America	42,7	37,9	64,7	-	50,0

	Absolute numbers				
The whole population	2 260 000	294 011	793 309	769 853	402 827
1. generation immigrants	140 727	15 869	61 652	47 383	15 823
Nordic countries	32 256	2 632	12 828	10 783	6 013
West-Europe	19 895	649	7 255	7 547	4 444
New EU countries East-Europe	6 357	739	2 446	2 326	846
Other East-Europe	16 888	2 973	7 529	5 587	799
North-America o& Oceania	4 007	138	1 380	1 719	770
Asia1	44 583	6 400	21 945	14 174	2 064
Africa	10 735	1 587	5 820	2 931	397
South & Central America	6 006	751	2 449	2 316	490
1. generation immigrants	7 100	3 886	2 285	850	79
Nordic countries	1 101	231	473	372	25
West-Europe	759	170	375	185	29
New EU countries East-Europe	478	115	162	193	8
Other East-Europe	416	182	191	38	5
North-America o& Oceania	123	23	44	46	10
Asia1	3 665	2 709	940	15	1
Africa	441	373	67	1	-
South & Central America	117	83	33	-	1

#### 1.1.4 The need for workforce

In the last 5 years the issue of the future need for manpower in the Norwegian economy has gradually gained public consciousness. This is hardly a unique situation for Norway, as many western European countries are in the same demographical situation where the balance between the working population and the elderly will increasingly shift in a negative direction. This negative trend is of course exacerbated by the consistently low fertility rates of the western countries. This situation will progressively enhance the need for labour migrants to help sustain the current level of welfare and economic development in these countries. At the same time, the labour market will be more unstable, causing periodically high levels of

unemployment, and there is much evidence that this, will also in the future affect immigrants more than the native population.

**Table 4**

Employees aged 16-74 years by region of birth and selected groups of industry. 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2001. All figures are in per cent.

Industry	Employees, total	Employees who are first generation immigrants							
		Total	Nordic countries	W. Eur	East Eur	N.America & Oceania	Asia <sup>1</sup>	Africa	S. & C. America
Total, including unspecified	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	1.3	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.9	1.1	0.9	0.4	0.5
Extraction of crude petroleum and natural gas	1.4	1.3	1.0	4.3	0.3	6.0	0.6	0.5	0.8
Manufacturing and mining	14.0	14.0	12.0	13.0	18.0	10.0	16.0	11.0	16.0
Of which									
Manufacture of food products, beverages and tobacco products	2.7	4.5	3.1	2.1	5.0	1.4	6.8	4.1	4.1
Publishing, printing and reproduction of recorded media	1.4	1.2	1.1	1.1	0.9	1.1	1.4	1.8	1.1
Manufacture of basic metals and fabricated metal products	1.7	1.4	1.2	1.4	2.2	0.7	1.4	0.6	2.6
Manufacture of motor vehicles and transport equipment	1.9	2.1	1.9	2.5	2.3	1.8	1.7	1.3	4.2
Electricity, gas and water supply	0.8	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.1
CONSTRUCTION	6.5	4.0	7.1	3.4	4.7	2.7	2.2	2.5	3.6
WHOLESALE AND RETAIL TRADE; HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS	18.0	21.0	19.0	16.0	20.0	13.0	27.0	19.0	18.0
Sale, maintenance and repair of motor vehicles	2.5	1.4	1.4	1.3	1.9	0.7	1.4	1.1	1.0
Wholesale trade and commission trade	5.1	4.0	5.0	5.2	3.6	5.3	3.4	2.6	2.0
Retail trade and repair of personal and household goods	7.7	5.9	6.7	3.2	7.0	2.9	6.7	4.4	4.4
Hotels and restaurants	3.2	9.7	6.2	6.4	7.7	3.7	15.0	11.0	11.0

Industry	Employees, total	Employees who are first generation immigrants							
		Total	Nordic countries	W. Eur	East Eur	N.America & Oceania	Asia <sup>1</sup>	Africa	S. & C. America
TRANSPORT, STORAGE AND COMMUNICATION	7.4	6.5	5.8	5.3	4.9	5.7	8.2	8.5	4.8
FINANCIAL INTERMEDIATION	2.3	0.9	1.4	1.3	0.6	2.1	0.5	0.3	0.6
REAL ESTATE, RENTING AND BUSINESS ACTIVITIES	10.0	14.0	11.0	15.0	13.0	19.0	14.0	19.0	17.0
Real estate activities	0.9	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.7
Renting of Machinery and equipment	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.2
Computer and related activities	1.8	1.8	2.3	2.9	1.3	4.6	1.1	0.9	1.2
Research and development	0.5	0.9	0.9	2.0	0.7	3.1	0.5	0.4	0.6
Other business activities	6.5	10.4	6.8	9.1	10.0	10.4	11.7	16.8	14.3
Of which									
Labour recruitment and provision of personnel	1.3	1.8	1.7	1.1	1.5	1.4	1.8	3.4	2.2
Industrial cleaning	0.9	4.7	0.9	1.0	5.5	0.7	7.1	11.0	9.0
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND SERVICE	37.0	37.0	41.0	40.0	37.0	40.0	31.0	39.0	39.0
Public administration and defence; Compulsory social security	7.2	4.1	3.6	3.4	5.0	3.4	4.2	4.9	4.5
Education	8.7	8.3	7.6	13.0	8.8	18.0	6.0	6.9	7.2
Health and social work	18.0	21.0	25.0	18.0	18.0	13.0	18.0	24.0	24.0
Recreational, cultural and sporting activities	1.4	1.5	2.0	2.1	2.0	3.1	0.7	0.8	1.0
UNSPECIFIED	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.1

### **1.1.5 Unstable labour market**

On the other hand, changes in the labour market with more short-time contractual work, part time employment and project employment are evident. There will be less job security, fewer long term positions and income security for most of the unskilled workforce. These developments will affect immigrant workers much harder than the ethnic Norwegians. Much qualitative material exists on this area but there is a decided lack of quantitative studies.

A paper by Rolf Ohlson, University of Lund, Sweden, "The Age Shock - in Hunt for the European Children" (1990), claims that there it is not the specialisation and automation, but the multi-competence that is in question, and that it is not going to be possible to insert low paid unskilled immigrants into this new paradigm. Instead he advocates language and vocational training to make immigrants a more flexible workforce with higher communicative and professional competence to cope with the continuing changes in corporations.

Jon Rogstad's book "Last amongst Equals" (2001), considers the same challenges in Norway. Some of the problems are in contrast to the visions in the report he compiled with Anne Britt Djuve, "Immigrants – the Future Oil", where they discuss the contradiction between the need for immigrant labour and the problems associated with the lack of the skills needed.

There have been campaigns such as 'Et fargerikt fellesskap' (a Colourful Community) which have presented immigration as profitable, and the Swedish "Without the Immigrants Sweden Will Stop". The need for immigrants is obvious, but there is a gap between this understanding and the political will and governmental investment. The discussion has instead been directed to the short term needs of labour and solving the immediate crisis in select areas.

Kåre Vassenden wrote in an article in the magazine of Norway's Central Bureau of Statistics (SSB) 2/2001 that in 2000, 36,500 people immigrated to Norway while 26,600 emigrated, which gives a net immigration figure of about 10,000. This accounts for only 0.25% of the population, and, he argues, we have therefore no reason to focus on this as a big problem. The problem is however, that immigrants as



a group are facing high unemployment and problems with their social integration that in combination, lead to poverty.

### **1.1.6 The need for migrant workers**

Immigrants and refugees are proved by Government documentations and research to be a necessary resource for the Norwegian labour market. They are necessary due to both the demographic situation and a need for labour force to continue the development of the productivity of the Norwegian society. Labour immigrants and refugees have throughout the last two decades been described in the media and in political discussions as large problems for the Norwegian society. This may seem strange when the numbers of immigrants are not more than 8,3 percent (or 6,1 percent with none western backgrounds) of the Norwegian population, and that the immigrants who are considered as a problem are probably less than 2 % and are mainly refugees and family reunion that have come legally. There has been a need for import of skilled and unskilled labour both presently and in the future (except for a few years with a higher unemployment rate in the beginning of this decade). Today there is a need for the import of skilled manpower in various jobs. Besides, the present population growth in Norway will give a decreasing rate of people of productive age compared with the increasing number of pensioners. There is a low birth rate, young people take more education before they start working, the average age is getting higher while the retirement age is getting lower, and there are fewer human resources inside the country that will hand over work power caused by structural changes. Statistics used in the publication by the Department of Immigration "Need of Workforce and Recruitment from foreign Countries" (1999) and The Action Plan to Combat Racism and Discrimination (2002-2006) from the Ministry of Work and Local Government, estimates that within a couple of decades there will be a need for immigrants to keep the balance between people of working and non-working age. To cut this argument short as it does not consider the changes of the work situation within the Nordic countries and Europe (an open working marked, more countries entering the EU etc.) and a possible changes in the Norwegian immigration policy, there will nevertheless probably be a need of immigration of gainfully employed people with little or no knowledge of the Norwegian language and in need of particular skills directed to an employment situation in Norway.

Based on its findings, MiA has stressed to the Ministry of Social Affairs that ethnic and national minorities as a group are highly poverty-prone. They have a high number of unemployed, are exposed to social exclusion and lack adaptability to Norwegian society. This is moreover clearly echoed in a Parliamentary report Action Plan Against Poverty, St.m.nr.6 2002-03 which says: "With poverty we understand that people have such low income, in combination with the necessary high expenses of illness, disability, and that over a protracted period of time do not have access to the basic materials of welfare. The main indicator, income is defined as low when less than 50 % of the average income over a period of three years." Such a definition raises the distinct possibility that on any day there will be a given number of individuals from national and ethnic minorities who are poor, and there is every indication that the number will increase in the future.

In the necessity of migrant workers within several fields and trades in the Norwegian working life is not only due to the demographic situation, but the current period of strong economic expansion are forcing a need for import of foreign workers. After Poland and the Baltic countries joined the EU, particularly Polish workers in building and construction were attracted by high salaries for skilled and unskilled workers. As Poland now has joined the inner labour market in EU, these workers can easily get work permits in Norway. Due to several reasons more thoroughly described in the case study with the Labour Union for Building and Construction Workers (Case Study 5) and a translated Appendix, many Polish workers work with comparatively low wages and bad working conditions in Norway.

#### **1.1.6 Non-national/multinational companies.**

There are no known statistics on non-national/multinational companies in Norway. Briefly we may however recognise that many companies in the private sector in Norway are connected to or partly owned by international companies. The majority of Norwegian employees are employed in public sectors (education, health, social institutions etc. and public owned companies as public transport, electricity and water supply, mending of roads and streets etc.). The biggest Norwegian oil companies are mainly public owned (Statoil) or partly owned by the state and international investors (Hydro). Privately owned national companies are mainly within agriculture, fishery, forestry, shipping, food stuff production, tourist industry. Within trade and commerce,

culture distribution, foodstuff distribution, hotels etc. there is often a mix of national and multinational ownership as retail chains, music and film producers, import of food products, hotel chains are mostly international owned. Small and medium stores and three food store chains, theatres and concert halls, distribution of dairy products produced in Norway, small hotels are owned by national owners. Car retailers are mostly Norwegian owned. Petrol stations are both national (Statoil and partly Hydro) and international (Esso, Shell etc).

### 1.1.7 Statistics of non-national/minority managers/employees

Available statistics on non-national employees by trades are only available from 2001, but give a picture of the distribution of immigrants in different trades and professions:

**Table 5 Employed by origin and trades, 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2001**

Trade	Employed	Employed by national origin					
		1st generation			Born in Norway by foreign born parents <sup>1</sup>		
		All	Western <sup>1</sup>	non-west	All	Western <sup>2</sup>	non-west
All	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
Agriculture, forestry, fishing	3,8	1,4	1,7	1,2	1,0	1,4	0,9
Production of oil and gas	1,3	1,2	2,2	0,4	0,4	0,8	0,2
Industry and mining	12,1	12,0	10,7	12,9	7,5	8,9	7,0
From this							
Food stuff industry	2,4	4,1	2,4	5,2	2,1	1,1	2,4
Metal production	1,4	1,1	1,0	1,2	0,5	0,8	0,4
Transport industry	1,5	1,4	1,7	1,2	0,4	1,1	0,2
Power and water supply	0,7	0,2	0,2	0,1	0,1	0,2	0,1
Building and construction	6,6	4,2	6,5	2,8	3,6	5,2	3,0
Retail, hotel, restaurants	18,5	21,8	17,4	24,6	35,9	22,7	40,9
From this							
Agency and wholesale	4,7	3,7	4,6	3,1	4,2	6,0	3,5
Detail sales and repair	8,0	6,6	5,5	7,4	19,2	8,9	23,2
Hotels- and restaurants	3,4	10,0	6,0	12,6	9,0	4,9	10,6
Transport and communication	7,0	6,5	5,2	7,4	10,0	7,6	10,9
Financial service	2,0	0,7	1,2	0,4	1,2	1,5	1,1
Service sales	10,0	13,1	12,9	13,2	13,2	15,1	12,4
From this							
Cleaning and renovation	0,8	4,3	1,0	6,6	1,9	1,2	2,1
Public services	37,5	37,5	40,5	35,4	26,4	35,8	22,7
From this							
Public administration, defence and social etc	7,4	4,6	3,8	5,1	6,0	6,2	5,9
Education	7,8	7,2	9,2	6,0	3,8	6,7	2,6
Health- & social services	18,3	21,3	22,3	20,6	12,8	17,8	10,8
Cultural services, sports etc. sport	1,6	1,8	2,6	1,2	1,7	3,0	1,2
Others	0,6	1,5	1,4	1,6	0,8	0,9	0,7

### Employees after profession and origine<sup>1</sup>, 4. quarter 2003

	All employees	All immigrants	Western	Non-west
All	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
1 Leaders/managers	8,8	5,0	9,4	2,1
2 Academic	10,1	10,5	17,3	6,0
3 College professions	18,0	12,2	19,4	7,6
4 Office	10,8	9,4	8,8	9,7
5 Sales- & service	20,7	21,5	18,5	23,4
6 Farmers, fishers etc.	1,1	0,7	0,8	0,6
7 Craftsmen	12,3	10,1	12,5	8,5
8 Operators, chauffeurs etc	11,3	12,4	7,6	15,6
9 Other trades	6,7	18,2	5,7	26,4
	Absolute figures			
All	1 280 473	78 817	31 163	47 654
1 Leaders/managers	112 531	3 933	2 920	1 013
2 Academic	129 718	8 247	5 381	2 866
3 College professions	231 009	9 640	6 036	3 604
4 Office	138 768	7 374	2 741	4 633
5 Sales & service	265 250	16 946	5 777	11 169
6 Farmers, fishers etc.	14 100	561	252	309
7 Craftsmen	158 110	7 972	3 908	4 064
8 Operators, chauffeurs etc	144 835	9 777	2 364	7 413
9 Other trades	86 152	14 367	1 784	12 583

The registered unemployment rate among immigrants decreased by 1.8 percentage points, from 10.0 per cent to 8.2 per cent from February 2005 to February 2006. In the rest of the population the registered unemployment fell from 3.4 to 2.6 per cent.

In these statistics, immigrants are defined as first-generation immigrants, i.e. people born abroad by foreign-born parents. They must also be registered as settled in Norway for at least six months. The figures are based on the Directorate of Labour's register of job seekers and are calculated as a fraction of the labour force. 14 384 immigrants were registered unemployed, which were 2 200 fewer than last year.

Measured in percentage points the decline in the unemployment rate has been stronger among immigrants than among the rest of the population. The relative decline was, however, strongest among the non-immigrants, since the level of unemployment was much lower. Within the immigrant groups the non-western had the strongest decline in percentage points, slight above two percentage points in each group. But the relative decline was, however, stronger within the western groups.

**Table 6**

Registered unemployed by immigrant background, region of birth and sex. In absolute figures and in per cent of the labour force. By the end of February 2005 and 2006

	February 2005			February 2006		
	In total	Males	Females	In total	Males	Females
Registered unemployed, total	91 107	52 369	38 738	71 763	39 572	32 191
Non-immigrants and descendants <sup>1</sup>	74 502	42 802	31 700	57 379	31 623	25 756
First generation immigrants, total	16 605	9 567	7 038	14 384	7 949	6 435
The Nordic countries	1 486	891	595	1 085	600	485
Western Europe else	995	686	309	727	473	254
New EU countries in Eastern Europe	476	155	321	483	184	299
Eastern Europe else	2 602	1 303	1 299	2 379	1 082	1 297
North America and Oceania	240	130	110	184	101	83
Asia <sup>2</sup>	7 323	4 097	3 226	6 327	3 453	2 874
Africa	2 672	1 868	804	2 536	1 760	776
South and Central America	811	437	374	663	296	367
	<i>Per cent</i>					
Registered unemployed, total	3.8	4.1	3.5	3.0	3.1	2.9
Non-immigrants and descendants <sup>1</sup>	3.4	3.6	3.0	2.6	2.7	2.5
First generation immigrants, total	10.0	10.6	9.3	8.2	8.3	8.1
The Nordic countries	4.5	5.4	3.5	3.3	3.6	2.9
Western Europe else	4.6	5.1	3.8	3.2	3.3	3.0
New EU countries in Eastern Europe	5.7	4.7	6.5	4.4	3.3	5.5
Eastern Europe else	12.0	12.3	11.8	10.3	9.7	10.8
North America and Oceania	5.8	5.7	5.8	4.4	4.5	4.3
Asia <sup>1</sup>	13.1	13.1	13.1	10.8	10.5	11.1
Africa	18.6	19.8	16.1	16.5	17.7	14.1
South and Central America	11.2	11.9	10.4	8.8	7.9	9.7

<sup>1</sup> Norwegian born to foreign born parents.

<sup>2</sup> Turkey is included.

### **1.1.8 Summary – national context**

Norway's history of subordination has led the country to form a strong national identity, and after WW2, closely related to the social democratic welfare state. The newer history of immigration started in the late 1960's and was based on the need for manpower to the growing industry. Since 1975 there has been a full immigration stop so the new flow of foreigners has mainly been refugees and people on family reunification. The need for workforce in some sectors has led the government to import groups of professionals from certain countries, especially in the health sector and in the construction business. The latest and biggest challenge for the multicultural workplace in Norway will be to integrate the flow of workers and their families from Eastern-European countries, especially Poland. Related to the immigrants and refugees from the southern countries the challenge is to avoid structural discrimination that this group meets to get work and to normalize their presence at the workplace, to de-mystify the perceived exoticness of their culture and background.

## 1.2 Government response

There has been a continuous policy for restricting immigration to Norway since the legislation of immigration stop in 1975. These restrictions have been fortified even if there has been a need for an immigration of workers all through the last 3 decades. Particularly the restrictions have been directed to refugees and asylum seekers. Nonetheless, the immigration has been more than tripled the last decades mainly due to family reunion programmes and acceptance of refugees through Norway's obligations with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). As noted earlier the demographic situation in Norway would probably demand an increased immigration of workforce in the future, but the present political situation in Norway is basically negative to immigration and support a restrictive immigration policy. On the other hand, there have been an increasing number of workers from the new EU member states particularly in construction and building, cleaning and other fields with the need of unskilled workers.

The Norwegian Government has at the same time been concerned on avoiding discrimination and other social problems connected to immigration and immigration. The government policy is directed to several programs as:

- Action plan against racism and discrimination (2002-2006)
- Law of Introduction Programme (2004)
- The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI) has worked on the following issues:
  - The need of workforce and recruitment from other countries 1999,
  - Art and extent of racism and discrimination in Norway
  - Participation or exclusion? – Municipalities, immigrants and integration 1998
  - Ethnic diversity at work – arguments and measures, 2000
  - Basic training of newly arrived immigrants, 1998
  - Work with behaviours in local communities, 1999
  - Handbook for the work with refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants, 1999
  - Introduction programme for newly arrived Immigrants: Basic training and alternative income security. Reports from 16 local communities, 2004



### **1.2.1 New Legislation**

In April 2005 the Norwegian parliament passed a new law against ethnic discrimination, a so-called complaint-based anti-discrimination law. The new law applies also in the work market. That the legislation is 'complaint-based' – means that when the statutes are alleged to have been breached, action will only occur if a complaint is made under one or more of the statutes to the appropriate authority. The law in itself is a good step forward for the anti-racism work in Norway, and many groups have worked hard for this law to become reality. Notwithstanding, experience from other countries shows that this particular kind of law is only effective in combating more obvious and open kinds of discrimination. The more subtle and structural forms of discrimination are not easily confronted with this law. Structural and systemic discrimination at the workplace refers to a kind of discrimination where the workplace has certain systemic characteristics. These characteristics can be administrative practice and cultural norms at the workplace that creates or maintains positions of relative advantage for some groups and disadvantage for other groups. Systemic discrimination can appear as standard and neutral practice (see also several of the case studies), and it is therefore difficult to detect, both for the victim and the “perpetrator”. Systemic discrimination works as barriers against equality of status and equal opportunities, and can therefore not be reduced to individual cases or one-time occasions. There is reason to believe that most of the discrimination in the work market is of a systemic character. For instance, many companies' recruitment- or promotion processes are often subjective and diffuse, and unequal treatment (conscious or unconscious) can easily be explained as related to the personal qualities of the candidate. In cases like this the new complaint-based law is insufficient, and there is clearly a need for a pro-active anti-discrimination law. Unfortunately the parliament did not pass the proposition for a pro-active anti-discrimination law that also was presented before the parliament. A pro-active anti-discrimination law requires the employers to put in effect measures to combat discrimination, both systemic and otherwise. That kind of law enables also government agencies to control and inspect workplaces to ensure that companies actually comply and prove that the measures that the law dictates are in fact implemented. The arguments used by the members of parliament for not passing the pro-active law, was the fear of alienating employers by demanding too much. Another reason members of both parliament and government gave for not passing the pro-

active law was the belief that the employers will take measures voluntarily when urged by the government. Critics argue that unfortunately, the belief in the good will of the employer when it comes to taking measures that costs money and at the same time, where the payoff are not automatically seen, is at best naïve and more likely, totally unrealistic. All experience shows that regulations about work environment and other work related issues only has effect when it is imposed by law and a control regime is established.

In conclusion, the new anti-discrimination law is in itself an improvement for the anti-racism work being done in Norway, it provides for a better protection for those people that can prove they have been victims of direct discrimination from an employer or a private or public company. The law however requires the victim to step forward and carry the burden of reporting the alleged act of discrimination. The new law is therefore not sufficient to end most of the discrimination, or the systemic discrimination that takes place at the work market.

### **1.2.2 Directorate for Integration and Diversity (IMDi)**

The latest government step for promoting multiculturalism and diversity in Norway is the creation of a new public agency. The former Norwegian Directorate of Immigration has been divided and the [Directorate of Integration and Diversity \(IMDi\)](#) was created. IMDi's professed goal is to contribute to equality in living conditions and diversity through employment, integration and participation. IMDi was established on 1 January 2006 to act as a competence centre and a driving force for integration and diversity. The directorate cooperates with immigrant organisations/ groups, municipalities, government agencies and the private sector. It provides advice and implements government policy. IMDi is, amongst other things, in charge of administrating the Introduction Programme for Immigrants and Refugees.

### **1.2.3 Relevant Experiences from the Introduction Program**

The new law of the introduction programme states that all new-comer refugees must participate in the programme as soon as they arrive in a local community. The programme took effect from 2003 in all Norwegian municipalities. The participants will

receive an annual allowance of approximately 120.000 NOK (€15.000) and offers extra support to Norwegian language training. The 2 year long programme will make a combination of training and work, directed to mixing employment, vocational training and social networking in the local community. An evaluation from the first 16 local councils has been positive. The refugees are learning faster and better Norwegian and it seems that they are acquiring employment faster. It is felt that many newly arrived refugees will benefit from this programme. They will learn better Norwegian, be able to get work and probably be better integrated into the local community although we do not know how this will be in the long run. Conceivable issues include:

- Will the programme lead to long term employment?
- Is the programme sufficiently flexible to adapt refugees to a changing labour market in the local economic life?
- How will the programme itself be able to adapt to new situations in the work market?

There is reason to believe that when there is a need for labour in sectors, this programme has the potential to succeed. The possibility exists however that the programme may have a lack of flexibility as it is linked to the local community with comparatively fewer opportunities. In times of depression there may be low interest from local companies to employ immigrants when there is high unemployment overall. The programme is not retroactive, which means that there are groups that could need the programme, but have no rights according to this system.

#### **1.2.4 Public organisations dedicated to combat ethnic discrimination**

There exists a variety of public organisations that works within the field of integration either on the training part or the anti-racist work. Not all of these organisations deal exclusively with themes related to ethnic minorities, but also to training need in general and other types of discrimination.

- Likestillings – og diskrimineringsombudet (Ombudsman for Equal Opportunities and Discrimination)
- IMDi – The Directorate for integration and diversity.

- KIM – The organisation for cooperation between immigrant organisations and Norwegian authorities.
- VOX – State Institute for Adult Education, promoting learning in working life
- Municipal training centres

We must add that there has been criticism from several minority groups which argues that the integration and diversity work in Norway has become an activity and even a business for white Norwegians. The lack of minorities represented in government bodies and institutions working in this field are a serious threat to the seriousness and credibility of the work being done directed to immigrants' situation in the society.

### 1.3 Civic response

There are several voluntary institutions and NGO's working on issues related to integration, anti-racism and ethnic discrimination in Norway. Most of them are able to subsist through government funding, but some are also larger member organisations. Some of the organizations work in several fields but have campaigns on issues going on. The main organisations dedicated to integration politics and/or anti-racist work are:

- SOS Racism – voluntary member organisation, youth work.
- The Anti-Racism Centre
- OMOD – Organisation against public discrimination
- Norwegian Peoples Aid – “anti-racism zones” and “give racism a red card”
- Oslo Red Cross International Centre
- MiA (Diversity at work)

These organisations are responsible for several nationwide campaigns. Campaigns that can be said to have an important impact on the wider public and that are well known:

- Give racism a red card (Gi rasismen et rødt kort) This is a ongoing campaign initiated by the Norwegian Peoples Aid with a close cooperation with the Norwegian association for athletes and sportsmen and women. Football Federation (NFF). The campaign is well alive and can definitely be labelled as a nationwide success and has practically led to very few problems with racism within the football and sports at all levels. The campaign is inspired by the a similar campaign in the England. The main goal of the campaign is to improve the conditions for ethnic minorities in organised sports, and as a generally preventive measure to combat racism and discrimination. Among the most visable measures is to use top professional players as role models, to declare football stadiums and athletic arenas for racism free zones. The importance of including local sports associations and football club at a local level is fundamental, for the nationwide results and in order for the sport organisations to be promoters for diversity and integration in their local community.

- Racism free zone is also initiated by the Norwegian Peoples Aid, the goal is to motivate and help organisations, municipalities, workplaces, institutions etc. become racism free zones. To be declared racism free zone a organisation must take several measures. Mainly it works as a preventive measure, to let all employees know that racism will not be tolerated at that particular workplace. Has also been very successful.

Several cultural campaigns as

- Norwegian national holiday for everyone, includes concerts and other cultural activities (17. mai for alle)
- Du store verden (The big world) Cultural organisation
- Verden i Norden (Music festival inviting bands labelled under the rubric, world music)
- Film fra sør (movies from south)

There's are a great number of immigrant's organisations, national, cultural and religious. Particularly organisations from the biggest immigrant and ethnic minority groups are organised nationally and locally and through the contact board between the immigrants and the authorities (KIM). The Contact Committee was first appointed by the Government in 1984 on a joint initiative of the authorities and immigrant associations. KIM is appointed for a four year period, coinciding with the term of office of the Storting. KIM discusses matters of importance for the immigrant community, both on its own initiative and on the basis of proposals from government departments, associations etc. The Contact Committee as a whole is a forum for dialogue. The Immigrant Forum within KIM formulates advice to the authorities and also seeks to influence policy in relevant areas. The Committee Chair has the lead responsibility for the activities of both the Contact Committee and its Immigrant Forum.

**The Contact Committee** consists of 17 regional representatives of the immigrant community. 17 representatives of the political parties in the Storting and 11 representatives of Ministries and other official bodies.

**KIM's Immigrant Forum** includes 17 regional representatives of the immigrant community and the **the Chairwoman** is appointed by the Government.

representatives of the seven political parties from the parliament are represented in the committee.

Eleven representatives of Government

Ministries, directorates and other official bodies:

Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion,

Ministry of Children and Equality, Ministry of

Government Administration and Reform, Ministry of Health and Care Services,

Ministry of Justice and the Police, Ministry of Local Government and Regional

Development, Ministry of Culture and Church Affairs, Ministry of Education and

Research, the Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDI), the Directorate of

Immigration (UDI) and the Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS).

### **Regional representatives**

Seventeen representatives of immigrant communities in twelve regions of Norway:

#### **The Contact Committee:** Dialogue

- Engages in dialogue on issues of importance for the immigrant community.
- Promotes contacts and discussion between the immigrant community and the authorities by arranging meetings, seminars and conferences.
- Gives visibility to the immigrant community as a social partner through its hearings, campaigns etc.
- KIM's Steering Committee sets the agenda for meetings of KIM and its Immigrant Forum.

#### **KIM's Immigrant Forum:** Advice and advocacy

- Gives advice to central and local authorities on issues of importance to the immigrant community.
- Seeks to influence policy in relevant areas.
- Makes submissions to Government Departments.
- Contributes to external conferences and seminars.
- Takes part in consultative committees and other official bodies.

- Writes and comments on relevant issues in the media.
- Arranges regional activities on issues of concern to local immigrant communities.
- Builds networks with national and local immigrant associations.

The Contact Committee has identified five priority areas for its current term, and has set up internal working groups in each area. The Committee will where appropriate also follow up important issues outside of these five areas.

- Employment and Inclusion
- Children and Youth
- Participation and Mobilisation
- Health and Living Conditions
- Major Legislative Initiatives

### **1.3.1 Training courses available**

There are a number of training courses available, particularly directed to language training of immigrants. Until August 2004 all immigrants and refugees were entitled 850 hours language training with learning of the Norwegian society. Those with less than 9 years (basic) education had an offer of 3000 hours of training. With the Law of Introduction Programme from 2004 newly arrived refugees and immigrants have got a possibility for until three years of paid training (language and work training) directed to possible employment. The introduction programme is clearly an improvement in the training courses available for newly arrived refugees and immigrants, but only for the people that are eligible for participating in the programme. In other words, the programme is not for all. The training is conducted mainly by:

- Municipal training centres
- VOX – Government secondary training of non-Norwegians
- International Organization for Migration (IOM)
- Folkeuniversitetet FU (“Peoples University”)
- AOF – Labour unions’ training centres



#### **1.4 Business community response**

The largest employers' organisations in private sector such as NHO and HSH have action plans directed to handle diversity in the private companies on an organisational level. On the other hand, even if they have a distinct policy against ethnic discrimination, most companies will be pragmatic to business considerations and Norwegian laws and regulations. Even if there are clear policies at the top level in the employers' organisations, the organisations are not very pro-active and have no sanctions against member companies who are discriminating ethnic minorities.

These organisations are promoting or funding several initiatives towards training of immigrants initiated by member companies. They are taking several initiatives such as organising and/or promoting conferences and seminars discussing ethnic diversity or combating ethnic discrimination. In addition they are participating in meetings with governmental and municipal bodies concerning jobs for immigrants and training for employment. Both of the major employers' organisations have promoted several studies, often in cooperation with the labour organisations, concerning the needs of skilled and unskilled employees from ethnic minorities. To sum it up, the business community represented through the large employers organisations, have good intentions when it comes to dealing with diversity and speaking warmly about the importance and so forth, but when talking about action, little or nothing is done. Conferences are being attended, matters are being discussed, but no concrete measures, no tangible results have materialised from this side. However this does not mean that there are no business leaders that care about this or that practice good diversity policies in their organisations. As mentioned earlier, there are firms that do a good job, but the business community as a whole has not much concrete results to show to.

## **1.5 Academic community response**

Research has been conducted on immigrant related problems and poverty over the last three decades. From the beginning of the nineteenth seventies, there have been parliamentary documents, official reports and other research literature on this topic. A speech from Leo Eitinger was published in 1978 about the relations between immigrants and Norwegian, Sunil Loona wrote an article on new racism in Norway in the magazine, *Immigranten* in 1983. Elsewhere, Bente Puntervold Bø and Niels Damsgaard have written about on migration research in Norway between 1980 and 1986. Geir Aasgaard published his thesis on immigrants and returns to their home country in 1983. At this time, a number of books and reports were released. The Norwegian Federation of Trade Unions presented an action plan in 1989.

The Norwegian official debate has basically followed along the same lines as the discussions of racism in the USA and UK. The socio-economic situation for immigrants and refugees has been the main topic in the Norwegian debate. A number of organisations were born such as Antirasistisk Senter (Anti-Racist Centre), Foreningen Mot Rasisme (Union Against Racism), SOS-Rasisme among others. Subsequently, OMOD, (Organisation Against Public Discrimination), SMED (Centre Against Ethnic Discrimination) as well as other organisations who had this topic on their agenda became vociferous. The discussion has evolved from racist attitudes, discrimination and adaptation (assimilation) to Norwegian values and culture. In this debate the acquisition of Norwegian language has been one of the most profiled questions with debate shifting from complaints centred on the immigrant's motivation for integration (assimilation) and the lack of training facilities. The question of racism has very often been a discussion of cultural differences and the study of the Norwegian language. The advent of immigrant poverty has been acknowledged and discussed but has seldom been raised as a topic in its own right. On the other hand however, unemployment among immigrants has been a topic in numerous reports about immigrants.

The preliminary works to the immigration stop (Law enacted in 1975) pointed at the improvement of undesirable working conditions for immigrants in other Western countries, and that many immigrants were living in poor areas in big cities. This was used as a reason to restrict the immigration into Norway. Ragnar Næss carried out

research on the situation of immigrants at select workplaces in 1986. Ragnar Næss and Rolf Undset Aakervik , AFI (Work Research Institute), carried out research in 1990, highlighting the situation whereby immigrants had continued in unskilled jobs for many years without being offered on-the-job training to develop their professional skills. This research revealed the evolution of niches of unskilled jobs for immigrants in the labour force and within certain fields of employment. Immigrants who lost their jobs because of corporate restructure had problems finding other occupations. The lack of Norwegian language skills was used as an argument without regard to other skills and educational capability. In addition, there were problems associated with social adaptation, and many immigrants and refugees had gone through a period of high unemployment. Through this period at the end of the nineteen eighties, and the beginning of nineteen nineties, many immigrants lived on social welfare and numbers developed social problems.

Several researchers, journalists and others who have taken part in the debate include Inger Lise Lien, Unni Vikan, Ottar Brox, Thomas Hylland Eriksen and Marianne Torbjørnsrud, and there have been books and articles published by Shabana Rehman, Walid al-Kubaisi, and Hege Storhaug. Political players have taken part in the discussion and have frequently used these authors (often uncritically) as references to their own points of view. Several projects have pointed out important issues and are documented in reports.

## **1.6 Media response**

### **1.6.1 Newspaper reports highlighting intercultural workplace issues.**

There has been and is still a focus on intercultural perspectives in the media. Basically the media has had a negative approach directed to problems concerning immigrants and immigration. In between there are presented success stories, but mostly described in opposition to all the problems with language, cultural and social adaptation. It is a reoccurring and serious problem that the media is the main contributor to the stigmatisation of immigrants and ethnic minorities. To be more specific it only applies to the non-western immigrants and refugees, and lately people from the Balkans like Kosovo-Albanians.

### **1.6.2 How is the foreign workers/companies/indigenous workers portrayed?**

The issues dominating the media picture in relation with immigrants and refugees are the following: the immigrant on social welfare exploiting the social security system, the criminal, robber or rapist, the refugee lying and cheating to get asylum, Muslim traditions like forced marriages or arranged marriages, circumcision of young females etc

### **1.6.3 Are there examples of discrimination against foreign workers reported?**

Even though the Muslim vs. Christian discussion has been going on for 20 years, this has exacerbated the last 10 years particularly after the atrocities of 9/11 2001. These attitudes have been increased after conflicts and negative attitudes towards Muslims societies also outside of Norway.

Are there examples of good practice on part of companies/institutions?

There is a tendency to describe successful stories about immigrants, particularly in minor local newspapers. To revert the situation of the mainly negative approaches in the mass media for immigrants in the work life, last year there have been several programmes conducted:

MiA has been conducting a price for the best Norwegian companies in promoting and adapting diversity in their business strategy. Another programme is the selection of top 10 immigrant women and men. These persons have also been portrayed in the press. Other successes are proved by a research that the majority of the Norwegian population has got a more positive attitude towards ethnic minorities. The majority of employers have also due to a more positive presentation in the media got a more positive attitude in employing immigrants than ten years ago.

## **1.7 Status and lack of knowledge and current challenges**

### **1.7.1 What do we know?**

We know that there is a positive relationship evident when combining language training with work experience and vocational training. The best results from such training have been seen to occur when the training is at the work place itself. We know that many people from ethnic minorities have problems in the labour market. Several reasons for this are generally acknowledged, particularly those applicable to the situation for refugees. We also know that many employers are using the lack of Norwegian language competence as a reason for not employing immigrants. Many immigrants have not got acceptance of their competence, and there is a very real lack of scope to convert the competence to be useable in the Norwegian labour market.

Many immigrant women have problems getting work. Some of the reasons known include their lack of work experience, their education, gender roles, conditions at home. Pragmatic issues such as child care, pregnancy, and female specific physical problems do have a bearing.

For the refugee category, there are a lot of motives for refuge. Some of these reasons can make it difficult to be adapted to a settled work life.

We also know that the second generation is facing many problems associated with identity crises, lack of self -esteem, diasporas, conflicts etc. There are also problems evident in drug addiction among young immigrants. Many of these problems have their roots in education, problems at school, discrimination on the work market,

disciplinary problems, and revolting against both parents and larger Norwegian community.

### **1.7.2 Lack of knowledge**

Psychiatrist Nora Sveaas presented experiences from many years working with refugees suggesting that too little is known of their particular psychological problems. The problems are often complex and sometimes hidden in the surroundings. These can be trouble with sleeping, irrational behaviour, headaches, memory loss, fear etc.

There is also a lack of understanding with regard to an immigrant's health issues on a broad scale, and we know that these problems are complex, being linked to their present and past situations. For many will there be a need to be able to secure a stable future. Immigrants with complex problems will be more exposed to poverty. We present a case study: A Somali refugee with little education from Somalia has psychological problems due to experiences from the war. He has some physical problems related to the hard unskilled work he performs in Norway. Absenteeism was a problem, causing him to lose his job, and the individual was sent for away without rehabilitation measures. The refugee, however, was unable to concentrate on Norwegian language training having subsequent problems in social integration. He became aggressive towards the social security office, and after much negative response, he was treated even worse. He also has a very traditional wife, who is illiterate and who does not speak Norwegian. They have got four children, and the oldest is in trouble with the police after some violent episodes. He has also dropped out of school. One wonders what can be done for this person and his family. This example gives a glimpse of the many and complex situations that need long term solutions. He could have got psychological help, get an easier job and applied training. His wife might have sought help in learning to read, write and speak Norwegian and might even have secured help to take care of the children. Conceivably, the children might have been able to get sufficient following up at school. Each of these measures would have been possible, but seen together they seem to be too complex and overwhelming.

The Ministry for Local Governments and Regional Affairs, St.m. 17 (2000 -2001), Chapter 12 states that, "Research tells us that problems mainly have to be solved

through adjustments and changes within the existing system and politics, and that there is a need for more knowledge and development of good working methods. At the same time, there is a need to follow up and evaluate previous work, both on state and local government levels” - and further, "There is a need for research that can map the extent of psychological problems for refugees, and to look at the connections between different factors in the asylum and settlement phase and psychological health."

There are several challenges which stem from the deficiency of knowledge:

- To what extent is it a problem that individuals from traditional societies prefer to keep their traditions and life styles? What kind of traditions and lifestyles will not be accepted or recognised at the workplace, and are the problems real or wrongly interpreted or over focused?
- Do we know enough of what can be done with people who have physical and psychological impairments from working in unskilled heavy work, and where ordinary occupational rehabilitation does not work?
- What can be done at those workplaces where attitudes make little concession for 'being different', and where colleagues are negative towards immigrants (some nationalities)
- Are the adapted training and development measures satisfactory for immigrants who have developed aberrations, learning problems or psychological and/or physical problems?
- What kind of measures has been directed to former immigrants who do not have full rights to pension? Will these immigrants find the old peoples homes satisfactory with regard to understanding Norwegian, cultural and religious traditions?
- How to find a balance between what the Norwegian society can accept in terms of deviated behaviour and how to find an acceptable adaptation?
- There is obviously a need for legal support for immigrant women.

## **2 Situation in the private, public & education sectors**

### **2.1. Cultural diversity in the private sector**

As in all countries with marked economy, the main concern of top level management in Norwegian companies is to keep up with the ever-changing market conditions, in order to secure the profitability of the firm. Diversity as a source of building a corporations' profitability, and as a policy of business is still uncharted territory for most Norwegian firms. In the degree companies do pay attention to the cultural diversity it is in order to solve communication problems or other conflicts they may perceive as being rooted in the cultural diversity in their company. There are however a small number of knowledge-based companies that practice and cultivate diversity as an integral part of the companies' business policy. These would typically be IT, architectural and shipping firms that because of their line of business find it necessary and also natural to practice a diverse recruitment policy. These are businesses that either because need of expertise or because they deal internationally in an intuitive way develop a multicultural organisation and that may also have English as an official work language.

When this is said, the private sector in Norway is by large better, and have more cultural diversity among their employees than the public sector. Private businesses have only one imperative; profit, and if they need to recruit diverse in order to secure labour and professional skills to their ranks, they will recruit colour-blind. The public sector however has until now been very careful to recruit diverse, unless they have no other choice. In the municipalities there is a lot of need for labour in the health services and therefore there is a considerable number of minorities working there. But at the administration level in both the local, regional and national bureaucracy the staff is almost all-white. The public sector is thus experiencing a credibility problem, as politicians and the government calls on private business to recruit more diverse, while the institutions under their own control are considerably worse than private sector to act accordingly.

When companies seek to cut production costs by staff cuts and demands for higher skills and more efficiency, immigrants are usually the first ones to be left out.



Demands for proficient language knowledge increase in a tight labour market with increased complexity.

The generation of knowledge in replacement of material products has become the goal. In the labour market of today, an expanding majority work in the so-called knowledge-based industry which includes services while a shrinking minority remains working in manufacturing and progressively fewer in primary industry. These trends demand a new appreciation of life and existence, and the area is hotly discussed both domestically and abroad. The social sciences are invoked to try to assess the effects of such trends.

One facet of the shift is that increasingly more activities are done with electronic equipment as purchase, stock management; process float, production and communication are done by computers. The service sector is an important part of the Norwegian economy and up to 73 % of those employed are in both private and public service sectors. The service is more linked to the retail of products as production is highly streamlined. Due to its high costs, Norway can not compete with other countries in the use of manpower as a factor of production. (NOU 1999:34). This background necessarily influences the orientation of corporations in their use of immigrants in their staff, the specifications set by human resource departments for immigrants and finally the self esteem of the immigrants themselves as employees.

Most immigrants and refugees do nevertheless one way or another establish themselves in the Norwegian society and most are able to find employment or other income possibilities. Still the unemployment rate is about three times higher for immigrants and refugees compared with the indigenous Norwegians. More important, the immigrants and refugees are a necessary workforce in a wide range of skilled and unskilled professions in the Norwegian society.

### **2.1.1 The companies need of qualified work force.**

A common understanding is that an adult immigrant must be employed in order to adapt themselves and to be integrated into society. Corporations will on the other hand only employ people that can satisfy the companies need for professional skills.

The following exhibit illustrates how corporations assess their need for employees. The most interesting revelation here is that many companies consider language and cultural competence for immigrants more important than other skills and capacities actually possessed by the immigrants.

### **2.1.2 Ethnic minorities as unskilled labour positions**

Many individuals from national and ethnic minorities are working in unskilled jobs and even continue in these jobs for years without regard to their background as education or other skills. These jobs are often:

- Sensitive to the economic cycles of the labour market
- Stressful and with high potential for physical mishap
- Have few and erratically adapted opportunities for training and development on the job
- Court less-than-desirable conditions and low salaries

### **2.1.3 Lack of Norwegian language skills**

Many people from an immigrant or refugee background do not have sufficient skills in the Norwegian language to be seen as attractive on to employers. This tends to limit possibilities:

- to influence their social and economic circumstances
- to participate in the democratic processes that form the framework for conditions at the workplace and in society
- to take part in social integration at the workplace and in local society
- to influence choices of occupation and career.

### **2.1.4 Acceptance of competence from home country**

Many immigrants and refugees have problems with the acceptance or otherwise of their education and skills gained from their home countries. The following are seen as contributing to this:

- the system for formal approval of certificates, diplomas and other endorsements and the conversion of competence for the Norwegian labour market

- an absence of acceptance of the immigrant's background skills by employers
- problems exist with those jobs available within the immigrants actual realm of competence

### **2.1.5 Examples of prejudices and discrimination**

Many individuals with an ethnic minority background confront negative attitudes that:

- will have an influence on the integration process at the workplace
- depress self esteem and the motivation to succeed in the job
- intensify the feeling of being treated as a second rate worker
- dampen the motivation to look for advancement (perpetuated acceptance of being unskilled)
- heightens self-segregation for people from lingual and ethnic minorities and national, religious and other groups which build their self-esteem, acceptance and respect from that group
- family and other kin will support complaints on discrimination
- other individuals from ethnic, national or religious
- groups will share common experiences of discrimination

Many with ethnic minority background are met with negative attitudes.

### **2.1.6 Ethnic segregated at the work place**

The environment bred in societies of ethnic, national, language and religious groups exerts an influence and breeds attitudes in opposition to the majority:

- To maintain and even strengthen traditions from the home country (gender relations, traditional dress, behaviour etc.)
- Distances and even contradicts Norwegian lifestyles (alcohol, food, sexual relations, broken families etc.)
- Religious and national leaders advise to avoid relations with Norwegians and Norwegian society.

### **2.1.7 Immigrants job-loss when corporations restructure.**

When companies restructure, immigrant workers will often lose their positions. Corporate rationalisation efforts will see higher professional and communicative skills coming into demand and this will be at the expense of the most unskilled employees. Many immigrant workers have not, even after many years developed sufficient language and vocational skills for such jobs meaning a loss of marketability.

The former Director of Norwegian Department of Immigration, Trygve Nordby remarked in his presentation at a conference of October 2002 that there are three times as many inhabitants with parents from other nationalities during the last 20 years, and that 30% of them had come to Norway in the last 5 years. This represents a net immigration of ca. 10.000 per annum. Statistics prove that the problems of unemployment for ethnic minorities will decrease over time. To give analyses of the situation in the labour market, we must also know the nature of work the immigrants perform. The general Norwegian training for ethnic minorities may easily be a long and depressing experience as it is not targeted to adjustment or qualifications to the company's need for competence. So far, it has been difficult for ethnic minorities to get admission to the ordinary labour market where they may utilize special skills. There have often been too many obstacles to recognize competence (except for unskilled labour), a situation which has tried their patience, and dampened the motivation towards securing further qualifications. This has also led to the fact that would-be training programmes both for the persons concerned and for the companies have been shelved.

### **2.1.8 Ethnic minorities in cleaning, hotels and restaurants**

Large cleaning companies in Oslo headline that approximately 90 % of their employed are of non-Western origin. The unskilled work available in hotels and restaurants would in fact tend to be dominated by non-Western ethnic minorities.

## **2.2 Cultural diversity in the public sector**

With public sector we mean all public offices offering services to the population, all the state and municipal health and social services, we also mean the administrative bodies of local, regional and national authorities. As a country defined as a welfare state, the public sector is quite large, and without counting the state-owned companies about 30% of all employees work in the public sector.

The importance of a public sector that reflects the development of Norway as multicultural society cannot be stressed enough. In practice this means that the public services are adapted to a diverse population with different customs and different needs, and that the staff of public servants reflects the people they're serving. Until now the staff at the public offices at all levels, are overwhelmingly all-white. The need for drastically changes in mentality and recruitment procedures in the public sector is slowly beginning to capture the attention of local and national politicians and to an increasing degree the public administrators themselves. As the consequences of a public service corps that is out-of-touch with the public they are supposed to attend are increasingly made visible for the administrators, the need for adjustments are being realised. Two direct consequences are A) an increased tension and conflict situation between the public servants and users with minority background and B) services that nobody is using because the customs and needs of the current population are others than that traditionally offered. When budgets are being cut because of the reduction in users of the services, the different public services affected have a tangible and real-life need for making changes in order to rationalise and legitimise their existence.

The need for a public service in touch with an increasingly multicultural population is made evident when we know that the number of individuals from immigrant backgrounds that lack familial relations and other social and economical networks are much higher than other for ethnic Norwegians. Such ties are vital in difficult situations, such as when immigrants are having health problems, personal crises etc. Some realities:

- limited access to economic and social support from family, relatives and close friends
- a lack of advice and guidance otherwise provided in a social network

- limited knowledge about how to get help or support that would otherwise be available through social networks

It is therefore necessary to institute measures directed to people from particularly vulnerable ethnic groups and ponder on problems deriving from serious social, cultural and traditional adaptation.

There are several issues surrounding common moral norms in Norwegian society; juridical rights and duties, ethical guidelines at work and social adaptation in local communities. It will be necessary to consciously map the social adaptation process for employees from ethnic minorities while addressing areas such as:

- How are different nationalities distributed across occupation and trade as well as gender?
- How will marriage or co-habitee, having children or established family relations between ethnic minority persons and ethnic Norwegians function socially and economically?
- Will marriages or other family relations between immigrants or refugees and Norwegians with social problems exacerbate poverty?
- Will unemployed immigrants with health and family problems having relations (children) by ethnic Norwegians be even more socially outcast or even not accepted by both the ethnic minority society and Norwegian society?
- How to develop a better social integration at workplaces?
- How to improve social communication between ethnic, language and national minorities at the workplace?
- How to put into place wise and applied measures for ethnic, lingual and national minorities that have fallen out of the ordinary labour market?

### **2.2.1 Refugees adaptation to Norwegian society**

The official statistics (January 2001) show a figure of 84 000 with refugee background, or 1.9 % of the total Norwegian population. About 6,900 refugees arrived in 2000. Of this number, Iraqis numbered some 3,900. The majority of the refugees however remain Bosnians and other earlier Yugoslavians (about  $\frac{1}{4}$  ). Out of the 84,000 having a refugee background, 66,000 came in as refugees, while about 18,100 came later as family members.

About 50% of the refugees are between 20 and 39 years. Less than 2% are 67 years (pension age) or older. In the Norwegian population, only 28% are aged between 20 and 39, while a level of 14% is more than 67. 57% of the refugee population is male, and tends to come particularly from Iraq, Iran and Sri Lanka. Most of the Balkan refugees are families. Oslo hosts  $\frac{1}{4}$  of all the refugees with about 4.4% of the population.

## **2.3 The cultural diversity in the education sector**

The impact of becoming a multicultural country on the education sector has not been deep in Norway. Still it would be incorrect to argue that none change has been made. There has since the early 1980's been a small but vivid academic environment that has fought for new directions in the educational system, particularly at the primary school level. New research shows that the Norwegian educational system has yet to adapt its teaching to the new multicultural reality, particularly at the elementary school level. Still, some progress has been made in the formation of new teachers. The efforts of this small academic group have brought about the establishment of four new classes/courses being thought in some of the colleges in Norway. All four classes are integrated into the teacher education: 1. the pedagogic of multiculturalism, 2. Migration pedagogics, 3. Norwegian as a second language and 4. Multicultural understanding. These classes are not obligatory though, so only students particularly interested will choose these classes as they're specialisation.

### **2.3.1 Primary school**

There has been developed strategic plans at the government level about the goal of adapting the teaching at what's being thought to Norway's multicultural society. In the capital Oslo, one of each five pupils has one or both parents foreign born. In some areas of the city the level of ethnic minorities reaches from 50 to 70% of all pupils. This new social reality makes it urgent to rapidly qualify the teachers for this task, and to use the richness of the pupils' background more actively in the school.

Research shows that pupils with ethnic minority background perform lower than the average pupil with an ethnic Norwegian background. This is alarming and underlines the need for rapid adaptation in the educational system for Norway's multiculturalism. Language problems for pupils with another mother-tongue than Norwegian, has led to the creation of a language class for pupils with inferior Norwegian skills, Norwegian as a second language. This is now a compulsory class for all schools to have.

There is also a rising alertness of the importance of recruiting bi-lingual teachers, both as an academic resource, but also to reflect the existing diversity in the society and of the pupils. MiA is adapting the Diversity Mirror to the school sector, primary



and secondary school. The Diversity Mirror will hopefully when fully adapted provide the teachers at each school with a tool for making their school a multicultural tool that uses the diversity present as a resource and that acknowledges the benefits of multiculturalism in its daily teaching and functioning. MiA's own research made under the adaptation phase of this tool shows that many school principals recognise the importance, particularly for boys to have male teachers from an ethnic minority background, they provide a role-model for the young that they lack in the rest of the society. Still there is a problem for many schools to recruit bi-lingual teachers, or teachers with ethnic minority background. Another related problem is that Norwegian teachers complain on the bi-lingual teachers that do exist and claim their pedagogical background is not compatible with the Norwegian school tradition.

### **2.3.2 Mother tongue training**

The lost battle for the time being is the offering of mother tongue lessons for all bi-lingual children. This was in the 1980's a right that all children from ethnic minorities had in the nation's capital, but was taken away by the conservative rule in the city. Hopefully only a battle is lost and the war will be won. The importance of giving bi-lingual children a chance to learn their mother tongue cannot be underestimated. All research on the field shows that the learning of the majority language is much easier when the kid has a written and verbal understanding of his parents' language.

### **2.3.3 Increased awareness of adaptation to cultural diversity**

There are positive traits as well, amongst other things the increased awareness of the need to make some changes. Also there is an increased focus on anti-racism and anti-discrimination. Several nation-wide programs have been implemented, programs where each school can take part and commit themselves to implement certain values and have activities so as to end with any kind of discrimination. The irony is that as the awareness has risen the financial means necessary to implement changes has diminished.

### **2.3.4 Recruitment to higher level studies**

Maybe as a consequence of the educational systems lack of adaptation to multiculturalism statistics show that there is a high number of high school drop-outs among ethnic minority students. The recruitment for college or university level studies are also far lesser than for ethnic Norwegian students. This does not mean that all students with ethnic minority background are left behind. There are some groups that do particularly well, and even better than the ethnic Norwegian students, but the gap between the successful and the drop-outs is alarming.

To conclude this section on the educational sector, there are plenty of challenges in this sector, the awareness has risen, but the government has failed to implement its own strategy plans for creating a more diverse educational system. Still there is also a lack of knowledge of this field. We have statistics but we do not entirely know why the differences in performance demonstrate the differences that it does.

### **2.3.5 Norwegian language classes free of charge - new regulations**

For immigrants who receive their first residence permit after 1 September 2005, there are [new regulations](#). For immigrants who have received a permit before 1 September 2005, the old regulations apply until 1 September 2010.

The following groups have the right to free tuition:

- Immigrants with Norwegian citizenship
- Refugees and persons granted residence on humanitarian grounds
- Immigrants with a residence and work permit granted before 1 January 2003
- Persons with a permit for family reunification with a member of the groups mentioned above.
- Asylum seekers under 18 years of age
- Asylum seekers who have been granted a residence permit, but who are still staying in reception centres for refugees while awaiting municipal settlement.
- Persons with a permit for family reunification with a Norwegian citizen.
- Persons with a permit for family reunification with a citizen from one of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Sweden) may in some cases have the right to free tuition.

The following groups do **not** have the right to free tuition:

- Citizens of EU/EEA countries with a residence permit according to EEA/EFTA regulations, regardless of when the permit was granted (Laminated card)
- Asylum seekers
- Persons with a student residence permit
- Citizens of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Sweden).
- Persons with a work permit granted for 3 months or less.
- Persons employed by a foreign employer on an assignment of limited duration, and their families.
- Embassy and consulate personnel and their families.
- Persons with a first permit to work granted after 1 January 2003, and their families
- Au pairs with a permit granted after 1 January 2003
- Persons with a specialist work permit granted after 1 January 2003

Note that the new regulations apply to the original permit granted to reside and work in Norway. Note also that cohabitants who have lived together for 2 years or more may apply for a family reunification permit on the same grounds as married couples. Persons with a permit for family reunification with a citizen from a Nordic country (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, and Sweden) may in some cases have the right to free tuition.

### **3. CONCLUSIONS**

The situation for immigrants and refugees in Norway are probably rather good compared with most other European countries. Programmes for language training, the new introduction programme for newly arriving immigrants and refugees and other laws and measures are comparatively better than in most other European countries. The main complaints from those working with integration of immigrants and refugees are both the strict immigration rules and the number of refugees accepted.

The Schengen agreement for immigration has been followed strictly by the Norwegian immigration authorities even with a high demand for immigration due to a need of workforce on the Norwegian work market. The unemployment rate in Norway is less than 3 % but the registered unemployment for ethnic minorities is about 9 %. The main challenge is that some ethnic minority immigrants, particularly recent immigrants and refugees from some African and Asian countries have severe problems with getting employment. Another challenge is that even if many people from ethnic minorities will have access to unskilled labour jobs, there are problems with acceptance of their education and professional skills and there is a glass ceiling for being accepted for advancement and higher positions at the workplaces.

#### **3.1. Common challenges for all sectors**

##### **3.1.1 For first generation immigrants**

Basic Norwegian language skills are necessary for most jobs in Norway. The main challenge is that the vast majority of immigrants have not learnt Norwegian before they arrive in Norway and that they will have to achieve the necessary language skills for the work market in Norway. Besides the necessity to participate in Norwegian language training classes, learning Norwegian may take time for certain immigrant groups, there is now a demand for more adapted language training at the workplaces, a work related language training.

- Firstly, it is necessary to allow immigrants to start working before they have obtained the demanded communication skills in Norwegian to be able to utilise their educational and professional skills.

- Secondly there is a need for improved acceptance of foreign education and skills by Norwegian employers and educational institutions.
- Thirdly there is a need for better converting tools of professional skills obtained in other countries directed to available jobs on the Norwegian work market.

There are under development internal company training programmes for employees that take as a point of departure the individual knowledge from their home country. There are also improvements of training programmes for adaptation and acceptance of foreign educations in vocational training institutions. Besides, the companies will have to work on changing negative attitudes toward employing and giving opportunities for improvements to immigrants at the workplaces.

For immigrants that have been in the country for a while, it is necessary to develop measures in order to improve the knowledge and competence due to rapid changes in modernising production and efficiency. Many immigrant employees who have worked many years in unskilled work have not participated in in-job training programmes in the companies. Particularly there are many immigrants who have worked in unskilled labour for many years and have got work related injuries that make them no longer able to do hard manual labour.

There is a challenge to both improve the Norwegian language skills and have training programmes adapted to lack of education particularly for women. Many immigrant women have come to Norway due to family reunion and many of them have been housewives for several years without learning Norwegian or have got any other professional skills to be able to be employed. They also have problems to follow up their children at school. The main problem for these women are when their husbands are getting unemployed, they are divorced or are being widows with no possibility to support their family.

### **3.1.2 For the second generation immigrants**

There are several challenges for the second generation that has their education from Norway and speaks the language well. In this case the main challenge is to combat discrimination based on name, colour, religion etc. Our main conclusion is that a pro-

active law has to be better implemented. At least the new anti-discrimination law must be provided with a stronger defence for the obvious cases of discrimination.

Due to problems described for the first generation, many of the second generation immigrants will have parents with low income and lack of social integration in the local society. Lack of adapted training programmes and other measures for children with foreign language parents, there are a number of young people with immigrant background who are failing in education. This has also created several problems with some immigrant youth using drugs and participation in criminal activities.

Discrimination of ethnic minorities, often described as problems with immigrants, are also creating difficulties for young ethnic minorities on the work market.

Another challenge are the discussions by Norwegian authorities and in the media how to avoid social clashes between ethnic minorities and the majority society referring to what has happened in France, England and several other countries. Particularly Muslims have recently been exposed to negative attitudes after the printing of caricatures of Muhammad in a Norwegian magazine with following demonstrations against Norwegian embassies. Many Muslim immigrants see this as a crusade against Muslims and that Norway and Norwegians participate in a western racial campaign.

## **3.2 Responses to challenges and opportunities**

### **3.2.1 Production**

Many immigrants are working in production companies, and mainly in the most unskilled jobs in the food stuff industry.

- There is a need for in-job training programmes for improving the communication skills for language minorities at the workplaces. Some companies have good results combining Norwegian language training and professional training directed to improved productivity.
- Some companies need to improve the recruitment processes for recruiting immigrants and refugees to vacancies.

- Many companies have challenges to avoid discrimination and racial attitudes among employees (see work package 6 for measures suggested in the recommendations).
- There is a need for improved vocational training programmes for immigrants in unskilled jobs who will like to improve their opportunities in skilled work and training of immigrant work leaders.

### **3.2.2 Service**

The service sector in Oslo could not have functioned without immigrant workers. Up to 90 % of all cleaners in Oslo have immigrant background. The vast majority of the house keeping personnel in the hotels is immigrants. Most of the unskilled personnel in health, nursing and care institutions in Oslo have immigrant background. Close to 50 % of all taxi drivers in Oslo are immigrants. About 40 % of the employees in the municipal public transport in Oslo are from ethnic minorities. The need in this sector is

Norwegian language training programmes, particularly for employees within health, nursing and care, but also within other municipal services.

Training programmes for vocational skills adapted to language minorities (public transport, health personnel, hotel services etc.)

Improved wages and work conditions in several companies who are employing a majority of immigrants in the most unskilled service sectors.

There are companies within the service sector who have positive measures directed to improve the conditions for immigrants and ethnic and language minorities as the Norwegian national post company who won the Norwegian diversity price 2005. The international cleaning company ISS, SAS/Radisson hotels and Scandic hotels, several municipal nursing homes and most hospitals in Oslo have done several measures to improve the opportunities for immigrant employees.

### **3.2.3 Public service**

Social offices, employment offices, social security offices, municipal services, insurance companies and the police are mostly aware that there is a need for improvement for services directed to the immigrant population.

- The Directorate for Integration and Diversity has announced several measures to improve the services for the immigrant and ethnic minority population.
- A private insurance company is using a benchmarking tool, the Diversity Mirror, to improve their services for ethnic minorities.
- The police are working on several measures to improve their services to a more ethnic diverse society, both by anti-discrimination attitudes and by employing more people from ethnic minorities in the police force.

### **3.2.4 Education**

Information on relevant training possibilities in public, private and educational institutions Most of the training of immigrants is done through municipal training centres. In addition some municipalities are using private training organisation (often semi-private adult training organisations) for specific training opportunities. There are now developing offers of connecting language, vocational and work training (language training at the work place and in connection with in-job training). Besides more and more vocational training institutions are offering training of immigrants as a part of training of skilled workers and it is also a development of private training consultancies as these type of training is now been a business concept as a part of the liberalisation of education in Norway.

In adult education:

- There is a need for better language training programmes for new immigrants to enable immigrants and refugees to adapt to the Norwegian work market (See case study 5 Construction workers and case study 4 Health workers)..
- The training must be more directed to necessary communication skills for employment and in combination with vocational skills for opportunities to professional improvement at the workplaces.
- Higher educational institutions (universities and colleges) must give better opportunities for immigrants to be accepted as student with adapted programmes for foreign language students.
- Vocational training institutes must improve the training programmes for acceptance of professional skills and education from foreign countries (particularly non-European countries).



In primary and secondary education:

- There is a need for better training of language minority children, particularly mother tongue training and Norwegian language training for children with lacking language skills in Norwegian.
- There is a need for more and better skilled minority language teachers (see case study 1 from upper secondary school/vocational school where this need is highlighted).
- The schools need to improve their contacts with minority pupils' parents (see findings in the case study 2 of a primary- and lower secondary school and recommendation for training material).
- There is need for improved programmes to avoid ethnic discrimination and racism in the schools.

### **3.3 Sector specific challenges/opportunities and responses**

The sector specific challenges and opportunities are the need for workforce particularly in unskilled sectors. This is due to both the demographic situation in Norway with an aging population and low birth rate and that the vast majority will have more than 12 year of education. Many (most?) young people will not start working before they are more than twenty and often with an education directed to professional skills. Therefore they will not be willing or satisfied to work in low paid and unskilled jobs. The vast majority of the cleaners and other unskilled workers in Oslo are immigrants or with immigrant backgrounds. The main challenge is due to the class question where immigrants or the ethnic minority population have turned to be an underclass with several exceptions of some highly educated and/or very clever immigrants. The Norwegian government has pronounced that they are aware of a development towards a situation with a link between ethnicity and class, particularly in low paid unskilled labour sectors.

In health, nursing and care there are need of more skilled personnel and therefore hospitals, nursing homes and other health and care institutions have imported nurses and doctors from other countries. But still the main need is low paid auxiliary nurses, low skilled assistants and cleaners. These jobs have turned to be opportunities for many immigrant women, but often without permanent appointments. Some

workplaces have directed in-job training programmes adapted for immigrant (language minority) employees to improve their language and professional skills for a future need of better skilled personnel in the health sector.

### **3.4 Good and bad practice examples**

We will find most of the good practice examples at workplaces with obvious need for recruitment of immigrants. In the national post company, municipal health and nursing institutions, some hotel chains, some big cleaning companies and several production companies they have started to promote a diversity policy, but are still lacking a more proactive attitude in their recruitment and within internal advancement. In sectors with the main objective of low pay workers we find the worst examples as in several building and construction firms importing low paid Polish or Baltic workers on bad contracts, in hotels and restaurants with underpaid immigrant cleaners and housekeepers and smaller cleaning companies. There is an improving awareness of a diversity ideology in most sectors, but still there is a need for unskilled and low-paid workers that are recruiting immigrant workers who are willing to work with low salaries and unaccepted work conditions. The Norwegian labour unions are also aware of this situation and this is discussed on a political level, particularly after Norway has now a left wing government after the parliament election in 2005.

### **3.5 Suggested areas for further investigation/research and case-studies**

There is probably sufficient research in Norway on discrimination. The further need for investigation is within recognition of immigrants skilled and how these skills can be adapted to the Norwegian work market. A new law for adult education (life long learning) gives opportunities for adapting and/or converting immigrants skills within secondary (vocational) training. Practical work experiences are recognised as a part of education for skilled work, but this has to be applied for a larger group of immigrants and refugees to achieve certificates of vocational skills.

### **3.6 Recommendations of training needs**

There is a need for development of pedagogic methods and teaching material:

- Health, environment and security training of immigrants in building and construction. (see case study 5 recommendation for construction workers).

- Training of immigrant (minority language) work leaders in production companies with many immigrant employees.
- Vocational training of immigrants in the cleaning sectors
- Norwegian language training combined with work training for newly arriving immigrants and refugees directed to possible employment
- Profession training for immigrants as caretakers, renovation workers, transport workers (bus, taxi, lorry etc), specialised work on production machines, warehouse workers (fork lift, computer logistic etc), sales staff in specialised shops etc.
- Intercultural training of leaders, union representatives and others in leading positions at workplaces.

### **3.8 Documentation**

To receive free Norwegian tuition, you must document that you have a residence permit that applies. Such documentation includes travelling documents (passport or similar), or documents issued by the Immigration authorities (police). In some cases it may be necessary to show the actual decision that the residence/work permit is based on (from the police, the Directorate of Immigration, or the Immigration Appeals Board).

## PART 2: CASE STUDIES

Case studies in Norwegian institutions and companies

Stiftelsen Mangfold i Arbeidslivet (Diversity at Workplace)

### 1. Introduction

The case studies have been implemented at following workplaces:

- 1 School (Etterstad upper secondary school /vocational training)
- 2 School (Linderud primary school and lower secondary school)
- 3 Municipal Bus Transport Company of Oslo
- 4 Health Care (Nursing home)
- 5 The Construction Workers Union in Oslo
- 6 Wine and liquor Workers Union in Oslo
- 7 University College of Oslo (HIO)
- 8 NRK Norwegian National Broadcasting

Mangfold i Arbeidslivet (MiA) have carried out case studies in 8 Norwegian companies and institutions. The objective with the case studies is to find out both bad and good practice in Norwegian intercultural workplaces.

#### 1.1 General considerations

During the last 40 years there has been a vast immigration of workforce into the Norwegian work market from non-European countries, from 1975 (law of immigration stop) mainly as refugees, asylum seekers, family reunion and marriages with Norwegian citizens. Today 8 % of the Norwegian population are people with two foreign born parents, and in Oslo there is more than 20 % of the population with an immigrant background. Recent statistics give an indication that most immigrants and refugees are employed in unskilled work. Other studies have proved a level of discrimination of ethnic minorities at the work market and that the unemployment is three times higher for immigrants compared with the population as a whole. This indicates ethnic discrimination by employers, but there are also other factors as lack of Norwegian language skills and other professional skills needed for immigrants to fit into many Norwegian workplaces. The case studies will give an indication of some of the obstacles ethnic and language minorities meet on the Norwegian work market

and some suggestions on how to meet the challenges with the ethnic diversity at the workplaces. We have also added some reflections about a spontaneous and rapid growth of immigrant workers from new EU-member countries, particularly from Poland and the Baltic states, in building and construction.

## **1.2 Aims**

The aims of this study are to highlight challenges and possible obstacles with the intercultural workplaces in Norway through case studies at 8 different workplaces and to make comparisons and draw some conclusions linked to our findings. These case studies will give a glimpse of the reality for ethnic minority and immigrant workers from labour immigration, family reunion members, refugees and their offspring at a limited number of workplaces who have been willing to give us the opportunity to do this mapping by filling in forms, participate in focus groups and take part in interviews. We have talked with company and institution leaders, labour union representatives, immigrant workers and other employees in the companies and institutions.

## **1.3 Methods**

The methodology used is questionnaires, interviews and focus groups. At some of the workplaces, questionnaires and focus groups have been used in combination, and in other workplaces the combinations of focus groups and personal interviews have been used. The aim has been to grasp reality as close as possible to the target group, the employees and employers at diverse workplaces. In some work places the focus group was recorded, and transcribed, but mainly the discussions has been written immediately down during interviews while the discussion took place. From MiA always 2-3 of staff was present, and thus it was possible to discuss if we had registered and focused on what was the most important in the focus groups. What people say they are doing, what may observed, what others tell about peoples practices and attitudes may not be equivalent . As the focus groups and personal interviews revealed real interest to tell about their situations and describe matters important to them, we presume still the rehabilitee and the outcome is fairly good.

The validity of the research must be seen relevant to the actual workplace or even a small division of it. Still the findings have general interest to describe the intercultural situation. Several interviews and focus groups have lead to recommendation of what

can be done further to develop the intercultural workplace, and some of the respondents have come up with suggestions and areas of needed training and material development.

The structure of the report from the case studies is a brief introduction and a description of the findings from the eight case studies and some conclusions to the findings. In addition we have added appendixes from the material, all in Norwegian, and even translated some of this material. The findings are also based on the situation analyses in part 1 of this report and more recent reports and statistics.

## **1.4 Issues**

Before we go into the specifics of each case study, we will share some general findings based on the very same.

### **1.4.1 Employment**

Most of the immigrants/ethnic minority employees in the companies investigated are working in unskilled jobs. The reason for this is mostly explained in lack of language competence in Norwegian. Another additional explanation is problems with accept of immigrants education and skills from outside of Norway. Other types of discrimination in the recruitment strategies are not well described or understood by the respondents, but some utters that discrimination is due to negative attitudes to ethnic groups, religion and culture. On the other hand in many of the interviews and focus group discussions there were several Norwegians expressing negative attitudes toward employing i.e. women wearing religious symbols, against praying rooms, halal food in the cantina etc. No-one expressed a negative attitude towards ethnic look if they behaved like Norwegians. On the other hand some expressed scepticism to employ persons from several groups. In the bus company they told that particularly that they were sceptical employing Somalis as they were not always strict on time, which was a necessity when they worked in public transportation. In other companies they talked more about other cultural codes linked to communication between the Norwegians and some muslim groups. Some mentioned that they preferred that it should not be too many from a particular ethnic group at the

workplace as they often would keep to themselves and would not learn proper Norwegian communication.

But mainly on manager level, they were mostly concerned employing people with necessary professional skills, and that the immigrants were able to have a professional communication with other employees or users of the services or customers. This was particularly expressed at the nursing home and the schools, but also expressed by several persons from other workplaces. Most of the companies would probably, if possible, prefer to employ Norwegians if they were available with satisfactory skills. Then it was mainly a need for foreign workforce that forced some of the employers to employ immigrants.

#### **1.4.2 Social integration**

In all the interviews and focus group discussions the social integrations of ethnic minority workers were seen as an important issue. But in many of the interviews and discussion this integration were described more as assimilation (they have to learn how to behave like us, speak fluently Norwegian, accept that this is how we do it here etc.) On some of the workplaces the ethnic minorities kept to themselves in lunch breaks, most of the ethnic minority workers had no social relations with Norwegian after work or in weekends and holidays. At some of the workplaces there had been several attempts to have an active mix of the immigrants into the work environment by international evenings, food and entertainment from different countries etc. But mainly the social integration activities were directed to make the ethnic minorities more adapted into a Norwegian environment. The measures were often described as Norwegian training courses, learning “them” to have a better understanding of on how to behave more like Norwegians, participate in Norwegian activities etc. Some claimed that the Norwegians have to learn to be more open minded, but they had no clear view on how except for courses in cultural training.

There were little acceptance of other religious or cultural behaviour. On the other hand it was by most of those participating in the mapping a secular thinking and agreed that everyone was entitled to have their own (other) religious and cultural values as long as they kept them to themselves. Some were also very positive to a

multicultural work environment and that they learnt a lot from behaviours from other cultures and nationalities. Some also praised the immigrant workers concern about the family, respect for elderly people, more gentle and polite attitudes and respect for authorities. They also praised the hard working, tidiness and punctuality of some ethnic minority.

Generally the ethnic minority employees in the interviews and focus group discussions express more willingness to have Norwegian friends than opposite. The Norwegians did not, with some few exceptions, express that they had no particular interest in having friends from ethnic minorities. On the other hand some of the Norwegians were married to ethnic minority persons; others had neighbours or relatives with ethnic minority backgrounds. But mainly, even if the workplaces were not clearly segregated and all employees had their lunch breaks together, there were few relations outside of work between work companions of Norwegians and ethnic minority groups.

### **1.4.3 Advancement opportunities**

From the findings in the case studies and from many other researches (see part 1, Literature), one of the main complaints from immigrant workers is the lack of advancement opportunities. Many immigrant workers regardless of professional skills or educations will start their career as unskilled workers and stay as unskilled workers for many years with few opportunities to use their professional skills or get possibilities to advance at the workplaces. It is many reasons for this, and from the employer's point of view, the in-job training at the workplaces demand a basic skill in Norwegian language. The employers will also demand communication skills in Norwegian for the employees if they are supposed to communicate professionally with customers, users of the services, work companions and leaders.

To meet the obstacles connected to advancement for immigrants and ethnic minorities in the Norwegian companies and institutions, it's important to develop adapted in-job programmes and other training facilities for advancement opportunities. Adapted training programmes connected to work leadership and



vocational skills in connection with language training are the most profiled measures that could be taken to promote advancement of immigrants and ethnic minorities.

#### **1.4.4 Training facilities**

The case studies have proved the necessity of the development of adapted training material within the different branches and workplaces. The training could both be directed to the management level and to the employees at the actual work places to improve intercultural communication skills. Training booklets and CD rooms directed to the needs for intercultural understanding and training for management and labour union representative level should be developed within the project, and also material for both courses and self studies.

The case studies revealed a lack of material for vocational training for ethnic minority employees in addition to in-job related language training at the work place.

#### **1.5 Concluding remarks**

The case studies in this project have been a necessary contribution to the understanding of what kind of teaching and training material that should be developed from this project. It has been developed some new ideas and proposals from the findings at the workplaces. We admit that these studies should have been both deeper and wider to give a more exact need analyses of how the working life situation is in Norway. All of the companies and institutions in the case studies are from Oslo and these workplaces may be different from other parts of Norway where number of immigrant population in the local community is less. Some of the workplaces in this study have a high percentage of immigrant workers, while others have only a few immigrants or ethnic minorities employed.

## **2 Case Study: Etterstad vocational training school/ upper secondary school**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The school is 116 years old, and has long tradition in offering vocational training to young people. The school is divided into four departments with 20 – 25 teachers each:

- 1) Service and Communication (new name from august 2006)
- 2) Restaurant and food subjects
- 3) Technique and Industrial production
- 4) Electro subjects

There is a total of 76 teachers that are employed at the school included administration, and 11 of them has ethnic minority background.

There are 560 students and 25 % of these had ethnic minority background (23 % of the population in Oslo has foreign born parents). The fact shows that ethnic minority students have a high drop out rate. The management was aware of the importance to combine vocational training and Norwegian language training to be able to follow the training.

The school has a canteen runned by the students and a restaurant with catering open to the public.

### **2.2 Individual interviews**

The survey was conducted among six individual employees of the Etterstad School. Respondents were from both Norwegian and minority ethnic backgrounds and had a suitable mix of both genders. Mentioned below are the details of the respondents.

## 2.3 Focus group

The focus group comprised students from different vocational programmes and the majority had ethnic minority backgrounds.

### Individual interviews

<b>Index Employees</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Profession</b>	<b>Cultural background</b>	<b>Intercultural experience</b>
1	Jan	Male	Principal	Norwegian	Working with students of ethnic minority backgrounds
2	Åse	Female	Vocational teacher	Norwegian	Working with students and colleagues of ethnic minority backgrounds
3	Gloria	Female	Substitute teacher	South American (Chile)	Contact with people of several cultural groups, socially and at work
4	Gulsun	Male	Assistant teacher	African background	Working as a person of ethnic minority background in a Norwegian school
5	Harald	Male	Principal	Norwegian	Working with students and colleagues of ethnic minority backgrounds
6	Kari	Female	Advisor and Teacher	Norwegian	Working with students and colleagues of ethnic minority backgrounds
<b>Students</b>					
7	Saara	Female	Student	Background in Uganda,	Attending a multi ethnic school and neighbourhood. Childhood in Uganda
8	Andrea	Female	Student	Parents from Child/Norway	Attending a multi ethnic school and neighbourhood. Cultural experience from both south America and Norway linked to the parents families
9	Guri	Female	Student	Norwegian	Attending a multi ethnic school and neighbourhood.. friends form ethnic minority groups
10	Usman	Male	Student	Background in Afghanistan	Attending a multi ethnic school and neighbourhood. Childhood in Afghanistan
11	Safi	Male	Student	Background in Morocco	Attending a multi ethnic school and neighbourhood. Childhood in Morocco
12	Hassan	Male	Student	Background in Somalia	Attending a multi ethnic school and neighbourhood. Childhood in Somalia

## **2.4 Challenges**

The analysis of the survey conducted shows that some of the challenges experienced were

Inability to communicate effectively in Norwegian by some teachers at work

- Difficulty in finding work placement for practical training for the ethnic minority students
- Problems in the existing information flow in the workplace
- Lack of communication between the school and parents of students (especially of minority groups)

## **2.5 The students recommendations**

- Employ more teachers with ethnic minority background.
- Bring some consciousness to the teachers about their behaviour towards minority and majority.
- Secure that the students complaints on discrimination are taken seriously by the school management
- Anti- discrimination programs among teachers and students
- Official recognition and action to follow up

## **2.6 Good practice**

The School has made special arrangement for problem solving and conflict resolution by seeking expertise from “Youth against violence” an external organization that gives the school advice when conflicts arise among students.

The employment of a small number of ethnic minority teachers, although they would like to employ more ethnic minority teachers if qualified. Fairly good relationship between the staff of diverse backgrounds, and fairly good relationship among students of diverse backgrounds.

The survey conducted has sought to collect data with issues relating to language, communication styles, cultural codes and practices, relationship between co-workers and issues of discrimination

## **2.7 Language**

A large number of respondents among the staff said that ethnic minority students have difficulties with expressions, technical vocabulary and vocational communication skills.

There is no clear evidence that there is difficulty in understanding colleagues (Norwegian and ethnic minority). The students said ethnic minority teachers had some difficulties in expressing themselves appropriately/ effectively whereas this was not a problem among Norwegians. "Some of the teachers with minority background are hard to understand". No teachers talks about the benefits of speaking several languages. Among the majority students the feedback is good for knowing several languages.

There is no room for speaking other languages than Norwegian in class, because other students won't understand. The respondents said that to keep to Norwegian is also to avoid suspicion of they talking about somebody else etc.

## **2.8 Communication styles**

The following can be inferred from responses collected among the staff:

- Norwegians were more concerned about being more direct in communication style than ethnic minorities.
- Ethnic minorities felt that Norwegians were too direct.
- Both Norwegians and ethnic minorities felt they could speak openly.
- There were no issues regarding people being rude
- In terms of dealing with conflict between students, the school used external help from an organization called "Youth against violence". There was however no platform to deal with conflicts among employees.
- Issues leading to conflict would be resolved directly without any mediation.
- There is not a special hierarchy that made it difficult to communicate with senior administrative personnel or between colleagues.

- There is a tendency for Norwegians to state that for ethnic minority staff it is sometimes necessary to explain things that usually are taken for granted.

The following can be summed up from the responses collected in the student focus group:

- The minority students found that some teachers discriminate them. They have different expectations to the “foreign” students, and the tone was harsher than to ethnic Norwegian students.
- There have also been incidents where the same rules do not apply for both groups, for instance when somebody comes late for class. A girl with Somali background was denied entrance by the teacher while the same week a Norwegian student didn’t have any problem.
- If experiencing problems the students can talk to the school advisor, but the students doubt if he actually will take any action. When one student made a complaint for being discriminated by one teacher, the advisor and other teachers played the incident down and said that it must have been a misunderstanding, because “he is a great guy”.
- Many students feel there is no point in making complaints. The ethnic Norwegian students also found that the teachers treated people differently depending on their background.

## **2.9 Cultural codes and practices**

The following was emphasized among staff:

- There has been no clear indication that issues regarding time (deadlines, being on time, multitasking) are problem issues for both Norwegians and ethnic minority employees.
- There was no provision for prayer rooms at the workplace.
- Wearing religious dress at work was permitted and was not an issue
- The canteen provided food keeping in view cultural dietary requirements, however most employees had the tendency to carry lunch.

The following was emphasized among the focus group participants:

- No big issues on these themes.
- Hijab is accepted. Religion is not a theme.

### **2.10 Relationship between co-workers**

Respondents stated that the relationship with colleagues/ subordinates/ managers as being very good. There were no particular difficulties regarding teamwork and the work place was described as being open and amenable to teamwork both in large groups and paired teams. Teachers were expected to take initiative and work independently

- There was a positive response towards feedback about performance
- There were no specific gender related issues or problems
- Getting the job done meant not only taking initiative but also working in teams
- Relationship between students of Norwegian background and ethnic minority students:
  - There is a tendency that minority students keep for themselves and vice-versa.
  - But there is no open conflict between the minority and majority.

### **2.11 Discrimination**

From the individual interviews among staff the following was expressed:

- Some of the teachers said that there was no discrimination concerning employment of ethnic minorities. However, ethnic minority teachers found it more difficult to get leadership positions and to be promoted compared to ethnic Norwegians
- In terms of access to promotions, most Norwegians said that this was not a problem if they had the right qualifications, but one of the ethnic minority teachers responded that this could be a problem
- In terms of employment practices, the school employs ethnic minority teachers and staff. However, there is a feeling that it is difficult to get qualified applicants for certain positions
- Although there is no evidence of comments about culture, there were comments made about lack of language comprehension by Norwegian teachers and administrative staff, concerning staff of immigrant backgrounds

Discrimination issues were commented by the students in focus group:

- There are few teachers with minority background, even though they are popular among the students.
- There seem to be a disregard towards teachers with minority background, and thus they are not enjoying the same status as ethnic Norwegian teachers. They already commented the cultural codes towards ethnic minority students.

## **2.12 Staff and students**

A number of respondents stated that they had contact with people from other cultural backgrounds. Although there is an element of curiosity dealing with a person of another culture, there is also the challenge of language and understanding that makes the process more challenging. A feeling exists that the Norwegian language is tied to the cultural traditions of Norwegians which makes it difficult for people from another cultural group in understanding expressions that are otherwise considered common. There is no clear negative or positive attitude towards the change in the makeup of the workforce. However, respondents stressed the importance of providing equal opportunities. Although the general attitude towards people of different backgrounds was positive there was a feeling that there could be misunderstanding between people of different backgrounds. A few respondents answered that cultural diversity has challenged their ability to explain issues to ethnic minority students. They felt that it was difficult for these students to cope with the curriculum and Norwegian language. However they responded that they had developed more openness towards other cultures. Working with other cultures however has required special tailor-made solutions. It was found that cultural competence is more necessary than before, but even as important, is the need for resources to assist individual students of minority backgrounds.

The students expressed that the cultural diversity among the students is not really reflected in how the school functions. There is a lot of challenges and improving to be done when it comes to attitudes, consciousness, knowledge and how to take use of the cultural diversity that exists. The respondents also said that there is a tendency that people stick to their own kind.



### 2.1.3 Conclusion

The survey found that the organization has diversified its workforce by employing people from ethnic minority backgrounds. They have used external agencies in conflict resolution. A concern expressed was that dealing with a highly heterogeneous group of individuals requires understanding different cultural codes. There is a feeling that it is not always easy for an employee of one ethnic background to understand the needs of individuals from another background. There is however a tendency for an ethnic minority employee to relate to the common problems (ex: being a person of non Norwegian origin) faced by individuals from other cultural groups.

The students said that there needs to be taken measures to avoid discrimination and to end with the 1st and 2nd rate student environment there is today. They advised to qualify the teachers about their behaviour towards minority and majority and to secure that students complains on discrimination are taken seriously by the school management. They also would like a more diverse staff. Some comments are negative about different cultures, and not so much from co-students as from teachers. But a negative attitude among the teachers reinforces tendencies among the pupils as well.

Recommendations and Training material suggested:

1) A motivation course (pilot course) and Guide (brochure/ simple booklet) to make better opportunities to ethnic minority teachers for promotion and further education

Target group: ethnic minority teachers/management

2) Language lists for secondary school youngsters for vocational training Target group: ethnic minority teachers/management

3) A guide for improving the language and communication within the specific field (cooking, health and care work, sale and service, skilled work).(booklets- vocabulary lists with drawings/pictures) Target group: ethnic minority teachers/management

4) A guide for vocational language in Norwegian according to the three or four department in the school /material and vocabulary lists (illustrated) Target group: ethnic minority teachers/vocational teachers/management/ students at the vocational school

### **3 Case Study: Linderud primary and lower secondary school**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The region is situated in a well established developed area with parents with diverse ethnic minority backgrounds and professions, with working class and lower middle class parents. The school was built in 1964, and rehabilitated in August 2005.

The school is a combined primary and lower secondary school with pupils from 1- 10 class. It is situated in the eastern part of Oslo. The number of pupils from ethnic minority background has increased from 5% in the early 1990's to the current 65 %. There are pupils with parents from 44 different nationalities.

- Number of teachers: 62
- Number of pupils: about 600
- Staff beside teachers count 20, some with ethnic minority background.
- Facilities: Swimming facilities connected to the school
- The dilemma with employing ethnic minority teachers is the number of 44 nationalities within the pupils.

Additional information was given by the principal in June 2006:

The school is gathering ethnic minority parents to build parents groups to strengthen the cooperation with the school: In spring 2006 Turkish parents group, Pakistani parents group has been established. There have also been formed parents groups by Tamil, Kurdish and Somali parents. The school will encourage an organization of representatives from the largest parents group in order to empower the parents to take initiatives and wield influence. Both the ethnic minority teacher, head master and head teacher have been active supporting this involvement in the development of the school. This work will be followed up and a guide will be made. The administration staff will study the successful experiences from Rinkeby school in Stockholm, Sweden and discuss alternatives for their school. They call themselves an international school and will develop the advantages of being an international school in the area.

## 3.2 Interviews and focus groups

### Individual interviews

Gender	Profession	Cultural background	Intercultural experience
Male	Principal	Norwegian	Working with colleague of ethnic minority background and contact with parents and students
Female	Bilingual teacher	Pakistan	Contact with ethnic diversity backgrounds, friends, colleagues and parents
Female	Teacher with special responsibility for social matters	Norwegian	Working as a person of ethnic minority background and parents/pupils
Female	Teacher special responsibility for social matters	Norwegian	Working with students and colleagues of ethnic minority backgrounds
Female	Teacher	Norwegian	Working with students and colleagues of ethnic minority backgrounds

### 3.2.1 Challenges

We have to focus on the cultural competence the school has among the teachers- and to design methods to offer education to benefit each individual. The school has only one teacher with ethnic minority background employed at present. In return this teacher has managed to have an important impact on the environment in creating an understanding for a multicultural workplace and learning space for the children.

Special note: Diversity contributes greatly to cultural and international knowledge. Students will get this from attending this school.

### 3.3 Good practice examples

In spring 2006, Turkish parents group and Pakistani parents group has been established. There have also been meetings with Tamil and Kurdish parents to involve diverse ethnic parents groups. The plan is to organize and influence the school to take better care of the development of the school. The ethnic minority teacher and the leadership of the school have taken this initiative and will follow up the further process.

The school is open to take more initiatives to make a diverse school for everybody.

### **3.3.1 Language**

It was found that language was a challenge. Among the staff there is only one colleague with ethnic minority background who speaks Norwegian fluently.

### **3.3.2 Communication styles**

Cultural communication styles were an issue

- There was no problem of people being too direct
- One could speak openly in the workplace
- There was an opinion that Norwegians could be rude and sometimes talked badly about immigrants
- Tried to solve problems through discussions
- Most would talk to the Principal, team manager when experiencing difficulties
- All the respondents said they talked with the employees and bosses and dealt with them as colleagues.
- Do you tell others, or do you keep it to yourself? All the respondents said they told others when they encountered a problem and discussed it with the persons involved if needed.
- Things that are usually taken for granted needed to be explained when talking to parents of immigrant background.
- If conflicts occurred among pupils, they used a program called “Olweus” a method for solving conflicts, by involving parents

### **3.3.3 Cultural codes and practices**

Differences in concepts of time were sometimes found to be an issue at meetings, but not among the teachers.

There were no prayer rooms available at work

People could wear religious dress. Wearing a turban/ veil at work was permitted (only one employed with ethnic minority background, and she was not using veil)

Most of the employees brought their own food “Norwegian way” with packed lunch.

The respondents said there was no canteen. Both staff and pupils carried their lunch.

### **3.3.4 Relationship between co-workers**

The relationship with colleagues/ subordinates/ managers was described as good. There were no particular difficulties in working in teams but the ethnic minority teacher responded that the teachers in general had different attitudes to ethnic minority colleagues, and did not show respect as for Norwegian colleagues, these examples are however exceptions.

- Employees were expected to work on their own and in teams. The ethnic minority teacher had in the team cooperation with other teachers to follow instructions rather than to be valued as a real team partner. This was again an exception as the ethnic minority teacher had this experience in relation to only a few Norwegian teachers. The role as a bilingual teacher turned in this case out to be as an “assistant” teacher and not a real partner.
- The teacher and also administrative staff gave feed back to each other.
- There is always hierarchy in the organisation as a school, but this is not shown in formal dressing, ways of speaking and addressing each other. This informal style in dressing and behaving is common in most work places in Norway, although there are a few exceptions.
- Everybody was expected to contribute at work
- It was Very important to maintain good relations with colleagues.
- When you work with humans, good relations are important so as do a good job towards the children.
- There were no gender related issues at the work-place and there was no problem in taking instructions from women managers.

### **3.3.5 Discrimination**

Employees regardless of their background had the same opportunities for promotion if they have the relevant competence, but the principal pointed to the necessity to employ ethnic minority teachers and continue to develop the school (see above). The respondents were not offered promotions as regulations stated that teachers have to apply for this.

Although there is no evidence of comments about culture, the only ethnic minority teacher felt sometimes she was reduced to an assistant of a Norwegian teacher. On

the other hand, she was highly respected by her by Norwegian teachers and administrative staff, concerning staff of immigrant backgrounds. She also made food for all the teachers once a year, and had many personal friends there.

The ethnic minority teacher responded that she did experience negative comments about other cultures, but was not such a big problem. In discussions there were also misunderstandings and perceptions of Norwegians.

### **3.4 General conclusion**

A number of respondents stated that they had contact with people from other cultural backgrounds. They also had contact with friends of their own children who had ethnic cultural background. Although there is an element of curiosity dealing with a person of another culture, there is also the challenge of language and understanding that makes the process more challenging. A feeling exists that the School need to employ and qualify ethnic minority staff to cope with the number of children with ethnic minority background. This will be important to continue to be a multiethnic and diverse school and to promote good cooperation with parents. A few respondents answered that cultural diversity has challenged their ability to include pupils, explain issues better to others, and to learn about other cultures.

#### **3.4.1 Comments at the Institutional level**

The survey found that the organization has developed a good understanding of diversity question in spite of only one ethnic minority teacher employed. They emphasized they were a school for a diverse neighbourhood. They talked very positive about the influence of the only ethnic minority teacher and her impact on the environment, colleagues and also pupils. There is a feeling that it is not always easy to find qualified ethnic minority teachers to strengthen the diversity of teachers employed. The school utilizes the ethnic minority teacher to mobilize parents and cooperation with the parents although this should be a responsibility of the whole school.

### **3.4.2 Recommendations**

The school needs to follow up on the establishment of ethnic minority parents groups. This should be integrated in the school year plans and teachers should be given time and credit for the work they are initiating.

Training material suggested: A guide to develop the workplace by involving the ethnic minority parents in steady groups (small handbook- brochure)

Target group: Ethnic minority parents, teachers, management, parents organizations



## 4. Case Study: Sporveisbussene /The Municipal buses

### 4.1 Introduction

The Municipal buses are Owned by the Oslo Sporveier” (The municipal public transport of Oslo), owned by the Municipality of Oslo. AS Oslo Sporveier was founded in 1927,

- 330 buses
- 900 employees, whereas 85 % are bus drivers
- Budget in 2005 600 millions NOK (80 milions Euros)
- Challenge; Greater competition with regard to laws and regulations in the European Union/
- Privatization of tasks

The overall strength is the open atmosphere among the bus drivers and leadership. The ethnic minority bus drivers seemed to be a fully part of the “workers collective” During both the focus group and individual interviews this was the most striking feature.

#### Interviews and focus group

The bus division in Oslo were contacted in May 2006 and both a focus group discussion and personal interviews took place. The interviews highlighted some of the issues and gave a good description of the situation. In the case study following the following took place:

- Focus group discussion with seven persons, two leaders, one team leader, 4 bus drivers, including a female bus driver from Pakistan.
- 3 individual interviews with bus drivers and one from the management, not participating in the focus group.

The interview consisted of a group of 4 respondents. An attempt has been made in summarizing attitudes both as focus groups and individually.

## **4.2 Challenges**

There are competition with regard to laws and regulations in the European Union. The management and the bus drivers both tried to avoid “outsourcing” /privatization. Most of the employees had been working in the company for years, and did not welcome a change that would disturb their routines and good relationship with each other.

## **4.3 Good practice**

The focus group agreed that there were positive attitudes of fellowship among the bus drivers and there was good relation between the management and the bus drivers. The work place included foreign female bus drivers, although the profession is still considered to be masculine and not fit for a female, even in some places in Norway.

### **4.3.1 Language**

The respondents said that this was mainly a problem if messages were given from the traffic leader to the ethnic minority bus driver. The ethnic minority bus driver could give extra good service because of the language competence, especially to people from the same area in for example Pakistan.

### **4.3.2 Communication styles**

In terms of cultural communication styles, the female bus driver said that the language and cultural codes were very direct, but after a **while you** became used to it. The frank tone was still not very rude, but including.

Some of the respondents mentioned that the problem with misunderstandings could as well be between people from their own society. The elderly Pakistani bus drivers did not expect to have a female Pakistani as a colleague. This had to be proved during some time to be adjusted and spoken openly about.

The communication style is often very direct, and some language problems are still there. The respondents did not find the hierarchy rigid and not very apparent in their

own organization. The respondents said that when they had the opportunity to know each other well, the communication style was not a big issue. Statements are usual on the work place, but nothing to take too serious, Commandos are often “wrapped in”.

The respondents said that they solved conflicts by discussing them, and they had therefore experience with communication.

### **4.3.3 Cultural codes and practises**

The respondents with ethnic minority backgrounds would like to know more about cultures, In some cultures there are more hierarchy, and we have a flat structure in our organization. This may lead to too much respect while others do not show respect. These are challenges.

The respondent from Turkey (a bus driver) said in a personal interview that new competence is always necessary, and very necessary to know even more about other cultures. Sometimes people misunderstand each other because they have different backgrounds, especially when coming to jokes. For example, males hug each other, but this is not so common among Norwegians or with some other cultures. Males in Turkey also held hands or walk arm in arm. This can be misunderstood. Now these attitudes are changing also in Turkey buy are probably interpreted as homosexuality.

The respondents said that commands as using the “finger” may be misunderstood very quickly. He said; “This must come to an end”. The leader was perceived as if he would fire the person.

To whistle may be seen as very bad. The cultural codes for calling people are important. Who is going to learn whose culture? These things have to be informed about. Most of the employees used their salary number (number for the employees) instead of names. In some sense they were impersonalised, but they claimed that this was not a big issue. The Norwegians were more concerned about being more direct in communication style than ethnic minorities.

Time related issues were not a problem in particular. Everybody has to be punctual to keep their job. The ethnic minority background participate little in the union of the building industry in Norway, and there exist a wish for these workers to earn money and not participate in the society, thus maintaining a system with “black work”. One of the respondents said that flirting is not so usual with immigrant females.

#### **4.3.4 Cultural dietary requirements and uniforms**

The canteen at the workplace does not have adapted food to suit ethnic minorities, but this was not seen as a problem amongst the respondents. **For parties the workplace would arrange for the muslim employees to be served Halal meat, equivalent to kosher for jewish** The canteen is expensive so people bring packed food. Halal meat was served on Christmas Eve. Halal meet is meet that is butchered in the appropriate way from a muslim point of view.

People could wear clothes identified with religion. The Muslim female respondent said that she was not so interested. If headgear should be used, it should fit to the uniform.

#### **4.3.5 Relationships between co-workers**

Respondents mentioned that it was not a special problem dealing with colleagues, and that the relationship between co- workers with diverse backgrounds were good. They became friends if they had interest in common.

#### **4.3.6 Discrimination**

Some of the respondents said that there was no discrimination concerning employment of ethnic minorities. They have not experienced enough applicants, but have to have knowledge competence to obtain these jobs. The company promote better jobs for ethnic minority drivers. The company have four traffic leaders already with ethnic minority backgrounds.

#### **4.4 General comments and notes**

- The immigrant employer must improve cultural and language competence in Norway. You have to adapt to the society. The respondent said that this would make a better workplace.
- Cultural evenings could be increased. Experience is that Pakistani with families are coming on special events, but the Tamil families are joining. Special measures could be taken. Christmas parties were more popular to day than earlier, but very few from Pakistan attended.
- Courses for Cultural codes between colleagues/ leaders /employees
- Once a year the company had a weekend with voluntarily participation. This could be developed further to include ethnic minority workers even more.

#### **4.5 Recommendations**

Communication training courses, meetings and seminars on intercultural issues.  
Booklet /leaflet with examples of Communication skills needed for bus drivers and technical leaders Target group: Employers with ethnic minority background /management

## 5. Case Study: MABO/ Majorstua Nursing home

### 5.1 Introduction

- The nursing home was opened in 1984 with good outdoor space and garden, own canteen that was also used by old people in the neighbourhood, residents (patients), relations and employees.
- They make all the food at the nursing home and also to provide to the home aid services, the activity centre, near by nursing homes and local care homes and its day care centre.

### 5.2 Employees

250 employees and in addition 250 extras (weekend extras and by sick leaves)

It is 9 leaders and 2 office functions for the leaders

25 nationalities, about 30 % with ethnic minority background, one department has a higher percentage with ethnic minority employees. They come mainly from the Philippines, but also from Bosnia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sri Lanka, Somalia etc.

There is a higher percentage of ethnic minorities among the extra employees.

#### Residents

About 140 residents, but very few from ethnic minorities (to give special service to a person from Bosnia, they use an employee with the same background).

Total number of respondents	32
Number of ethnic Norwegians	19
Others (ethnic minorities)	13

### 5.3 Attitudes towards diversity

42 % of ethnic Norwegians have social contact with colleagues of immigrant backgrounds at work, while 68 % of them had social contact with colleagues of ethnic minority background outside the workplace. The corresponding numbers for ethnic minorities are 100% and 61 %.

#### *Social attitudes:*

47 % of ethnic Norwegians responded that diversity creates a better social climate, where as 61 % of the ethnic minority group responded positively.

#### *Creativity:*

52 % of ethnic Norwegians responded that diversity increases creativity at work place.

The corresponding number was 53 %.

#### *Communication*

63 % of ethnic Norwegians responded that communication within the organization becomes more difficult because of diversity, while 38 % of immigrants responded similarly.

#### *Conflicts*

21 % of ethnic Norwegians responded that conflicts within the organization increased because of diversity, while 15 % of immigrants responded similarly.

#### *Customer relations*

15 % of ethnic Norwegians responded that customer relations (the elderly/ the relatives) deteriorated because of diversity, while 7 % of immigrants responded likewise.

### **5.4 Cultural Codes and practices**

#### *Language*

63 % of ethnic Norwegians meant that immigrants needed fluency in the Norwegian language whereas 53 % of immigrants said the same.

#### *Food and time*

A few Norwegians responded to questions related to food and time.

The immigrants did not answer questions related to these issues.

#### *Clothing*

Only 5 % of ethnic Norwegians said that immigrants way of clothing was acceptable, while 15 % of immigrants responded positive to this question. A great number did not answer this question, both ethnic Norwegians and Ethnic minority employees.

There have been divergent responses from ethnic Norwegians and ethnic minority employees on a majority of issues. The main differences are with regards to language fluency and need for social contact. The ethnic minorities have a greater interest to have more contact with Norwegian co-workers. The questionnaires gave a general impression, but were of little value to catch specific issues concerning the possibilities/ exclusion /inclusion questions and other issues regarding culture and possible discrimination.

## 5.5 Interviews and focus groups

The Nursing home agreed to have focus groups. However, the good relationship from earlier can be easily destroyed if research work is undertaken too often as they had already answered previous questionnaires..

Two focus groups were carried out at Majorstutunet Nursing home, one with leaders and leading nurses, and the other one with only ethnic minorities' employees.

The first group had four participants while the second group had respondents with ethnic minority employees. In the first group the respondents had only Norwegian backgrounds. There were more women than men in the group with ethnic minority employees. Mentioned below are the details of the respondents.

Index	Name	Gender	profession	Cultural background	Intercultural experience
1	Petter	Male	Director of the Institution	Norwegian	Working with colleagues with ethnic minority backgrounds
2	Ellen	Female	Nurse with responsible for education and courses	Norwegian	Staying for many years in Canada, and working with colleagues of ethnic minority backgrounds
3	Anne	Female	Nurse	Norwegian	Working with colleagues with ethnic minority backgrounds
4	Jan	Male	Assistant head of the Institution	Norwegian background	Working with colleagues with ethnic minority backgrounds
5	Arshad	Male	Nurse (without vocational education)	Norwegian Pakistani	Ethnic minority background from a village in Pakistan, working with many ethnic minority colleagues at the nursing home
6	Lilly	Female	Registeretd nurse	From Philippines (3 years in Norway)	Ethnic minority background from Philippines, working with many ethnic minority



					colleagues at the nursing home
7	Judith	Female	Student Nurse	Norwegian	Student, Own background from East Africa, colleagues at the work placement with diverse ethnic minority backgrounds
8	Fibi	Female	Nurse (without vocational education)	From the Caribbean	Own background from Trinidad, and working in an intercultural workplace, also living among neighbours with ethnic minority backgrounds
9	Sandra	Female	Registered nurse	From Philippines (3 years in Norway)	From own background and married to a Norwegian, working in an intercultural workplace

## 5.6 Challenges

The analysis of the survey conducted shows that some of the challenges experienced were

- Inability to communicate effectively in Norwegian by some ethnic minority employees at work
- Difficulty in tolerating different cultural codes coming to head wear and not learning the language properly (uttered in the Norwegian group) whereas the Ethnic Minority group did not find any difficulties in this matter and even pointed at one of the women in the focus group to show how tolerant people were at their work place (and the respondent wearing a veil said that she was not a Muslim)
- Problems within the ethnic minority community were that one respondent of the ethnic group felt discriminated by her own national colleagues. This could also be because of personal differences and misunderstanding of each other.
- Internal courses and education of staff (especially directed to minority groups).  
The Norwegian group wanted to know more about other cultures.

## 5.7 Good practices

The Work place had social events on the day of FN (United Nations) with food and entertainment representing all the ethnic minority employees.

The work place had undertaken tailor-made courses for ethnic minority nurses and unskilled nurses during the last three years.

Based on the data collected, the following recommendations can be made

Language training for ethnic minority employees

Improvement of knowledge about other customs and cultural traits of minority cultures at the workplace.

The survey conducted has sought to collect data with issues relating to language, communication styles, cultural codes and practices, relationship between co-workers and issues of discrimination.

### **5.7.1 Language**

The Norwegian focus group agreed upon lack of sufficient language competence among ethnic minorities. They said that ethnic minority employees have difficulties with expressions, reports and communication skills. The lack of Norwegian language competence was a hindrance to work efficiently, and also leads to misunderstandings. Ethnic minority employees felt they had some difficulties in expressing themselves appropriately/ effectively whereas this was not a problem among Norwegian staff and leaders' participation in the focus group.

### **5.7.2 Communication styles**

The following can be inferred from responses collected

- Norwegians were more concerned about that it was important to be direct in the communication style.
- Ethnic minorities felt that there were no special problems with being direct in the communication style.
- Both Norwegians and ethnic minorities felt they could speak openly.
- There were no issues regarding people being rude, except personal conflicts independent of ethnicity.
- In terms of dealing with conflict between colleagues, work place used the union and solved problems internally..
- Issues leading to conflict would be resolved directly with the persons involved.

- There is not a special hierarchy that made it difficult to communicate with senior administrative personnel or between colleagues.
- There is a tendency for Norwegians to state that for ethnic minority staff it is sometimes necessary to explain things that usually are taken for granted, and this was a special problem that the work place had employed ethnic minority work force without sufficient Norwegian language competence. The respondents said that to be able to document and to communicate with the elderly residents and with colleagues in the nursing home, the ethnic minority employees in general had to improve their Norwegian communication competence.

### **5.7.3 Cultural codes and practices**

There has been no clear indication that issues regarding time (deadlines, being on time are problem issues for both Norwegians and ethnic minority employees).

There was no provision for prayer rooms at the workplace.

Wearing religious dress at work was permitted, but the Norwegian focus group did not appreciate this so much. The ethnic minority focus group felt this was not a problem, and some used head gear even if they were not Muslims.

The canteen had no special provisions for ethnic cultural dietary requirements, however some of the ethnic minority employees carried food for everybody at their department at times.

### **5.7.4 Relationship between co-workers**

Respondents in both focus groups stated that the relationship with colleagues in different positions/ subordinates/ managers as being very good, but the Norwegian focus group found the lack of Norwegian skills affecting the relationship to some of the ethnic minority employees.

- There were no particular difficulties regarding teamwork except for language problems and the work place was described as being open to teamwork at department level
- Nurses (all categories) were expected to take initiative and work independently
- There was a positive response towards feedback about work performance, and negative feedback when necessary
- There were no specific gender related issues or problems

- Getting the job done meant not only taking initiative but also working in teams and taking good care for the elderly staying in the nursing home.

### **5.7.5 Discrimination**

Respondents in both focus groups said that there was no discrimination concerning employment of ethnic minorities.

- In terms of access to promotions, most Norwegians said that this was not a problem if they had the right qualifications, but the “best position achieved” at the work place as ethnic minority employees was as a team leader of the nurses.
- In terms of employment practices, the nursing home was dependent of recruiting qualified staff, and could not only choose Norwegian staff (not available).
- Although there are comments about wearing scarf, there were comments that it was interesting to learn about other cultures in both focus groups.

### **5.8 General comments and notes**

All the respondents stated that they had contact with people from other cultural backgrounds at the workplace. There is a negative attitude among Norwegian staff that the language and communication situation was not satisfactory, although they had a language course earlier to qualify ethnic minority staff. However, respondents stressed the importance of communication in both group, and the ethnic minority focus group felt included by the Norwegian colleagues and administrative staff.

However, all respondents responded that they had developed more openness towards other cultures except for the one who had problems with communication within her own ethnic group who were all registered nurses. Working with other cultures however, was a special challenge requiring special communication skills and social awareness. Social awareness is more necessary than only working within a more homogenous group. There is a feeling that it is not always easy for an employee of one ethnic background to understand others from other cultural backgrounds, and not always from their own cultural background. Both cultural and social competence is necessary in the further development of the workplace.

## **5.9 Comments at the Institutional level**

The survey found that the organization was important to continue training of ethnic minority staff, and also work with diverse cultural attitudes and traditions. They felt it was important to mobilize the ethnic minority group to improve their skills in language and communication. It was felt that this was the responsibility of the ethnic minority group even more than that at the institutional level, also since they had been given tailor-made courses which had been successful for those involved.

Comparison of respondents at individual interviews (se below) and focus groups  
The main difference between the individual interviews and the focus groups is the focus on sentiments and attitudes. It is probably easier to capture these attitudes in a focus group because issues will be highlighted as issues and not only with a personal focus. The main difference between the findings was the resistance against wearing scarf at work place. The focus group with Norwegian respondents only also emphasized the importance of language skills even more than on individual level. The focus group respondents with ethnic minority employees were very satisfied with the communication with Norwegian colleagues, while the respondents in the individual interviews were more interested in stronger social contact with Norwegian colleagues.

## **5.10 Recommendations**

Training material to be recommended:

1) Guide to develop a multicultural workplace (best practices...)/about culture, communication and cultural codes for behaving, religion, clothing, food traditions and common ritual and habits (the film planned to cover this field and the guide to follow it) Target group: ethnic minority health workers/management (to be used in pilot course)

2 and 3) Communication guide for ethnic minority health workers ( communication skills in practical situations (booklets/book)

Target group: ethnic minority health workers/management

## **6 Case Study: Construction and building workers Union in Oslo**

### **6.1 Introduction**

The Construction Workers Union in Oslo was contacted in June and agreed to share their experiences with us. We had a focus group discussion and an in depth interview about how to organize Polish workers with the Union General Secretary.

The challenges are greater competition with regard to laws and regulations in the European Union and to include the Polish construction workers in the work force and to be a union for all construction workers working in Norway.

### **6.2 Focus group discussion**

The focus group was of four elected representatives at top level in the Union, and one Polish female working with organizational tasks.

The interview consisted of a group of 4 respondents. An attempt has been made in summarizing attitudes both as focus groups and individually. Additionally the personal experience of the General Secretary is attached.

Best practice was the attitudes to foreign workers and the strategy to organize them (see appendix with a description by the General Secretary).

### **6.3 Language**

The respondents said that this was the main problem due to security and communication. The respondents said that this should be taken seriously to understand and be understood. This is not only the language, but also misunderstanding of security. Misunderstandings are frequent. The employees do not take responsibility, and less than in other sectors in Norway. They cannot employ them because they do not understand Norwegian. They also say they are not adapting to the Norwegian working life, and the demand from the Union is that nobody should work under the minimum wages, The union representatives said that the employees used different reasons for payment It is the cheap labour force that is important for the employees. We also have a need for labour in this sector.

The respondents said it could be a problem to understand, but mostly not in the daily work situation. Sometimes there was a need for an interpreter.

It is a big communication problem with understanding because of follow up instructions and this lead to more foremen /interpreters (or it takes longer time to explain) than what would be necessary in other work situations.

#### **6.4 Communication styles**

In terms of cultural communication styles, the following observations were made. Some of the respondents mentioned the need for language training for the ethnic minority construction workers. The respondents were only Norwegians except for the Polish organizational part time employee. Norwegians are often diffuse and not direct enough. It is a cultural collision, because Norwegian leaders are not direct and precise enough.

The communication style is often very direct, but the language problems are still there. The respondents do not find people too rude, and the hierarchy is not very steep in Norway, (understatements are usual, and commandos are often “wrapped in”).

#### **6.5 Dealing with conflict**

The respondents said that they solved conflicts and had succeeded to be an office for the Polish workers. They were able to offer help and fellowship. People come with all problems to the Union. The foreign workers come with all kind of the union, tax problems, problems with housing, and children’s problems.

#### **6.6 Cultural codes and practises**

Time related issues were not a problem in particular. Everybody has to be punctual to keep their job. The ethnic minority background participate little in the union of the building industry in Norway, and there exist a wish for these workers to earn money and not participate in the society, thus maintaining a system with “black work”.

## **6.7 Relationships between co-workers**

Respondents mentioned that it was not a special problem dealing with colleagues, subordinates or managers. Language problems were said to be the main issue faced when it came to team work and participation in projects. Often communication had to be in English or the body language. Respondents felt that it was necessary to improve all the time and important to get the job done as a team.

## **6.8 Discrimination**

Special topics were focused:

- Plans for language courses, one free course has been run.
- One language course can be directed to health, security, AOF (The workers information Union). These courses should be tailor made. The workers are from Poland and Baltic. Those who are coming alone are receiving work for minimum wages. The other challenge is firms in Baltic (Latvia, Lithuanian and also some from Eastland) or in Poland through. They are recruited in their home countries thought these firms and they operate with two contracts. They try to cooperation with these workers in firms and also to organize these workers.

Another challenge is that people are not receiving their wages for holidays etc. New firms are established. Adecco is organizing Polish workers (150 all over Norway). The union has organized some of these (most of their 200). It means that they will be comprised by the law and regulations.

## **6.9 Comment from the General Secretary of the Union**

The union is a union for construction workers in Norway and not for ethnic Norwegians in particular. (The union organizes Germans, polish, Danish Swedes, Finnish construction workers). The conception for trade union is different from their home countries.

## **6.10 Recommendations**

The need to develop communication skills in Norwegian on the work place site is necessary. This could be both in Polish/Baltic languages and Norwegian



(booklets/books). (Two levels- new comers and for those who has picked up simple communication skills in Norwegian)- Can be applicable within the project if written in Polish/German, Baltic languages/German, in Polish/Swedish, Baltic languages/Swedish, in Polish/English, Baltic languages/English, in Polish/Norwegian, Baltic languages/Norwegian

- 1) Booklet/book: A simple daily communication skills for working as a construction worker (both in Norwegian and for example Polish) Target group: Foreign workers /polish workers
- 2) Booklet/ book: The advanced edition should contain subjects for safety, secure working conditions, rules and regulations in the host country, the organizations in the work life for construction workers. Target group: Foreign workers /polish workers
- 3) A guide (brochure/ booklet) for native workers to include the new workers from East Europe in the collective challenges and regulations as far as possible Target group: Union representatives/ Norwegian construction workers

## **7 Case Study: Arcus, wine and liquor manufacturing company**

### **7.1 Introduction**

The number of employees at ARCUS with ethnic minority background is 20%. There are 240 employees and they are all members in the Union. Employees from ethnic minority backgrounds participate in Union meetings and one of the union leaders is a person belonging to an ethnic minority background (Pakistani).

### **7.2 Challenges**

#### **7.2.1 Language**

- The respondents said that language could be a problem.
- Some of the employees with ethnic minority backgrounds had problems expressing themselves
- One of the leaders of the wear house was Danish whom all the respondents had problems understanding.
- One of the workers had applied for further studies, but was refused because of a lack of language competence in Norwegian.
- Some ethnic Norwegians were using a dialect which was difficult to understand.
- The respondents said communication with ethnic minority colleagues could be a problem, especially communication on the phone.

#### **7.2.2 Communicating styles**

- The respondents said that communication style was very direct
- In terms of being open at the workplace some answered that it was not necessarily true. Some had problems with this at the initial phase but got over it later
- The respondents dealt with conflict by talking openly about issues however, mention was made that there were a few trouble makers.
- How do you address others (your boss/ your colleagues/ your employees/...)
- When it came to dealing with the boss, respondents said that this differed, depending on individuals. Some did not maintain eye contact with the boss,

but this depends on position and rank. Some of the bosses liked to be looked upon as the boss.

- When one encounters a problem, things are discussed openly both in the Union and at workplace.
- Norwegians responding to a question of whether they explained things that are normally taken for granted said they used time to explain and were careful not to use difficult expressions.

### **7.2.3 Cultural codes and practises**

- Differences in concepts of time (e.g. 'being on time'/ dealing with many things at the same time) was not a special problem (production requires punctuality), Coming late from breaks, did not depend on ethnicity at the workplace. Outside the work-place, this could be a problem in for example Pakistani weddings.
- There has not been a demand for prayer rooms at the work-place. Some go to the wardrobe room to pray. Praying during working hours is difficult in a production factory in order not to affect the productivity.
- Respondents said that wearing religious dress was no problem, and one worker used a veil, but this was no problem. Caps are used both by ethnic Norwegians and ethnic minorities.
- The respondents said the cultural dietary provisions at the work place were fine, and the canteen personnel gave information and wrote down the ingredients in various dishes. They had fish and eggs as well. Turkey and chicken were served during feasts. They had mostly bread in the canteen.

### **7.2.4 Relationship between co-workers**

- Relationships with colleagues, subordinates managers was described as good
- The workforce was very diverse and challenging with females, males, ethnic minorities, Norwegians working together in teams
- The respondents said that they had to work in teams and take initiative sometimes to get the job done.

- There was hierarchy at the work place. New bosses were more aware of their roles as bosses, but this is independent of ethnic background. These are often young Norwegians with little experience. This creates a problem, as it did not respect the workers for their experience.
- It was important to maintain good relations with fellow workers.
- Many answered that if relationships between co-workers were good; the job got done more efficiently.
- There were no gender related problems or issues and it was not a problem for the respondents to take orders from female managers.

### **7.2.5 Discrimination**

- all employees regardless of their background probably had the same opportunities for promotion
- The respondent with a Pakistani background was offered a leading position. He had been a foreman in a previous work place, but did not want to continue in this position at Arcus; He was now leader at the work place branch committee, but still working full time in production.
- Although everyone had the same opportunities, foremen sometimes favours some of the employees
- Some of the respondents experienced negative reactions during the controversy about the drawings of Mohammed in January 2006, but this did not lead to serious discrimination. There was no tolerance for racism, both in the union and in the management. Some defamatory paintings that were Painted on the walls had not been tolerated and these things has been stopped at once and letters of protest given from the leadership and union to all the employees.

The courses planned for reading and writing will be both for Norwegian and ethnic minorities. (8 weeks. 130 hours during the working hours and paid for by the factory).

The leadership needs more information in intercultural communication. The union has offered such courses for them, because the leadership training has not improved their skills in treatment of people, cooperation and understanding.

Diversity leadership is absent at present, and should be improved. The future plans are very unsure both for the workers and the leadership as the factory will probably be moved. People in key positions are now looking for other jobs.

Ethnic minority employees need to take courses to build up self confidence in order to take on more responsibility and positions both in the union and the management.

#### Good practice examples

1. The respondents said there was no tolerance for racism and back biting at the work environment. Issues are discussed openly to create a good environment. Some years ago this could have been a problem. Now the ethnic background does not matter because they have gotten more intercultural experience. They look at people as individuals. The general competence of different cultures is increasing in the Norwegian society, and this is influencing the work place.
2. Learning from ethnic minorities as well as from other Norwegian colleagues.

#### Recommendations

Courses for both Norwegians and ethnic minorities for those with reading and writing difficulties (ongoing project, soon to be initiated)

Leadership courses for the management in "Social relationship" issues.

Booklet for training course – "stay together- with courage- course" in a intercultural workplace, 3 half days (12 hours) Target group: Ethnic minority workers

2) Leadership training in cultural competence/ Managing diversity- a pilot-course for the leadership (with a handbook to follow) Piloting the video will be useful.

Target group: Management, newly recruited leaders.

## 8 Case Study: HiO University College of Oslo (HiO)

### 8.1 Introduction

HiO is a university college with approximately 11.000 students, 14 unites and about 1100 employees. The studies have been conducted at the technical department with about 50 employees, mainly employing cleaners, care takers, ITC services and other practical and technical matters at the HiO. Besides, representatives from the department of intercultural issues took place in the focus group discussion. The questionnaires were sent out to the employees at the technical department divided in operation and ITC.

Total number of respondents	27
Number of ethnic Norwegians	18
Others (ethnic minorities)	9

### 8.2 Attitudes towards diversity

22 % of ethnic Norwegians have social contact with colleagues of immigrant backgrounds at work, while 44 % of them had social contact with colleagues of ethnic minority background outside the workplace.

The corresponding numbers for ethnic minorities are 66% and 33 %.

*Social attitude/environment:* 27 % of ethnic Norwegians responded that diversity creates a better social climate, where as 55 % of the ethnic minority group responded positively.

*Creativity:* 38 % of ethnic Norwegians responded that diversity increases creativity at work place. The corresponding number was 22 %.

*Communication:* 33 % of ethnic Norwegians responded that communication within the organization becomes more difficult because of diversity, while 11 % of immigrants responded similarly.

*Conflicts:* 5 % of ethnic Norwegians responded that conflicts within the organization increased because of diversity, while none of immigrants responded similarly.

*Customer relations:* None has responded on this issue.

### **8.3 Cultural Codes and practices**

*Language:* 66 % of ethnic Norwegians meant that immigrants needed fluency in the Norwegian language whereas 55 % of immigrants said the same.

*Food and time:* 33 % of the Norwegians are positive to a variety of food selection whereas 55 % of ethnic minorities responded positively.

Neither of the groups answered questions related to time issues.

*Clothing:* Only a few answered this question.

There have been divergent responses from ethnic Norwegians and ethnic minority employees on some issues. The main differences are with regards to language fluency where the ethnic minority group reduced the problem of fluency. They also had a need for improvement regarding the social contact with ethnic Norwegians.

### **8.4 Focus group**

The respondents in the focus group were six employees with varied positions. One was assistant principal, one were adviser Working with a colleague from Bangla Desh, worked with recruiting and adjusting measures for people from all over the, one was a technical director, one had technical responsibility (ethnic minority background from Sri Lanka, two others from Sri Lanka were cleaners and employed many years back. Most of them had experience with ethnic minorities at the work place, but did not find the questions so relevant or interesting.

### **8.5 Good practices**

Bachelor degree for bilingual teachers, special offers for those lacking formal education as a teacher in Norway, but have this education before.

## **8.6 Language**

Sometimes it is difficult for ethnic minorities to understand jokes, humour, and details in perception. Language is a challenge and normally there are no problems. The respondents said that it was natural to mention language, but in their work it is not so important. Sometimes they had to ask several times and in different ways make sure the message had been understood.

## **8.7 Communication style**

The respondents did not find any problems in hierarchy, openness or possibility for solving conflicts. They had an open communication at the work place.

## **8.8 Relationship to co-workers**

They had good relationship with their co-workers and most of the respondents were mainly concerned about getting the job done. One respondent in the focus group said she had much contact with ethnic minority colleagues and also with people in various professions, coming from the working class and not from an academic background. She stated that this made it easier to understand the students from other backgrounds, and her colleagues. Others did mostly have contact with their own ethnic group, included the Norwegians.

## **8.9 Cultural codes and practices**

They were only two Muslims at the work place, one religious, the other not. The religious person did not wear special clothes. If some people showed their religion openly, one person said he would not be neutral. The students should address this question because religion should be dealt with within the subjects in school.

The canteens/ kafés only serve Halal meat, it was mentioned, but this answer was not further clarified. The two ethnic minority employees working with cleaning, said that they got what they wanted, both Halal meat and different food. They were not Muslims, and not in need of Halal meat.



## **9.0 Challenges**

- The University College has to be more diverse if we want to utilize the resources and reach out to the entire population (one respondent was underlining this issue)
- Cultural days at the University College of Oslo, focus on positive sides of immigration, but must not be arranged as an obligation.

### Recommendations

1. Competence development of unskilled workers, information of study possibilities

Target group: Unskilled workers and management

## **9 GENERAL SUMMARY**

This analysis of the intercultural situation in Norway and case studies at 8 workplaces in Oslo give a glimpse of the situation at intercultural workplaces in Norway. Stiftelsen MiA (Diversity at Work) is an ideal foundation that has worked with action research, case studies and measures on workplaces in Norway for more than 16 years. The findings from MiA's work have been published in reports, books, articles and papers on many issues on ethnic diversity and intercultural activities. Most of this literature is in Norwegian. MiA has managed a LdV pilot project with partners from Norway, UK and Denmark on "Improving Economic and Social Integration of Pakistani Immigrant Women in Health, Nursing and Care" from 2000 to 2003, has been partner in the LdV pilot project "Improving Immigrants' Access to Language and Society" from 2001 to 2004 with partners from Finland, Germany, France, Norway and Greece. MiA is working with several projects within training of leaders, employee representatives, trainers, public officers, immigrant workers and ethnic minorities with offices at IMDi (The Directorate of Integration and Diversity).

### **9.1 The case studies**

The nursing home described the main challenges as inability to communicate effectively in Norwegian by some ethnic minority employees at work and difficulty in tolerating different cultural codes as religious head wears and cultural accepted dress codes and food traditions. While not learning the Norwegian language properly was uttered in the Norwegian group, the ethnic minority group did not find any difficulties in this matter. They even pointed at one of the women in the focus group to show how tolerant people were at their work place (the respondent wearing a veil said that she was not a Muslim). A problem within the ethnic minority community were that one respondent of the ethnic group felt discriminated by her own national colleagues. This could also be because of personal differences and misunderstanding of each other and internal courses and education of staff (especially directed to minority groups). The Norwegian group wanted to know more about other cultures.

The wine and liquor producers recommended courses for both Norwegians and ethnic minorities for those with reading and writing difficulties (ongoing project, soon

to be initiated) and leadership courses for the management in “Social relationship” issues

At the University College the focus group described that: Sometimes it is difficult for ethnic minorities to understand jokes, humour, and details in perception. Language is a challenge and normally there are no problems. The respondents said that it was natural to mention language, but in their work it is not so important. Sometimes they had to ask several times and in different ways make sure the message had been understood.

The construction workers union was mainly concerned about the Polish and Baltic immigrant workers and pointed out the need to develop communication skills in Norwegian on the work place. This could be both in Polish/Baltic languages and Norwegian (booklets/books). (Two levels- new comers and for those who has picked up simple communication skills in Norwegian)- Can be applicable within the project if written in Polish/German, Baltic languages/German, in Polish/Swedish, Baltic languages/Swedish, in Polish/English, Baltic languages/English, in Polish/Norwegian, Baltic languages/Norwegian.

In terms of cultural communication styles at the municipal bus company, a female Pakistani bus driver said that the language and cultural codes were very direct, but after a while she became used to it. The frank tone was still not very rude, but including. Some of the respondents mentioned that the problem with misunderstandings could as well be between people from their own society. The elderly Pakistani bus drivers did not expect to have a female Pakistani as a colleague. This had to be proved during some time to be adjusted and spoken openly about. The communication style is often very direct, and some language problems are still there. The respondents did not find the hierarchy rigid and not very apparent in their own organization. The respondents said that when they had the opportunity to know each other well, the communication style was not a big issue. Statements are usual on the work place, but nothing to take too serious, Commandos are often “wrapped in”.

At the secondary school some of the challenges experienced were inability to communicate effectively in Norwegian by some teachers at work, difficulty in finding work placement for practical training for the ethnic minority students, problems in the existing information flow in the workplace and lack of communication between the school and parents of students (especially of minority groups). The school also found that the organization has developed a good understanding of diversity question in spite of only one ethnic minority teacher employed. They emphasized they were a school for a diverse neighbourhood and talked very positive about the influence of the only ethnic minority teacher and her impact on the environment, colleagues and also pupils. There is a feeling that it is not always easy to find qualified ethnic minority teachers to strengthen the diversity of teachers employed. The school utilizes the ethnic minority teacher to mobilize parents and cooperation with the parents although this should be a responsibility of the whole school.

Both the situation analysis and the case studies prove that there is an increased understanding of the challenges with an increasing ethnic diverse society, by decision makers in both public and private institutions and companies. The need for workforce demands adapted skills for the actual work tasks, but still there is a way to go to avoid all kinds of ethnic, national and religious discrimination at intercultural workplaces.

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