



European network of legal experts in gender equality and non-discrimination

FLASH REPORT

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| Country: | Norway |
| Title: | Report on integration and discrimination of immigrants |
| Date: | 6 July 2020 |
| Expert: | Lene Løvdal |
| <u>Context</u> | |
| Issue at stake: | Report on integration and discrimination of immigrants, as seen by both majority and immigrant population |
| Grounds of discrimination: | Racial or ethnic origin |
| Field of application: | All fields |
| Source: | Policy development |
| Applicable law: | The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act (GEADA), 16 June 2017 |

Content

Policy development: The directorate of integration and diversity (IMDi) implements the government's integration policies and published in June 2020 its first annual report on the knowledge status on immigration population in Norway. The directorate's mandate is to strengthen the municipalities, sector authorities, and other collaborative partners' competence in the field of integration and diversity.

The last two decades the immigration population in Norway has tripled, but the average differences between immigrants and the remainder population have not increased. Most indicators that have been studied over time show that the differences have been either stable or gradually lessened, such as employment, kindergarten attendance, and crime statistics. For most immigrants, the level of employment, kindergarten attendance and other indicators of living conditions improve when they have lived longer in Norway, but for those with a refugee background, things stabilize at a rather low level after 7 to 10 years of residence.

The report summarises several studies that have measured trust in society's institutions (vertical trust) and trust in other people (horizontal trust). This is seen as a key indicator of the level of integration, and also of experienced discrimination. The immigrant population has a somewhat lower horizontal trust in the remainder population than the general population (an average of 1.5 points lower than the average of a sample of the general population on an 11-point scale). Persons born in Norway with immigrant parents have a little higher horizontal trust than immigrants of the same age, but less than the general population. People who have experienced discrimination report a lower degree of trust than others.

Regarding vertical trust, immigrants have a higher trust in the political system than the general population, and the trust in the police is also a little higher among immigrants. The trust in the judiciary is on the same level as the general population. Children of immigrants

aged 16 to 39 report the same level of trust as the general population in all these institutions.

Persons with immigrant background are, however, underrepresented in important political institutions such as the government, the parliament, and local governments. The underrepresentation has lately increased due to an increase in the number of persons with immigrant background being able to vote. During the local elections in 2019, 680 000 persons with immigrant background had the right to vote, approximately 2 800 persons with immigrant black background were candidates, and just below 300 persons with immigrant background were elected for a local government.

Immigration is much debated in Norway, often in a rather polarised manner. Research shows that the population is divided, and research on parliamentary elections have since 1989 documented that immigration is the subject where the voters are most consistent, i.e. that if a part of the population expresses scepticism against immigration on one question, they are very likely to express the same scepticism when answering other questions. However, results from European Social Survey show that Norway is among the European countries where the population on average is the most positive towards immigration.

Several research reports show that a significant part of the population has a negative attitude towards Muslims in particular. In the integration barometer of 2018, 56 % expressed scepticism towards having a Muslim son or daughter-in-law, and 47 % expressed scepticism towards Muslims in general. Anti-Semitism is also an issue. However, there has for many years been a slow improvement in the attitudes towards immigrants in the general population.

In a 2016 survey, 22 % of immigrants and 27 % of the descendants of immigrants report having been discriminated against in at least one of four areas: recruitment for employment, the workplace, in an educational institution or while being in touch with the health services. In a 2019 survey among young adults more than 40 % of those with immigrant background report having been discriminated against by at least one of the following: the police, the public administration officer, at work or at an educational institution, in a restaurant or café, in a store, on public transport, or on the street. Descendants of immigrants report the highest number of discrimination experiences, and more than half of the descendants of immigrants from Somalia, Pakistan, Iraq or Turkey reported experiencing discrimination.

While the surveys focus on experienced discrimination, not on how it is defined by law, these results are substantiated by experimental studies such as the use of fictitious application during hiring processes. In one such study the researchers found that if you had a Pakistani sounding name, you had 25 percentage points less chance of getting an interview when all other qualifications were the same. Another such experimental study showed that men with Arabic sounding names with blue-collar jobs had less chance of finding a place to live.

Internet link source:

https://www.imdi.no/contentassets/05e2fd2076cf4b17938d2913a403a852/integrering_i_norge_2020.pdf.