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Ethnic Diversity and Inclusion in the Labour Market

Indicators, status and development trends



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Preface

In this report, the Norwegian Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi) presents a framework for being able to monitor developments in ethnic diversity and inclusion in the Norwegian labour market. The indicators in this report present the opportunities and challenges encountered by people with immigrant backgrounds in different phases of the labour market.

There is an increasing demand for labour in Norway. High employment, inclusion of vulnerable groups in the labour market and a stable connection to work are key goals that the Norwegian Government has set. If integration is to be a success, we need to create the conditions for immigrants to contribute what they have to offer. The labour market is the most important arena for inclusion and integration.

An important tool for achieving the political objectives is a comprehensive and structured knowledge overview of how immigrants and their Norwegian-born children are succeeding in the labour market. This provides the basis for identifying the most prevalent barriers and what groups are at greatest risk of falling outside of education and employment and of being excluded.

IMDi's social mission is to contribute towards achieving equal opportunity and that all people are able to utilise the resources that they possess, irrespective of their background. Our mission also includes developing and sharing knowledge in the field of integration. IMDi will continue to work with obtaining an overview of developments in ethnic diversity and inclusion in the labour market. These efforts include updating and further developing the framework that we present in this report. This will, in turn, provide us with more targeted measures for promoting ethnic diversity and inclusion in the Norwegian labour market.

Libe Rieber-Mohn

Director

The Norwegian Directorate of
Integration and Diversity



Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of ethnic diversity in the Norwegian labour market, and the status of labour market integration among people with immigrant backgrounds. Immigrants make up an increasingly larger share of the Norwegian workforce. Over the past 20 years, the proportion of immigrants among employees in Norway has tripled and now amounts to half a million people.

Extensive research literature and data shed light on immigrants' participation in various phases of working life. At the same time, there is a need to collate and structure this knowledge, to enable us to address specific challenges, focus on vulnerable groups and identify the areas in which more knowledge is required.

In Part I of the report, the Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi) presents a framework that can be used to measure ethnic diversity and the inclusion of people with immigrant backgrounds in the Norwegian labour market. The framework consists of a set of indicators that provide an overview of various aspects of labour market integration among people with immigrant backgrounds.

In Part II, the framework is used to describe the status and development trends in labour market integration among immigrants. The indicators measure the extent to which this group is represented in different parts of the labour market and in different types of jobs. Another central theme in the report is to describe how inclusion and equal opportunities in the labour market vary between immigrants with different backgrounds and skills. The indicators also address barriers for employment that people with immigrant backgrounds may encounter, and which factors may increase the risk of job loss.

When it comes to the ***extent and distribution*** of ethnic diversity in Norwegian workplaces, we find both an increasing number and an increasing proportion of immigrants among the employees. Norwegian society is completely dependent on the employment of immigrants to meet future labour market needs. At the same time, we see that the labour market is divided when we compare the proportion of immigrants among the employees in various industries and occupations. Immigrants make up an increasingly large share of the employees in some parts of the labour market, and a relatively smaller share in others. For example, we find that immigrants are overrepresented in the private sector and underrepresented in the public sector, particularly in state-owned enterprises.

There are considerable differences in the employment rate and distribution in the labour market between immigrants with different levels of education, immigration backgrounds and countries of origin. The employment rate increases in line with period of residence for all groups, but is persistently low for some, particularly for women with refugee backgrounds. Low employment is largely linked to a low level of education and few formal qualifications.

Compared to the majority population, there is a relatively higher proportion among the immigrant population who have not completed upper secondary school. On the other hand, there are also relatively more immigrants with higher education than in the rest of the population.

The report also describes many important findings related to the degree of ***inclusion and equal opportunities*** in different phases of working life. Immigrants are more likely to be excluded from work and education. The unemployment rate among immigrants is three times higher than in the rest of the population. The same is the case for the proportion of young people with immigrant backgrounds who are not in employment, education or training. The literature points to persistent and significant differences between immigrants and the rest of the population in these areas. Unemployment and marginalization have negative consequences and great costs for both the individual and society.

Over a third of immigrants in Norway, 37 per cent, experience barriers to employment. This applies to a greater extent for women than for men. The exception is male refugees, and this group most often experiences challenges relating to employment when compared to other immigrant groups. Inadequate Norwegian language skills are perceived as being a major barrier for immigrants being able to find employment. Results from the Norwegian language tests indicate that less than half of immigrants can use Norwegian at an advanced level ((level B2 in accordance with the European framework) after completing Norwegian language courses, however we have observed a positive development in this proportion over time.

The fact that discrimination in employment occurs is well documented. Prejudice, scepticism and uncertainty that result in negative discrimination are a significant barrier to immigrants' labour market participation and good use of their resources in working life.

When it comes to social aspects of inclusion in the workplace following employment, the report paints an ambiguous picture. An ever-increasing proportion of the population is coming into contact with immigrants in the labour market, and the majority consider this contact as being largely positive. At the same time, one in four immigrants has experienced discrimination in the workplace, and this discrimination can occur in different forms and in different work situations. Most employers are positive about ethnic diversity in their businesses, but the proportion that use specific measures to promote ethnic diversity is still low.

When we examine working conditions and opportunities in the workplace, we find differences between immigrants and the rest of the population for several indicators. Part-time work is more widespread among immigrants, and immigrants more often state that they would like to work additional hours. The wage level is lower in the immigrant population. One possible explanation for the wage gap is that a larger share of immigrants is employed in low-paid types of jobs and industries. However, there are still systematic differences between employees with and without immigrant backgrounds, even within the same job categories and industries. The same applies to immigrants' degree of organisation.

This is considerably lower than in the rest of the population, but we are seeing a positive trend towards increased organisation over time.

The knowledge base in the report indicates that people with immigrant background encounter both barriers to labour market participation and barriers on their way up the career ladder once they are employed. Immigrants are underrepresented in management positions and on boards, despite the average differences having decreased somewhat over time. The proportion of immigrants who are overqualified for their job position is more than twice as high as in the rest of the population. A full 40 per cent of immigrants are overqualified, compared to 14 per cent in the rest of the population. This shows that there is major potential for better utilising the skills that immigrants bring with them in the Norwegian labour market, and a need to reduce barriers.

The report also demonstrates that people with immigrant backgrounds more often experience the risk of losing their job. The proportion that is concerned about losing their job is more than twice as high among immigrants than in the rest of the population, (27 per cent versus 12 per cent). The research also shows that some immigrant groups have a higher probability of withdrawing from the workforce before they reach retirement age. This may be related to the fact that immigrants more often work in temporary positions, physically exhausting occupations and in industries that are more exposed to business cycles and economic uncertainty. Other risk factors may include inadequate Norwegian language skills, lack of relevant qualifications, and poor health. Another important finding related to withdrawal from the labour market is that many immigrants have limited pension rights. This results in an increasing proportion of older immigrants with persistently low incomes.

An important purpose of the framework has been to identify areas in which more knowledge is required. This may include the need to collect new data, more detailed statistics based on existing data sources or more research on the mechanisms behind the changes in indicators that we observe over time. Finally, this report presents **knowledge requirements** that we have identified while developing the indicator framework, as well as recommendations for further work with the indicators.

Part I Framework for ethnic diversity and inclusion in the labour market

1. Introduction

In Norway, we have extensive and detailed knowledge about labour market participation among immigrants and people born in Norway to immigrant parents. There is presently little *overall data* pertaining to the distribution of ethnic diversity in the labour market, and more systematised knowledge is required concerning how people with immigrant backgrounds are represented in different parts of the labour market. There is also a limited overview of the steps that are being taken to facilitate inclusion and ethnic diversity in different industries and businesses, and the effect various measures have had.

In the autumn of 2023, the Norwegian Government presented a new action plan against racism and ethnic discrimination, "Action plan on racism and discrimination – New initiatives 2024-2027" (Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion, 2023b). The plan will apply until the end of 2027 and includes 50 measures designed to prevent and counteract racism and discrimination in different social arenas. One of the measures in the action plan is to develop a framework for measuring the status and development trends in ethnic diversity and inclusion in the Norwegian labour market, with the aim of systematizing available knowledge in the field, and identifying specific challenges and knowledge gaps. This will assist in formulating targeted measures, regulations and tools for increasing ethnic diversity and inclusion in the labour market (Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion, 2023b). IMDi has been tasked by the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion to implement this measure.

The purpose of this report is to respond to the aforementioned measures in the action plan. Part I presents a set of indicators that can be used to measure ethnic diversity and inclusion of people with immigrant backgrounds in the labour market. When developing the indicators, various assessments and trade-offs were made in relation to the framework's structure, scope and target groups, which will also be described in more detail below. In Part II of the report, the set of indicators is then used to describe the overall status and development in ethnic diversity and inclusion. The knowledge summarized in this part of the report thus provides the basis for pinpointing and discussing vulnerable groups and identifying new knowledge requirements in the field.

1.1. Background and purpose

The number of immigrants in Norway has more than tripled in the past 20 years. At the start of 2022, more than one million people out of the total Norwegian population of 5.5 million

had an immigrant background. Immigrants in Norway have backgrounds from over 200 countries. This means that immigrants are a diverse group, not just in terms of their countries of origin but also in terms of their age, skills, health, lives, period of residence in Norway, etc. Immigrants also come to Norway for different reasons: to work, study, be reunited with their families or because they have been forced to flee their home countries (IMDi, 2023a). This is also reflected in the Norwegian labour market. Immigrants make up an ever-increasing share of the workforce and employed persons in Norway. In 2001, immigrants accounted for 6 per cent of all employed persons, while this figure was 18.4 per cent in 2021 (Statistics Norway, 2022b; Umblijs et al., 2022).

High labour market participation and a stable connection to work are key objectives in welfare policy, labour market policy and integration policy (Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion, 2023; Ministry of Education and Research, 2018). Having the highest possible employment rate is a prerequisite for a sustainable welfare society. While the differences in labour market participation between immigrants and the rest of the population have decreased since 2015, immigrants still have lower employment rates, work more often in part-time positions, and are more often overqualified for the jobs they are employed in. Immigrants are also overrepresented among the unemployed. Some groups in the immigrant population have a weaker connection to the labour market than others. This includes refugees, and especially women with refugee backgrounds (IMDi, 2023a). There may be various reasons for lower labour market participation among immigrants, such as little formal education and qualifications, poor Norwegian language skills, little work experience, lack of network and discrimination.

The need for labour will increase in the future. Labour shortages can contribute to better conditions for the inclusion of people who are outside of the labour market. The Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV) has concluded that in order to address future labour needs, the overall supply of labour needs to increase (NAV, 2023c). The workforce will be dependent on demographic developments, the amount of labour immigration and workforce participation. We have a good overview of the cohorts of young people who will enter the labour market in the future, however there is greater uncertainty related to developments in the average retirement age and access to foreign labour. In order to ensure the highest possible employment rate in the future, it is therefore important to focus on qualifications in the form of education, Norwegian language training and practical work experience for those with little education and few qualifications. This development places increased demands on our expertise within labour market inclusion and knowledge-based services.

There is also an increasing need for restructuring and a greater focus on diverse skills and good inclusion in the labour market. This means that employers need to have different expectations when recruiting and have to work more with inclusion and training (NAV, 2023c). Norwegian employers generally report that they are positive about ethnic diversity in the workplace. The motivation of employers to work with ethnic diversity encompasses commercial, societal and ethical aspects. In other words, a diverse workforce is not just about fairness and inclusion, but can also be profitable for the companies. The benefits may

include increased productivity, lower wage costs, more exports and greater innovation (Umblis et al., 2022).

All of this suggests that, as we propose in this report, government authorities, employers and other actors will greatly benefit from monitoring developments in ethnic diversity and inclusion in the labour market.

The employment rate is an important indicator of labour market integration, but does not present a complete picture of the various aspects involved in being employed. Other key aspects include working conditions, working environment, wage development, and career opportunities. The employment rate itself does not provide answers to whether the connection immigrants have to the labour market is stable and lasting. The employment rate can also not be used to tell us anything about possible barriers to entry to or reasons for withdrawal from the labour market.

The same applies to various targets for representation in different parts of the labour market. It is necessary, but not enough, to systematically measure the proportion of immigrants in businesses in different occupations, sectors and industries. If we want more insight into barriers to participation, workplace challenges or possible reasons for withdrawal from the workforce, more knowledge is required about job quality, inclusion and discrimination in the workplace. It is well-documented that various barriers to integration occur in the labour market and contribute to people withdrawing from the workforce and experiencing long-term exclusion (Wollscheid et al., 2022). Inclusion of people with minority backgrounds is an important prerequisite for this group having lasting and stable workforce participation.

The purpose of this report is to identify a set of indicators that can be used to measure ethnic diversity and inclusion in the Norwegian labour market from an integration perspective. The set of indicators will be regularly updated and used to monitor developments in ethnic diversity and inclusion over time.

Both diversity and inclusion are complex phenomena that can be interpreted differently in different contexts. They therefore cannot be measured directly, and need to be operationalized through a set of indicators, which can assist in providing information about the status and development of these phenomena. Diversity and inclusion have many different dimensions. When talking about diversity in the labour market, this often pertains to variation in observable and unobservable characteristics between different groups of employees and employers. Among other things, these include gender, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity. Knowledge about the distribution of the different groups in the Norwegian labour market, their working conditions, and the challenges they face in their everyday work, is a necessary prerequisite for being able to create better inclusion and equality in the labour market.

From an integration perspective, we see a clear need to document the situation for ethnic minorities with an immigrant background in the labour market, and to obtain a more

comprehensive overview of the knowledge base in this field. This is relevant for – and has been requested by – both national authorities and employers in the public and private sectors.

Another goal of the set of indicators is to call attention to groups in the population with immigrant backgrounds who are particularly vulnerable in the labour market. By monitoring the status and development of these groups, we can more clearly identify the specific challenges and barriers they face in the labour market. This in turn will contribute to enabling us to formulate targeted measures, regulations and tools for better representation and inclusion of people with immigrant backgrounds in the labour market.

The set of indicators is not intended to provide answers to all the details pertaining to ethnic diversity in the labour market, but rather identify certain key factors that we can monitor over time, and which can provide us with an indication of status and development.

In preparing this report, IMDi was in dialogue with several public actors in the field, including the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir), the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV), the Equality and Anti-discrimination Ombud (LDO) and Statistics Norway. Labour market statistics from Statistics Norway and NAV are key sources of the findings presented in the report, in addition to relevant figures from other actors in the field, findings from the research literature and international comparisons from Eurostat and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

1.2. Methodological approach

Several methods were applied in connection with the work on developing indicators of ethnic diversity in the labour market, and describing the status and development trends over time. Relevant literature, definitions and data were reviewed and provided the basis for developing the indicators. The proposal for the set of indicators was also discussed and developed with experts at IMDi, as well as with several public actors and researchers.

In order to obtain relevant literature, systematic literature searches were conducted with assistance from IMDi's specialist library. Searches were conducted in several databases (Web of Science, EBSCO, Oria and Idunn), and the Google Scholar search engine was also used. Initial literature searches (test searches) were first carried out in the databases. Based on these, the terms and other search criteria were adjusted to make the searches even more accurate. The time period was set at 2013-2022 due to there being relatively few relevant hits for a more limited period. The first selection of references was made based on the title and summary of the article. In the second round, the text was analysed in its entirety to select the most relevant articles. In addition to literature searches, it was appropriate to use a strategic search in the reference lists by employing the "snowball method". This method was used to find multiple relevant sources. By reviewing the literature, we were able to confirm that there is comprehensive research literature pertaining to people with immigrant

backgrounds in the labour market. The issues that appear in the literature touch upon different phases and different aspects of being employed, such as the transition from education to employment, temporary work, overqualification, pay differences, health impact or withdrawal from the workforce. In the following, we highlight relevant research under each theme in connection with the development of the indicators.

Both laws and other regulations, as well as political objectives, recommendations and measures form an important backdrop for the development of knowledge about ethnic diversity in the labour market. In our work on the indicators, we therefore reviewed Norwegian laws and rules that are relevant to the regulation of ethnic diversity, gender equality and discrimination in the labour market. We also systematically reviewed recent strategies and action plans, political platforms and government budget texts containing goals and ambitions. Furthermore, we reviewed the annual reports and websites of public actors that contribute to labour market integration of immigrants, gender equality and diversity, with the aim of providing an overall picture of how the work on ethnic diversity is being followed up by government authorities. Multiple ministries play a key role in this work, including the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion, the Ministry of Education and Research, the Ministry of Culture, and the Ministry of Children and Families. Relevant directorates in this context are NAV, the Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills (HK-dir), the Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi), Bufdir, the Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority and others. Other important actors include LDO, the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS) and the parties in the labour market.

A number of international organisations compile regulations and prepare recommendations for how businesses and public authorities can monitor and work with ethnic diversity and inclusion in the labour market (including the EU, International Labour Organization (ILO), and Observatory of Economic Complexity (OEC)). The most up-to-date recommendations from selected international organisations were reviewed as part of the work on the set of indicators.

A crucial step in the development of indicators was to create an overview of available data sources in the field, both in Norway and internationally. We therefore identified available data that can be used to describe ethnic diversity in the labour market, including both register data and data from sample surveys. We also looked at publicly published statistics, both in Norway and internationally, that are relevant to the work on the set of indicators. When identifying available data sources, accompanying documentation was reviewed to obtain a better understanding of factors such as scope, collection methods and data quality.

1.3. Structure of the report

The report is divided into two main parts. Part I addresses the background, context and methods for developing a framework and set of indicators. The actual set of indicators is also presented in this part of the report. In order to prepare a comprehensive set of

indicators, a number of questions need to be answered (Proba, 2019). First, it is necessary to define the phenomena that will be measured. Following the introductory chapter (Chapter 1), which describes the background, purpose and content of the report, Chapter 2 provides an overview of definitions and key terms, and we take a closer look at the concepts of diversity, ethnicity, inclusion and discrimination, and the dimensions that these terms cover. Chapter 3 describes regulations and the work of public actors in the field, and Chapter 4 describes the actual set of indicators.

Part II makes up the remainder of the report. Chapters 5 and 6 present the status and development of the indicators of ethnic diversity and inclusion in the labour market. Chapter 7 provides a summary of the main findings of the report and recommendations related to future work with the set of indicators. Particular emphasis is placed on describing identified knowledge requirements.

2. Definitions and data sources

2.1. Key terms

Diversity and ethnic affiliation are comprehensive terms that can be defined in many ways and used differently in various contexts. This report focusses on ethnic diversity and inclusion in the labour market from an integration perspective. In this chapter, we take a closer look at how key terms such as *ethnicity*, *diversity*, *inclusion* and *discrimination* can be operationalized by analysing the labour market for people with immigrant backgrounds. This chapter also includes definitions of the most important demographic characteristics among people with immigrant backgrounds, such as country of origin and reason for immigration, as well as other terms that are relevant to this report.

The purpose of the definitions is to assist in providing a better understanding of the choice of target groups and indicators. The descriptions also provide a basis for assessing which groups and characteristics we should use as a starting point when presenting status and developments in the field.

Ethnicity

Ethnicity describes a common cultural, historical and geographical background. Identifying with an ethnic group often involves sharing a language, religion, traditions, values and other characteristics. A number of related terms, such as ancestry, citizenship and nationality, may overlap with ethnicity. However, ethnicity is not the same as nationality, citizenship or biological characteristics, and is largely about the common understanding of the cultural and historical origins of a group (United Nations, 2017).

Ethnicity has many different dimensions, and an individual's ethnic identity may also change over time. For immigrants and their descendants, factors such as period of residence in Norway, knowledge of family background and relationship to their own ethnicity can influence their experience of ethnic affiliation.

Since ethnicity is a complex concept that is challenging to measure quantitatively, information about country of origin or citizenship is often used as an indicator of ethnicity in quantitative studies. This information is relatively easy to access and often considered "objective". For many immigrants, there is often a connection between country of origin and the ethnic affiliation that they themselves experience.

At the same time, this method of operationalising ethnicity is not entirely unproblematic when establishing a completely accurate description of the term. According to the United Nations' recommendations for data collection and measurement of ethnicity, information about ethnicity should not be deduced from information relating to citizenship or country of birth. Ethnicity should rather be measured by obtaining information about factors such as ethnic origin or heritage, ethnic identity, cultural origin, nationality, skin colour, minority status, tribe, language, religion, or through various combinations of the characteristics referred to above (United Nations, 2017).

There may be various reasons for why categorising according to country of origin or citizenship may provide an incorrect picture of ethnic diversity. The country of birth of a person neither takes into consideration the ethnic diversity of the country of origin nor does it identify self-perceived cultural affiliation, or the ethnicity the person themselves identifies with (Gill et al., 2005; Bore et al, 2013). For example, some immigrants with a long period of residence in Norway or people born in Norway to immigrant parents may feel less ethnic affiliation to their own country of origin or that of their parents. Categorising according to country of birth also does not highlight ethnic diversity and sense of belonging among indigenous peoples and national minorities in Norway.

There are also challenges and disadvantages associated with collecting information about ethnicity in line with the aforementioned United Nations recommendations. Register data relating to the ethnic affiliation of the population is not collected in Norway (Bore et al., 2013). Ethnic affiliation and identity are subjective characteristics that cannot simply be categorized in a register. Collecting data through a nationwide survey would be resource-intensive and bring with it uncertainties related to the composition of the sample and representativeness. Since ethnicity is a dynamic concept that can change over time, it would also be challenging to create robust time series showing the distribution of different ethnic groups in the population. In addition, ethnic background and religion are considered particularly sensitive personal data, and there are thus strict requirements in the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) regarding who is permitted to collect and process this data, and how (EU, 2016).

Practices for measuring ethnic diversity vary internationally. In many countries, various information is collected about immigrants, such as country of birth or parents' country of

birth, period of residence, reason for immigration and language skills. It is less common to collect information about race, skin colour and ethnicity, however this does occur in countries such as Canada, Ireland, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Mexico, and in some Eastern European countries. When it comes to data on indigenous peoples and national minorities, relatively few countries collect information about these groups. This occurs in countries such as Australia, Canada, Chile, Mexico and New Zealand (Ballestra & Fleischer, 2018). The data pertaining to country of origin, reason for immigration and period of residence is often register-based, while information on ethnicity, skin colour and sense of belonging to indigenous peoples and national minorities is usually collected through surveys and censuses.

In summary, ethnicity is a multidimensional and dynamic concept that is challenging to measure quantitatively. Therefore, in studies of ethnic diversity it is common to operationalize ethnicity by using more readily available information such as country of birth, citizenship, reason for immigration or period of residence. This form of operationalization can provide us with some indications of how different ethnic groups are distributed among the population, especially in studies focusing on people with immigrant backgrounds. However, it is also important to keep in mind that the characteristics such as country of origin, reason for immigration and period of residence cannot be equated with ethnicity, and that such a simplified approach would not cover all ethnic groups in Norway.

Diversity

There is no uniform definition of *diversity*. In literature pertaining to diversity in the workplace, diversity often refers to similarities and differences that exist between people and that can influence employment, commercial opportunities and results. These similarities and differences not only relate to personal characteristics such as age, gender, gender identity, disability or ethnicity, but also to values, work styles, approaches to work and roles in the workplace (ILO, 2022). Diversity in external characteristics is often referred to in the literature as surface-level diversity, while differences in unobservable features are referred to as deep-level diversity (Bore et al, 2013). In other words, diversity describes both observable and unobservable differences that may influence the group's interaction and approach to work (Drange, 2014). Diversity is not about a particular difference, but about human variation, and the need for social arenas to reflect this variation (Berg et al, 2012). An important aspect associated with the term is that the differences described above should be perceived as something positive and of value.

It is possible to highlight diversity in the labour market at different levels and from different perspectives. One possible approach is to describe the status and development from a macro perspective, i.e. the success of diversity in the labour market at an overall level in society. This is the approach we have chosen in our work on the indicators. In other contexts, it may also be applicable to study diversity from other perspectives, such as diversity within the business or individual experiences related to diversity and "otherness" (Kuptsch & Charest, 2021).

Another dimension of diversity concerns the distinction between actual and perceived diversity. Several studies argue that the understanding of diversity in the workplace should be based on the perspectives and opinions of employees, because it is precisely these opinions that are the driving force behind interaction within an organisation. Even if diversity exists “on paper” within an organisation, it is unlikely that it will achieve any of the benefits of diversity if employees do not consider the workplace to be diverse (Allen et al, 2008; Harrison et al, 2002).

Inclusion

The concept of diversity often focuses on quantity, or amount of diversity, by measuring the representation of different groups in a business. **Inclusion**, on the other hand, is more about the “quality” of this diversity, because experiences, attitudes and relationships between individuals and groups in the workplace are the focal point (ILO, 2022).

Individuals feel included at the workplace when they feel a sense of belonging, while experiencing being seen, valued and understood as an individual with a unique identity, skills and experience (Shore et al., 2011). In other words, inclusion encompasses not only the emotions and behaviours of the individual employee, but also the behaviours of the other people around them and the environment in which they work. The experience of inclusion is not static, and may change over time due to different workplace conditions. While a company may successfully attract and recruit a diverse mix of employees, inclusion is influenced by the extent to which different employees are thriving and fully contributing. It is therefore important to understand and measure inclusion at work, even if this can be somewhat challenging.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) proposes a framework to measure inclusion which consists of three levels. The first and most overarching level is the employee’s own experiences of being included in the workplace. Second, the framework measures underlying factors that contribute to inclusion at the workplace. These factors are the extent to which employees: (1) feel respected and experience a sense of belonging; (2) feel supported to perform well in their roles; and (3) experience career development and being rewarded for their work. The third level of the ILO framework is to measure perceived benefits of inclusion. These benefits include an increased sense of well-being, ambition for career development, higher levels of productivity, performance, commitment and dedication, collaboration, and opportunities to contribute to improvements at the workplace.

Inclusion is therefore a measurement of both an employee’s sense of belonging and the extent to which their individual needs are being met (ILO, 2022).

Discrimination

The term **discrimination** is often used as a synonym for unlawful differential treatment due to various demographic or social characteristics such as gender, age, ethnicity, skin colour, sexual orientation or others. However, this definition only includes the most obvious forms of discrimination (Craig, 2007). At the same time, neutral and formally equal rules and practices

can also be discriminatory, and result in serious disadvantages for some groups. In other words, the term discrimination can relate to both unlawful differential treatment and unlawful equal treatment, also known as direct and indirect discrimination. `

Direct discrimination occurs when a person is subjected to unlawful differential treatment when compared to others under equivalent circumstances. Indirect discrimination takes place when people are treated equally in different situations based on seemingly neutral rules, but when this involves unjustifiable and disadvantageous differential treatment linked to one or more grounds for discrimination (Craig, 2007). For example, a ban on head coverings at the workplace is a seemingly neutral rule that facilitates equal treatment of all employees. However, this rule is an example of discrimination because such "equal treatment" can result in people who wear religious head coverings being banned from the workplace.

Discrimination may still be permitted if it "has a legitimate purpose, is necessary for achieving the purpose and is not disproportionately intrusive against the person or persons who are being treated differently" (Ministry of Culture and Social Equality, 2018). In Norwegian legislation, both direct and indirect differential treatment are referred to and regulated in the Act relating to equality and a prohibition against discrimination (Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act). This is described in more detail in Chapter 3.

Discrimination can occur at different levels and with different degrees of intentionality (Midtbøen & Liden, 2016). It can be expressed both through serious and offensive behaviour and in the form of minor, indirect humiliation or derogatory attitudes, also referred to as "microaggressions." Microaggressions make people with minority backgrounds feel inferior and alienated, however it can be especially difficult to address these and measure their extent (Aambø, 2021).

One form of discrimination that can often be linked to indirect discrimination is structural discrimination. The term structural discrimination is frequently used in research into how discrimination is embedded in social structures and institutions. Structural discrimination concerns a form of systematic differential treatment, despite this type of discrimination not being a consequence of a deliberate act. For example, microaggressions can be intentional, while systemic discrimination will often be unintentional. According to Rogstad (2009), there are two primary ways in which structural discrimination can take place:

"First, institutional arrangements or regulations which should, in practice, be equal for everyone, result in systematic discrimination against people who belong to specific groups. (...) Second, social patterns in, for example, an organisational culture or administrative structure, contribute to creating barriers or disadvantageous positions for some groups – and privileges for others." (Rogstad, 2009, p.15)

Discrimination can therefore occur both at an individual level where individuals experience differential treatment, and at a more overarching level in society through established norms and structures. Research also shows that discrimination can accumulate over time, between different social arenas, as well as over generations (Blank et al., 2004; Midtbøen & Liden,

2016). This is often referred to as cumulative discrimination. Cumulative discrimination is the aggregate result of actions, rules or procedures that accumulate over a longer period of time or across areas, and influence status in society and expectations of future discrimination both at the individual and group level (Lidén & Midtbøen, 2016).

Another form of discrimination that is central to the research is multiple discrimination, which concerns complex or multidimensional discrimination based on multiple grounds for discrimination or societal arenas simultaneously (Wollscheid et al., 2021). The term multiple discrimination elevates the importance of intersectionality in the research in the field. Intersectionality is about studying the consequences of discrimination across different grounds for discrimination and arenas.

It is challenging to quantify the extent of discrimination in different groups with immigrant backgrounds and in different parts of the labour market, as well as monitor developments over time. Various methods are used to document discrimination, such as surveys that ask people with immigrant backgrounds about their own experiences of discrimination (Dalen et al., 2022; Holmøy & Wiggen, 2017), surveys on attitudes among employers and in the population (R. K. Andersen & Sterri, 2022; J.-P. Brekke & Fladmoe, 2022) and statistical register-based analyses of differences between groups, as well as experimental methods (Midtbøen, 2015; Midtbøen & Rogstad, 2012). The aforementioned methods all have their strengths and weaknesses. For example, surveys will identify subjective opinions and this can lead to both over and under-reporting of the extent of discrimination. Register based analyses are also encumbered with some uncertainty, because one cannot be certain that the differences in register data are due to discrimination, and not other unobserved factors. The advantages and disadvantages of using different types of data sources are described in more detail in Chapter 2.2.

People with immigrant backgrounds

Based on Statistics Norway's definition (Kirkeberg et al., 2019) and standard classifications, **immigrants** are people born outside of Norway to two foreign-born parents (Statistics Norway, 2008). **People born in Norway to immigrant parents** have two foreign parents and four foreign grandparents. **People with immigrant backgrounds** refers to both immigrants and people born in Norway to immigrant parents. Everyone else is referred to as the rest of the population.

Population statistics include all people officially registered in Norway. This means everyone with legal residence and who intend to stay in Norway for at least six months. Individuals who come to Norway for work, and who document commuting from another country within the European Economic Area (EEA), can be exempted from registering as a resident of Norway. People on shorter work stays in Norway, such as seasonal workers, are not registered in the National Population Register (cf. National Population Register Act).

Reason for immigration is the reason for initial immigration to Norway. Because citizens of the Nordic countries can freely move to Norway, there is no information about Nordic

citizens' reasons for immigration. Statistics Norway has prepared a standard for the reason for immigration that consists of seven main categories (Statistics Norway, 1994).

For people born abroad, **country of origin** is, with some exceptions, their own country of birth. For people born in Norway, country of origin is the country of birth of their parents. In instances where the parents have different countries of birth, the mother's country of birth is selected. Since 2008, Statistics Norway has divided immigrants' countries of origin into Country Group 1 and Country Group 2. Country Group 1 includes the EU/EEA Member States, the UK, as well as the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Country Group 2 includes countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America, Oceania, except Australia and New Zealand, and Europe, except the EU/EEA and the UK (Høydahl, 2008).

Period of residence is the number of years the person has lived in Norway. Period of residence is calculated based on the first registered year of residence, and is stated in full years per statistical year.

Business

Statistics Norway defines a **business** as a locally delimited functional entity that primarily operates within a specific industry group, either in the public or private sector. In this context, the **size of the business** is measured by the number of employees. The number of employees is based on the data for the register-based employment statistics (Slensvik, 2014).

Industry is a description of an entity's activities and is assigned on the basis of the business/branch to which the entity is primarily a part of. Branch is part of an industry. The term "branch" is sparingly used in this report. The industrial classifications of the indicators are instead based on Standard Industrial Classification (SN2007). This classification is also used in Statistics Norway's labour market statistics.

Sector is a statistical standard used to categorise the Norwegian economy based on the classification of uniform institutional entities. The following categories are used for statistics pertaining to employed persons:

- **Public administration**, which includes public and social security administration. Health trusts are included in this sector.
- **Municipal and county municipal administration** (municipal administration), which includes municipal and county municipal administration. Consists of enterprises that are not commercially oriented, i.e. roads, schools, culture etc.
- **Private sector and public enterprises**. The private sector includes what is not part of public or municipal administration, i.e. private business activities other than state controlled enterprises. Volunteer organisations are also included in this category. Public enterprises also include companies that are not part of public or municipal administration, but which are publicly controlled enterprises. This applies to the state's business operations as well as enterprises in which the public sector controls more than

50 per cent of the share capital. Examples of such enterprises as of November 2021 are the state's business operations (including the regional hospital pharmacies), state-owned limited liability companies, etc. Equinor, Statnett, Statkraft, Mesta, Vinmonopolet, Telenor, etc.), municipal enterprises with unlimited liability (including municipal enterprises (KS) and intermunicipal enterprises (IKF)), municipally owned limited liability companies, Norges Bank, and government lending institutions (Statistics Norway, 2023b).

2.2. Data sources

There is an extensive data base that covers various topics related to ethnic diversity and inclusion in the Norwegian labour market. This applies both in the form of extensive register data and multiple sample surveys. This part of the report describes the most important data sources used in the work on the indicators. In addition, we discuss the benefits and potential challenges associated with using different types of data.

Register data

In Norway, there are several public administrative registers for the population and labour market. While the primary purpose of the registers is, among other things, to ensure effective public administration and the provision of good public services, data from the registers can also be used for knowledge development, analysis and statistics on different groups in Norwegian society. The contents of the registers are usually standardized and divided into one set of specific categories. Register data is therefore well-suited for examining the scope and frequency of different phenomena, as well as comparing different groups about whom there is information available in the registers.

A key source of information about employees, employers and working conditions in the Norwegian labour market is the "a-ordningen". The a-ordningen is a coordinated service used to collect information about working conditions, income and tax withholdings for the Norwegian Tax Administration, NAV, and Statistics Norway which has been used since 2015. Up until 2014, data for the register-based employment statistics came from several different registers. The most important of these are NAV's Register of Employers and Employees (the Aa Register), the End of the Year Certificate Register (LTO) and the tax return register administered by the Norwegian Tax Administration (Statistics Norway, 2020a).

The register data on working conditions provides the opportunity to shed light on many different aspects of ethnic diversity in the labour market. For businesses, we find information such as geographical location, industry, sector and size measured in terms of the number of employees in the business. When concerning employees, there is information which indicates their connection to work, such as working hours, salary, occupation, number of employment relationships and place of work. There is also information registered about the age, gender, and level of education of employees, as well as a number of immigrant-specific

variables such as immigrant category, country of birth, reason for immigration or period of residence in Norway. The immigrant-specific variables are linked to data that is based on officially registered data pertaining to country of birth and the immigration itself, and are based on standards for categorising immigrants, reason for immigration, and country group.

This register data forms the basis for several key public statistics about the Norwegian labour market, such as Statistics Norway's employment and wage statistics. Several statistical tables are currently published that are relevant for measuring various aspects of ethnic diversity in the Norwegian labour market. For example, tables are published on the proportion of immigrants in businesses in various industries, sick leave, as well as several tables on overqualification (Statistics Norway, 2023d).

Another important source of information about connection to work is the jobseeker register ARENA, which is administered by NAV. ARENA includes all registered jobseekers in Norway, i.e. totally unemployed, people participating in ordinary labour market measures, people with occupational disabilities involved in measures and in the assessment and pending phases, as well as the partially employed. The register contains all information about people in terms of their jobseeker status, activities and benefits, for example whether the person receives the work assessment allowance, disability benefit or sickness benefits. Personal data includes information about gender, age, place of residence, level of education and immigrant category (NAV, 2022b). Based on the register figures, NAV publishes statistics about people who are unemployed, laid off, participants in labour market initiatives, and recipients of various benefits and allowances. The statistics for people who are totally unemployed currently include several tables relating to immigrants. The tables show developments in the number and proportion of unemployed immigrants by gender, age, country of origin and place of residence (NAV, 2023a).

The advantage of data from registries is that it covers the entire population, and that the information is updated regularly to ensure that developments can be followed over time. The data base is accurate and well-suited for producing detailed statistics and advanced analyses. Under certain conditions, data from different registers can also be linked together at an individual level, based on, for example, national identity numbers. In other words, information from different sources can be easily linked together in a manner that produces completely new knowledge. Since register data covers the entire population, one does not encounter the uncertainties and margins of error present in other types of data sources, such as challenges relating to representativeness, selection bias, non-response, etc.

However, register data also has certain limitations. Firstly, there may be various conditions during registration which render the data in the registers deficient. Another source of error is a breach in the source data, for example, when switching to a new source of data or changes in registration methods. This can provide misleading information about the development in the indicators over time and should be taken into consideration when producing and analysing time series. Challenges may also arise in connection with confidentiality in the preparation of indicators and analyses, for example, when figures for small groups are published.

At the same time, register data provides fewer opportunities to compare different aspects of ethnic diversity in the labour market between countries. Since the registers are created for administrative purposes, the Norwegian register data is often based on national standards and definitions, and may not always correlate with standards in other countries.

It is a known fact that Norway and the other Scandinavian countries have good register data, while other countries more often collect data through sample surveys. However, an increasing number of sample surveys on the labour market are also being carried out in Norway. In the next section, we take a closer look at what information is collected through these surveys, as well as the advantages and disadvantages associated with the use of this type of data.

Sample surveys

There are a number of sample surveys that provide relevant information on various factors related to ethnic diversity in the Norwegian labour market:

The European Union Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS) is a large sample survey of households that collects and compiles data from labour force surveys in 34 European countries, including Norway. Norwegian information included in the EU LFS is collected through the Labour Force Survey (Arbeidskraftundersøkelsen) conducted by Statistics Norway. Detailed statistics and analyses on the Norwegian labour market are published based on the data (Statistics Norway, 2023a).

EU LFS is conducted both quarterly and annually, and is supplemented by additional modules that are completed every eight years. The survey targets both the employed and unemployed, as well as people outside the workforce aged 15 years or older. The surveys cover topics such as labour market participation, employment conditions, previous work experience, working conditions (including working hours) and working hour arrangements, participation in education and training, health status and disability, and income (Eurostat, 2021).

Additional modules on immigrant working conditions were implemented in 2008, 2014 and most recently in 2021. The purpose is to provide users with more detailed insight into specific topics related to labour market participation, such as pension and labour market participation, combining work and family life, young people in employment, job skills, as well as the labour market situation for immigrants and their descendants. Among other things, the questions included cover topics relating to looking for work, language skills, participation in Norwegian language courses and whether people with immigrant backgrounds believe they are overqualified for their jobs (Statistics Norway, 2023a).

The living conditions survey of people with immigrant backgrounds is conducted by Statistics Norway approximately every ten years and is the most comprehensive survey on immigrant living conditions in Norway. Among other things, the survey sheds light on questions related to immigrant working conditions, experiences in the labour market, perceived discrimination

and inclusion, and health situation. The survey was last conducted in 2016 (Holmøy & Wiggen, 2017). The sample consisted of immigrants aged 16-74 with a period of residence in Norway of at least two years and who had backgrounds from twelve countries: Poland, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Eritrea and Somalia.

There are also several sample surveys in which questions about selected aspects of immigrants' connection to the labour market are included. Among them we find the Quality of Life Survey (Pettersen & Støren, 2021), Survey of the population's attitudes towards immigration (F. Strøm & Molstad, 2022), Integration Barometer (J.-P. Brekke & Fladmoe, 2022), Survey on attitudes towards ethnic diversity among employers (R. K. Andersen & Sterri, 2022) and Survey of the immigrant population on everyday integration (Dalen et al., 2022). Examples of topics covered include working conditions, working environment, attitudes, discrimination and contact with immigrants at the workplace.

The benefits of sample surveys are that they can provide knowledge that is not possible to obtain from registers. They are therefore a valuable supplement to register data. For example, surveys enable us to gain an insight into attitudes, motivations, experiences, values and desires expressed by the respondents. The surveys can be designed in such a way that the results are comparable to previous studies, time series, and surveys from other countries.

Sample surveys can also be used to supplement inadequate register data. An example of this is Statistics Norway's surveys that are used to identify education from a foreign country. Since there is inadequate information regarding education for many immigrants, Statistics Norway has conducted several rounds of surveys on the level of education and education from abroad to supplement the registers with educational information (Statistics Norway, 2012).

However, there are also challenges and limitations associated with sample surveys. First, there may be challenges related to sample size. As a general rule, it is desirable to have the largest possible sample in order to have the most robust data possible, with good quality and multiple options for breaking down this data. However, data collection costs impact the sample size and place limitations on this. Therefore, irrespective of the data collection method used, surveys are more resource and cost-intensive to conduct when compared to the collection of register data.

Second, it may be difficult to achieve a representative sample of survey respondents. Immigrants are generally underrepresented in sample surveys that are not specifically directed at the immigrant population. There are also systematic biases in terms of which immigrant groups respond to surveys. For example, there are often higher non-response rates among immigrants with low socioeconomic status and immigrants who are not in employment or have a low level of education (Haraldsen, 1999; IMDi and Fafo, 2010; Villund, 2007). It is possible to use certain methods to ensure representativeness and adjust for selective non-response (stratification, weighting, translation of questionnaires, incentives,

interview methods involving outreach etc.), however, these methods will not solve all the challenges relating to representativeness that exist in sample surveys.

A third challenge with sample surveys is that it is not possible to analyse and break down into equally detailed groups in the same way as when using register data. There are thus limited opportunities to study differences between, for example, age groups, immigrant groups, regions or industries. Unlike register data, it is also not possible to follow the same individuals over time when using sample surveys.

In summary, data from both registries and surveys can be used to provide a more comprehensive and nuanced picture of the situation in the labour market for people with immigrant backgrounds. However, it is also important to be aware of potential challenges, sources of errors and uncertainty associated with the use of the various data sources in analyses and the development of indicators in the field.

There are also other types of data sources based on reported and collected data on various grounds. These are data sources that do not necessarily have the status of official registers or defined and time-limited surveys, but may nevertheless provide valuable information. Examples of the types of sources that are of relevance here are descriptions of efforts to promote gender equality in companies that are reported in annual reports, more commonly known as the Employers activity duty and the duty to issue a statement (Aktivitets- og redegjørelsesplikt (ARP)). The ARP is described in more detail in Chapter 3.1. Reporting based on the Employers activity duty and the duty to issue a statement could also potentially have been a source of information for this report, however, it is challenging to extract aggregated figures and statistics based on the reporting in its current form, and we have therefore chosen not to do so. There are also factors relating to data protection and the GDPR that prevent businesses from registering information according to immigrant background, as well as reporting on status and measures.

3. Legislation and efforts by public actors

This chapter addresses the legislation in the field, applicable policies, and the efforts by and tools available to public actors. The purpose is to provide a complete overview of tools and areas of responsibility that relate to diversity, inclusion and gender equality in the labour market. All actors referred to here have a role in promoting or contributing to diversity in the labour market, as well as guiding and monitoring the situation. The review in this chapter will assist in linking the set of indicators for ethnic diversity in the labour market to policies and tools, with a view to being able to assess the need for new policies, tools and knowledge.

3.1 Legislation relating to gender equality in the labour market

Norway adheres to both national and international legislation that regulates the labour market and relevant conditions in various ways, such as the Gender Equality Act, Employers activity duty and the duty to issue a statement (ARP), Anti-Discrimination Act, Working Environment Act, etc.

The legislation that pertains to ethnic minorities is largely associated with regulating and prohibiting discrimination, where ethnicity is referred to as one of the grounds. The Act relating to the strengthening of the status of human rights in Norwegian law (Human Rights Act) states that "ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, or use their own language." The Constitution of Norway stipulates that the State shall respect and ensure human rights. The Norwegian Penal Code stipulates that it is prohibited to threaten, disparage, insult or make derogatory statements about others on the basis of their faith, skin colour or national or ethnic origin or sexual orientation. Laws relating to residential properties prohibit discriminating against someone on the basis of their faith, skin colour, language skills, national or ethnic origin or sexual orientation when renting or selling residential property.

Furthermore, in this chapter we discuss the most relevant laws and regulations for inclusion and gender equality in the labour market.

Act relating to equality and a prohibition against discrimination

The most important provisions relating to discrimination on the basis of ethnicity in the labour market can be found in the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act. Pursuant to Section 6 of the

Act, it is prohibited to discriminate on the basis of gender, pregnancy, leave in connection with childbirth or adoption, care responsibilities, ethnicity, religion, belief, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age or combinations of these factors.

Under the Act, the definition of discrimination includes both direct and indirect differential treatment. Direct differential treatment refers to treatment of a person that is worse than the treatment that is, has been or would have been afforded to other persons in a corresponding situation, on the basis of factors referred to above. Indirect differential treatment refers to any apparently neutral provision, condition, practice, act or omission that results in persons being placed in a worse position than others on the basis of factors referred to above (Sections 7 and 8 of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act). See also the previous chapter, where the term *discrimination* and different forms of discrimination are described in more detail.

There are exceptions to the prohibition against discrimination. Differential treatment is not considered unlawful if it has an objective purpose, is necessary to achieve the purpose, and does not have a disproportionate negative impact on the person or persons subject to the differential treatment. Such forms of differential treatment are only permitted in employment arrangements they are of decisive significance to the performance of the work or the pursuit of the occupation (Section 9 of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act).

Employers activity duty and the duty to issue a statement (ARP)

Chapter 4 of the Equality and Anti- Discrimination Act regulates an employer's obligation to engage in activities to prevent discrimination and to report on these activities. All companies in Norway, regardless of their size and sectoral affiliation, are subject to a general activity obligation. Pursuant to Section 26 of the Act, all employers shall, in their operations, make active, targeted and systematic efforts to promote equality, prevent discrimination on the basis of gender, pregnancy, leave in connection with childbirth or adoption, care responsibilities, ethnicity, religion, belief, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or combinations of these grounds, and shall seek to prevent harassment, sexual harassment and gender-based violence. Such efforts shall encompass the areas of recruitment, pay and working conditions, promotion, development opportunities, facilitation and the opportunity to combine work with family life.

In addition to a general activity obligation, employers in all public businesses and private businesses with more than 50 employees have an expanded obligation. Pursuant to Sections 24 to 26, employers in these businesses are required to:

- investigate whether there is a risk of discrimination or other barriers to equality, including by reviewing pay conditions by reference to gender and the use of involuntary part-time work every two years;
- analyse the causes of identified risks;
- implement measures suited to counteract discrimination and promote greater equality and diversity in the business; and
- evaluate the results of efforts made pursuant to what is specified above.

The same applies to employers in private businesses with between 20 and 50 employees if requested by one of the labour market parties. These efforts shall be documented, undertaken on an ongoing basis and take place in cooperation with employee representatives.

Furthermore, Section 26 of the Act states that employers must issue a statement on the actual status of gender equality in the business and what the business is doing to comply with the activity obligation. The statement shall be issued in the annual report or another document available to the general public. Employers in public enterprises which are not required to prepare an annual report shall include the statement in another report issued annually or another document available to the general public. The statement must be worded in such a way that no personal circumstances of individual employees are revealed. The results of the pay review shall be included in the statement in anonymised form.

Public authorities are also subject to the ARP pursuant to Section 24 of the Act. In accordance with this section, public authorities must describe the steps they are taking to safeguard considerations relating to equality and non-discrimination in a document available to the general public (for example in their annual report). Furthermore, public authorities shall provide an assessment of the results that have been achieved, and outline expectations with regards to future efforts in this area (Ministry of Culture and Equality, 2018).

While efforts are being made for actors such as private employers with companies over a certain size, educational institutions and public enterprises to be managed and controlled through measures such as ARP, there are studies showing that a significant proportion of employers violate the prohibition against discrimination (Larsen and Stasio 2021, Midtbøen 2016). Research also shows that knowledge about and follow-up of the Employers activity duty and the duty to issue a statement are inadequate (Bjørnseth, Rogstad & Sterri 2018; Svalund & Hansen 2013; Tronstad 2010). ARP requires employers to work systematically and preventively against discrimination. However, this obligation does not interfere with the employer's ability to make individual assessments and decisions. An example is the freedom of employers to assess the personal suitability of applicants in employment processes (Oxford Research & NTNU Community Research, 2022).

Discriminatory and hateful statements

Section 13 of the Anti-Discrimination Act, which pertains to harassment, and Section 185 of the Norwegian Penal Code, regulate discriminatory and hateful statements. Section 185 of the Norwegian Penal Code states that "discriminatory or hateful statement means threatening or insulting a person or promoting hate or persecution of or contempt for another person" on the basis of the person's group-based affiliation. Group-based affiliation can be, for example, skin colour or national or ethnic origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, or reduced functional capacity. These provisions may overlap. Section 13 of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act establishes a civil law (not criminal law) prohibition against harassment on the basis of gender, pregnancy, leave in connection with childbirth or adoption, care responsibilities, ethnicity, religion, belief,

disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, age or combinations of these. In Section 13, paragraph two of the Act, harassment is defined as "...acts, omissions or statements that have the purpose or effect of being offensive, frightening, hostile, degrading or humiliating."

The Working Environment Act

The Act relating to the working environment, working hours and employment protection, etc. (Working Environment Act) regulates working conditions and various aspects of the Norwegian labour market. Among other things, the Act includes rules concerning working environment, job protection, working hours, leave, employment and termination of employment (notice and dismissal). The objective of the Act is to ensure a safe and sound physical and psychological working environment, and that employees are treated equally both in connection with employment and in the labour market following their employment. The Act also regulates the facilitation of work for employees who have special needs due to health, family situation or other reasons (Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion, 2006).

Chapter 13 of the Act contains provisions relating to protection against discrimination. It is emphasised in this chapter that direct and indirect discrimination are prohibited, and that this applies to all aspects of employment, including advertising of positions, hiring, relocation and promotion; training and other skills development; salary and working conditions; and termination of employment. This applies irrespective of whether the employee is employed full-time or part-time, and both permanent and temporary employees are covered by the Act.

3.2 Policies in the field

While the purpose of the legislation is to prevent punishable acts, a number of stakeholders, schemes and measures contribute to promoting and enhancing ethnic diversity in the labour market. In the following, we look at public policy in the field, as well as the role of and tools available to key actors for promoting diversity in the labour market.

Public policy for diversity in the labour market

Public policy for ethnic diversity in the labour market is about achieving the highest possible workforce participation, good working conditions and a fair labour market. The extent to which government authorities place emphasis on rights, opportunities and results may vary (Berg et al., 2012).

An overarching objective of integration policy is that more immigrants participate in the labour market (Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion, 2023c; Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion, 2022). The following was stated already in the first sentence of the Norwegian national budget for 2023: "The goal of the economic policy is economic growth that contributes to work for everyone, more equitable distribution that reduces social and geographical differences, and a strong welfare state, with good services regardless of people's wallets and place of residence." (Report no. 1 to the Norwegian Parliament (2022-

2023). Chapter 1 “Main lines in economic policy and outlook for the Norwegian economy”, under the heading “Employment and income policy”, states: “The Government emphasises that everyone who can and wants to work shall have the opportunity to do so. The labour force is our most important resource. Employment policy, coupled together with other economic policies, will contribute to high employment and low unemployment.” It is also noted that the low unemployment rate and strong demand for labour provide good opportunities for groups who are often further outside the labour market to now be able to work. The Norwegian Government is increasing its efforts to focus on targeted initiatives for these groups. They emphasize that vulnerable groups may have specific needs for participating in labour market measures. It further states that the Norwegian Government will prioritise measures and tools for strengthening the right of employees to permanent employment and will create the conditions for a safe, serious and organised labour market.

Since 2022, responsibility for both employment and integration policy has been combined into one ministry, the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion. “Work for everyone in an inclusive labour market,” “Strengthening employee rights in a safe and serious labour market,” and “Integration and diversity” are among the key priorities (Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion, 2023). The following objectives for employment, integration and welfare policy were set for 2023:

1. A well-functioning labour market with good utilisation of the labour force.
2. A safe and serious labour market.
3. Reducing sick leave and withdrawal from the labour market
4. Good inclusion of vulnerable groups in the labour market
5. Good integration of immigrants into employment and society
6. Job retention schemes that provide financial security while also stimulating employment.
7. Good and predictable pensions for current and future generations.
8. Inclusion in society and good living conditions for those who are the most disadvantaged

Of particular relevance in this context are the goals of good integration of immigrants into employment and society, a safe and serious labour market and good inclusion of vulnerable groups in the labour market.

Action plans, strategies, agreements and formal cooperation

Hurdal Platform 2021 – 2025

The Hurdal Platform states that the Norwegian Government will make safe work for everyone the number one priority. It further states that work for everyone in a safe labour market is the key to more equitable distribution and freedom for the individual. More young people shall get a chance in the labour market. The Norwegian Government’s goal is full employment. The following is stated under the heading “Work for everyone in an inclusive labour market”:

Anyone who can and wants to work will have the opportunity to do so. The Government makes the employment line the basis of employment and welfare policy. The community therefore needs to come up with more active measures to help people in work. The Government will make it easier for more people to participate in training and skills development. It is particularly important to get young people who currently receive passive national insurance benefits into activity. It will be easier for people who live on national insurance benefits to combine national insurance benefits with work. People with reduced functional ability and health challenges will encounter a labour market that is open and inclusive. Immigrants must be able to contribute their resources. Women and men shall have the same opportunities, and no one should be subjected to harassment or violence in the workplace (p. 46).

With regard to labour market policy, the Hurdal Platform further states that the Norwegian Government wants to significantly strengthen NAV and labour market measures with wage subsidies, training and qualification initiatives.

Under the section on integration in the same document, it states that the Norwegian Government's primary objective for the integration work is to get more people into work, build strong communities and good common arenas, promote equality, and combat negative social control. Among other things, the Norwegian Government will:

- Start qualification for work already in reception centres and strengthen the competency focus in Norwegian integration policy.
- Strengthen the work-oriented integration efforts in the municipalities.

In line with the Hurdal Platform, the Norwegian Government has prepared an action plan against racism, extremism and radicalisation (Action plan against racism and discrimination – New initiatives 2024-2027). An action plan has also been developed to combat social dumping, work-related crime and unreported employment, and works in close cooperation with the parties to ensure a serious and organised labour market (Action Plan to combat social dumping and work-related crime, October 2022).

The previous government (Solberg Government) also presented a series of action plans and a strategy for integration:

- Action Plan against Racism and Discrimination on the Grounds of Ethnicity and Religion 2020-2023
- Action Plan to Combat Discrimination and Hatred Towards Muslims, 2020-2023.
- The Government's integration strategy, "Integration through knowledge", 2019–2022.
- The "Inclusion Initiative", a joint social mission to get more people into work.

Agreement for inclusive labour market

The Agreement for a More Inclusive Working Life (IA Agreement) is a letter of intent that applies to the entire Norwegian labour market (Norwegian Government, 2019). The

objective is to prevent and reduce sick leave, strengthen attendance at work and improve the working environment, as well as prevent exclusion and withdrawal from the labour market. Follow-up of the Agreement is based on good cooperation between the relevant parties (IA Cooperation) and is a means of achieving overarching goals within employment, working environment and inclusion policy.

The Council for Working Life and Pension Policy is responsible for following up the IA Agreement at a national level. The Council shall annually discuss experiences and results, as well as strategy and overarching plans for the IA work. Through the cooperation, the various parties shall actively contribute to individual workplaces being able to participate in a binding commitment to achieving the common goals. Management, elected representatives and safety representatives all play important roles in these efforts within the companies.

The State's interview scheme

State enterprises are obligated to call at least one qualified applicant who is an immigrant or who was born in Norway with two foreign-born parents in for an interview. This is stipulated in the Regulations to Section 4 b of the Civil Service Act. The prerequisite is that the applicant is qualified for the position. It is preferable that applicants from Europe, except for the EU/EFTA, Asia (including Turkey), Africa and South and Central America, and Oceania, except for Australia and New Zealand, are called in for an interview¹.

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the UN Member States' joint working plan for eradicating poverty, combating inequality and halting climate change by 2030. The SDGs consist of 17 goals and 169 targets. One of the main principles of the SDGs is "*Leaving no one behind*". Excluded groups, such as people with disabilities, refugees, ethnic and religious minorities, girls and indigenous peoples are heavily represented among those still living in poverty. All countries have a responsibility to formulate policies, goals and specific indicators for achieving the SDGs.

Goal no. 8 "Decent work and economic growth" is particularly relevant in the context of ethnic diversity. The goal is sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all. Target 8.5 is to achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all.

In June 2021, the Norwegian Government presented a white paper on the continued work on achieving the SDGs: Report to the Storting (White Paper) No. 40 (2020—2021) Goals with meaning – Norway's action plan to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. The white paper describes the challenges facing Norway and the Government's policies in these areas. In order to monitor attainment of the SDGs over time, a set of

¹ Cf. including the guide for diverse recruitment
<https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/upload/kmd/apa/mangfoldsrekruttering.pdf>

indicators have been developed. Statistics Norway is the Norwegian point of contact for the indicators and measurements. Norwegian figures for the global indicators can be found on Statistics Norway's SDG portal. Norwegian data can be found for about 80 indicators. Several of the indicators are relevant for a set of indicators for diversity in the labour market.

3.3 Efforts of key actors

Success in achieving the goals and ambitions relating to ethnic diversity in the labour market requires all parties to contribute, including central government and municipal actors, non-profit organisations and the labour market itself. The Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion is responsible for formulating national policies, and NAV, IMDi, the Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority and several other actors are responsible for following up and implementing political guidelines. IMDi, for example, is specifically responsible for implementing schemes and measures for integration, and for providing knowledge-based input for policy development and documenting the situation. Bufdir and LDO have key roles in documenting and providing guidance. Below is a brief overview of the roles of the various public actors in the efforts to promote ethnic diversity and inclusion in the labour market.

The Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi)

IMDi is a directorate that is subordinate to the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion. IMDi is tasked with implementing the Norwegian Government's integration policy and is the national resource centre responsible for the integration field. IMDi's vision is to promote equal opportunities, rights and duties for everyone in a diverse society. As previously mentioned, the primary objective of integration policy is that more immigrants are in work and participating in society (Proposition no. 1 to the Norwegian Parliament (2021 – 2022) Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion), and IMDi is tasked with, among other things, facilitating this. IMDi is responsible for a number of different schemes that are intended to contribute to more immigrants finding work and is responsible for managing the integration rules that regulate the work of the municipalities on the Introduction Programme and instruction in the Norwegian language and social studies, as well as paying per-capita grants that shall finance the work of the municipalities with the schemes. IMDi also manages a number of application-based grants in the field of qualification and the labour market that are targeted at municipalities, county municipalities and employers.

IMDi's work on ethnic diversity in the labour market consists of initiating and disseminating knowledge, developing and providing tools, supporting businesses and sharing experiences on how businesses can increase ethnic diversity through recruitment. Each year IMDi presents the Diversity Award (Mangfoldsprisen), and has developed the website MIKA (diversity-inclusion-competence-labour market) with tools and guides developed by various public actors (IMDi, 2023b). IMDi also disseminates knowledge about how different inclusion measures can create added value for businesses. The target group is employers in the public and private sectors and the parties in the labour market. IMDi's efforts shall contribute to increased recruitment and inclusion of immigrants in the labour market, good use of

immigrants' skills in the labour market, and greater awareness among employers about ethnic diversity as a resource. The purpose is to contribute to a more inclusive, equitable and sustainable labour market that is free of discrimination.

The Norwegian Directorate of Labour and Welfare and NAV

The Directorate of Labour and Welfare is responsible for controlling, managing and developing NAV on behalf of the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion. The Directorate has overall responsibility for NAV achieving the goals and results it has been set, and for implementing labour market, national insurance and pension policies. The Directorate of Labour and Welfare is the specialist directorate of the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration, and is responsible for supervising the municipal social services. This entails that the Directorate has specialist responsibility at national level, administers and interprets the legislation and ensures that political guidelines are put into practice.

NAV's social mission is to contribute to social and economic security, and promote the transition to work and activity. The goal is to create an inclusive society, an inclusive workforce and a well-functioning labour market, in which more people are working and have a stable connection to working life. NAV shall be the welfare state's safety net. NAV shall contribute to more people getting into work and fewer people going on benefits, while also providing those in need with an income and financial security by providing the correct financial support at the right time (NAV, 2023b).

NAV has three principal ambitions moving towards 2030:

- Mobilising labour in a labour market that is undergoing a period of transition.
- Everyone will receive the funds they have the right to receive - simple and predictable.
- Together we will find solutions for those who need them most.

NAV has a number of measures and schemes, such as labour market measures, qualification programmes, wage subsidies, training initiatives etc. NAV shall assist unemployed persons who need to find work, offer work-oriented measures and provide individual guidance, and more comprehensive follow-up and measures for those who are struggling to enter the labour market. This applies both to those without education or qualifications, have gaps in their CV, and those who require aids or facilitation to function well at work. In some municipalities, responsibility for the Introduction Programme has also been assigned to NAV.

Employers are NAV's most important partners in creating a good and inclusive labour market. NAV is in daily contact with local employers concerning recruitment needs and has entered into agreements of intent at regional and national level with large employers for recruitment and follow-up assistance. Among other things, NAV offers recruitment services, cooperation on training initiatives and facilitation, various forms of support schemes and grants, and assistance in monitoring sick leave. NAV closely monitors the labour market, and

takes steps to supply the labour market with the required skills and move the labour force to where demand is highest.

NAV has a large database of vacant positions and also offers meeting places for companies and job applicants, including job fairs. Through EURES (European Employment Services) partnerships, NAV offers job placement services through the entire EEA.

The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs

The Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir) is subordinate to the Ministry of Children and Families, however is also managed by the Ministry of Culture and Equality in the area of gender equality and non-discrimination, and by the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion in connection with individual assignments.

Bufdir has a broad portfolio of tasks within child protection, family protection, child upbringing, adoption, violence and domestic abuse, as well as equality and non-discrimination. Bufdir is both a specialist directorate and implements central government policy, and controls the Office for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufetat), which is responsible for the central government child and family welfare services.

Bufdir was set the following objectives for equality and non-discrimination in the letter of allocation (2023):

- A less gender-segregated labour market.
- Fewer barriers to participation for people with disabilities.
- Promote universal design in areas where the challenges are greatest.
- Protect the rights of LGBTQ people, contribute to transparency and actively combat discrimination
- Combat racism, hatred and discrimination on the basis of ethnicity and religion.
- Promote gender equality and non-discrimination internationally through multilateral and bilateral cooperation.

Bufdir is responsible for providing guidance and information about the Employers activity duty and the duty to issue a statement (ARP).

The Gender Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud

The Gender Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud (LDO) promotes guidance and prevention related to gender equality and discrimination issues. These efforts are targeted at individuals both inside and outside the workforce, employers, government authorities, elected representatives, non-profit organisations and others who require advice and guidance.

Most of the cases that LDO is contacted about relate to discrimination in the labour market, and largely concern discrimination on the basis of gender, as well as pregnancy and parental leave. With regard to ethnicity as grounds for discrimination, guidance was provided in 367

cases in 2022, which was an increase from 196 cases in 2019. In addition, guidance was provided in 44 cases for which religion was grounds for discrimination, compared with 37 cases in 2019 (LDO, 2022).

The LDO wants more people with an immigrant background to contact them for guidance in cases where they suspect they have been discriminated against. In 2021, LDO conducted a campaign about ethnic discrimination on social media. The Ombud has also held courses with a specific focus on discrimination on the basis of ethnicity. Brochures will also be prepared that contain information about the Ombud's guidance service (LDO, 2021). LDO has also developed a practical handbook for employers on how they can systematically promote diversity and prevent discrimination. The handbook is based on the Employers activity duty and the duty to issue a statement (ARP) which is mandated in the Anti-Discrimination Act.

The Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority

The Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority is tasked with monitoring that businesses maintain high standards in the areas of health, working environment and safety. The Norwegian Labor Inspection Authority is a specialist and independent body that is responsible for monitoring that businesses comply with their responsibilities under the working environment laws, laws governing collective agreements and other relevant regulations. Among other things, this entails that the businesses work systematically with having a preventive working environment, health and safety, that they ensure there are serious and decent working conditions, and that labour market crime is detected and combated.

Several of the Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority's goals contribute to promoting inclusion and equality in the workplace. Among other things, the Authority assists in preventing work-related injuries, labour market crime, indecently low wage levels and indecent hiring in and out of labour. Another goal is to ensure that foreign workers are able to safeguard their rights and comply with their duties. The Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority monitors employers in industries that employ large numbers of immigrants through, among other things, supervision and guidance. The Authority also provides foreign workers with information about the rights that they hold in the Norwegian labour market. In 2022, the Authority had five service centres for foreign workers that provide information, guidance and assistance with practical matters required for being able to legally work in Norway (Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority, 2022a).

Parties in the labour market

The parties in the labour market consist of employees or their organisations on the one side, and employers or their organisations on the other. The parties in the labour market therefore represent many people on both the employee and employer sides. The cooperation takes place both at company level and at an overarching organisational level. In the tripartite cooperation, the government authorities work together with both the employer and employee sides. The Norwegian Government and the parties in the labour market play

an important role in connection with income policy, and the primary objective is to coordinate wage formation and contribute to moderate price and wage growth. This in turn will strengthen the basis for sustained high employment and low unemployment. The cooperation contributes towards a high employment rate, job creation and profitability (Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (NHO), 2017). The Tripartite cooperation has played an important role in the efforts to have more established rules in the labour market See also Chapter 3.2 for a more detailed description of the IA Agreement.

The different parties and organisations work both collectively and individually to promote diversity and inclusion within the different industries and sectors. They promote and stimulate diversity and inclusion through information and guidance, by highlighting good examples, documenting, and through various projects. One example is the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise's (NHO) project "Rings in the Water" (NHO, 2023).

The Norwegian Agency for Public and Financial Management

The Norwegian Agency for Public and Financial Management (DFØ) is the central government's specialist agency for financial management, good decision-making in connection with central government measures, organisation and management in the central government, as well as for procurements in the public sector and joint purchasing agreements. DFØ is also a provider of joint services for pay and accounting administration, and is responsible for providing employer support to state enterprises (DFØ, 2022). DFØ has many primary tasks, one of which is to provide employer support to state enterprises. DFØ is also tasked with providing professional advice and guidance in areas such as management and the role of employer. DFØ shall prepare and offer tools to develop state governance and management, offer skills development services to managers and employees in public enterprises, and assess and analyse the status, development and need for change in Norwegian public administration. In other words, DFØ has a role in influencing as well as the opportunity to influence state enterprises as employers. DFØ has prepared the Statens arbeidsgiverportal (Norwegian Government Employer Portal), which is a specialist website for employers, managers and HR in the State.

DFØ has a specific focus on inclusion and diversity in the labour market by promoting and further developing measures to ensure good and inclusive recruitment practices in state enterprises, with equal treatment of candidates with "multicultural backgrounds". DFØ offers specialist websites and e-courses, including e-learning courses in diversity recruitment and webinars on diversity and inclusion. DFØ is part of the Norwegian State's diversity network. Here, DFØ presents its initiatives and tools that are offered to state employers in their work on inclusion and diversity.

4. Set of indicators for ethnic diversity in the labour market

In this chapter, we describe the assessments that form the basis for the design of indicators for ethnic diversity in the labour market from an integration perspective. The purpose of the framework is to facilitate systematic and regular measurement of the status and development trends in ethnic diversity and inclusion of people with immigrant backgrounds in the Norwegian labour market.

4.1 What characterises good indicators?

When approaching a complex and multifaceted phenomenon, it is common to describe (operationalise) the phenomenon using one or more indicators.

An indicator is a measure intended to specify or describe conditions that are too complicated or too costly to measure directly. One or more key figures are selected that can provide some information about status and development. A set of indicators provides a good starting point for obtaining an overview of the situation and presenting the development of different dimensions of a complex phenomenon, as well as further examining differences between different groups. This in turn can help identify, for example, the most vulnerable groups or areas where developments are moving in the wrong direction. A comprehensive and systematic overview can also be of benefit when seeking to identify knowledge gaps and areas where measures are required.

At the same time, one needs to be aware of certain factors when using indicators. Indicators often provide a simplified description of the status and development of a phenomenon. There may be a number of other observable and non-observable factors that influence this phenomenon which are not covered by selected indicators. In addition, indicators say little about the causes and mechanisms behind the development. Indicators should therefore be supplemented with more in-depth analyses, quantitative or qualitative research.

Good indicators should satisfy a series of requirements. Among other things, they should be specific, i.e. clearly defined, quantifiable, considered realistic, time-specific, as well as easy to understand and measure (DFØ, 2010). In the report "How to measure integration?", Proba provides recommendations for designing indicators for integration (Proba, 2019). These recommendations are used as a basis in our work on the set of indicators for ethnic diversity and inclusion in the labour market in this report. When selecting individual indicators and designing the full set of indicators, we have used a number of criteria based on Proba's recommendations. These criteria are listed in the table below.

Table 1. *Criteria for selecting indicators (based on Proba, 2019)*

Criteria for designing the set of indicators

- 1) On the whole, the set of indicators should encompass all relevant aspects of the selected definition of ethnic diversity and inclusion.
- 2) The set of indicators should include subjective and objective aspects of the selected definition.
- 3) The set of indicators should be linked to overarching political objectives.
- 4) There should be a limited number of indicators in the set.

Criteria for selection of individual indicators

- 5) The indicator should be easy to understand, interpret and communicate.
- 6) The indicator should not measure exactly what another indicator measures.
- 7) The indicator should be based on data which makes it possible to obtain an adequate sample size.
- 8) The indicator should have sufficient options for being broken down into categories.
- 9) The indicator should be based on data that is comparable over time.
- 10) The indicator should allow for long-term and stable data collection.
- 11) The indicator should be relevant for both immigrants and people born in Norway to immigrant parents, as well make it possible to estimate for the two groups separately.

Using the criteria described in the table above, assessments and choices have been made that relate to the scope of the framework, relevant target groups and potential limitations. The reasons for these choices are further explained below.

When designing the set of indicators, we first looked at how different aspects of ethnic diversity are operationalised in Norwegian and international research in the field, as well as what data is available. The most common approach is to use immigrants' country of origin, i.e. their own or their parents' country of birth, as an indication of ethnic affiliation. We also made the decision to do this in the report. Information pertaining to country of origin is easier to obtain from administrative registries or via sample surveys, when compared to other characteristics of ethnic minority such as language, skin colour or religion.

Second, we have used integration policy objectives and IMDi's mandate as a basis when selecting indicators and target groups (Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion, 2023c). Since the purpose of the set of indicators is to call attention to ethnic diversity in the labour market from an integration perspective, this entails that the target population for the framework matches with the target groups for integration policy, i.e. immigrants and their Norwegian-born children. Other ethnic minority groups, such as indigenous peoples and national minorities, are not included among the target groups in this report.

Third, we know that the population with immigrant backgrounds in Norway is a heterogeneous group, and different immigrants have different needs and challenges related to labour market integration. For example, Proba (2019) notes that Nordic immigrants have lower linguistic and cultural barriers and thus different prerequisites for integration than other immigrant groups. Therefore, an important purpose of the report is to shed light on the differences within the immigrant population when concerning the various indicators of ethnic diversity and inclusion in the labour market. When formulating the indicators, we therefore chose to distinguish between immigrant groups from different world regions. Among other things, the reason for this was to examine the labour market for non-Nordic immigrants. When so permitted by the data base, the differences between groups that have different ages, genders, reasons for immigration and periods of residence in Norway are also highlighted.

Fourth, we have chosen indicators that can be followed over time. However, it will be relevant to further develop and revise the set of indicators in the future to ensure that it is considered relevant and applicable. We therefore need to continuously assess whether the indicators cover key conditions, are able to be updated and can be viewed in relation to new knowledge that is constantly being produced in the field. It may also be applicable to go into some thematic “deep dives” around selected issues by way of future updates to the set of indicators.

4.2 Framework for ethnic diversity and inclusion in the labour market

A holistic set of indicators should highlight both objective and subjective aspects of ethnic diversity and inclusion. Based on the definitions in Chapter 2, we find that there is a need to:

- 1) quantify the extent and distribution of ethnic diversity in different parts of the Norwegian labour market, and
- 2) measure the “quality” of ethnic diversity, i.e. assess the extent to which people with immigrant backgrounds experience inclusion and equality in the labour market.

Therefore, in the framework we have divided the indicators into two overarching thematic areas:

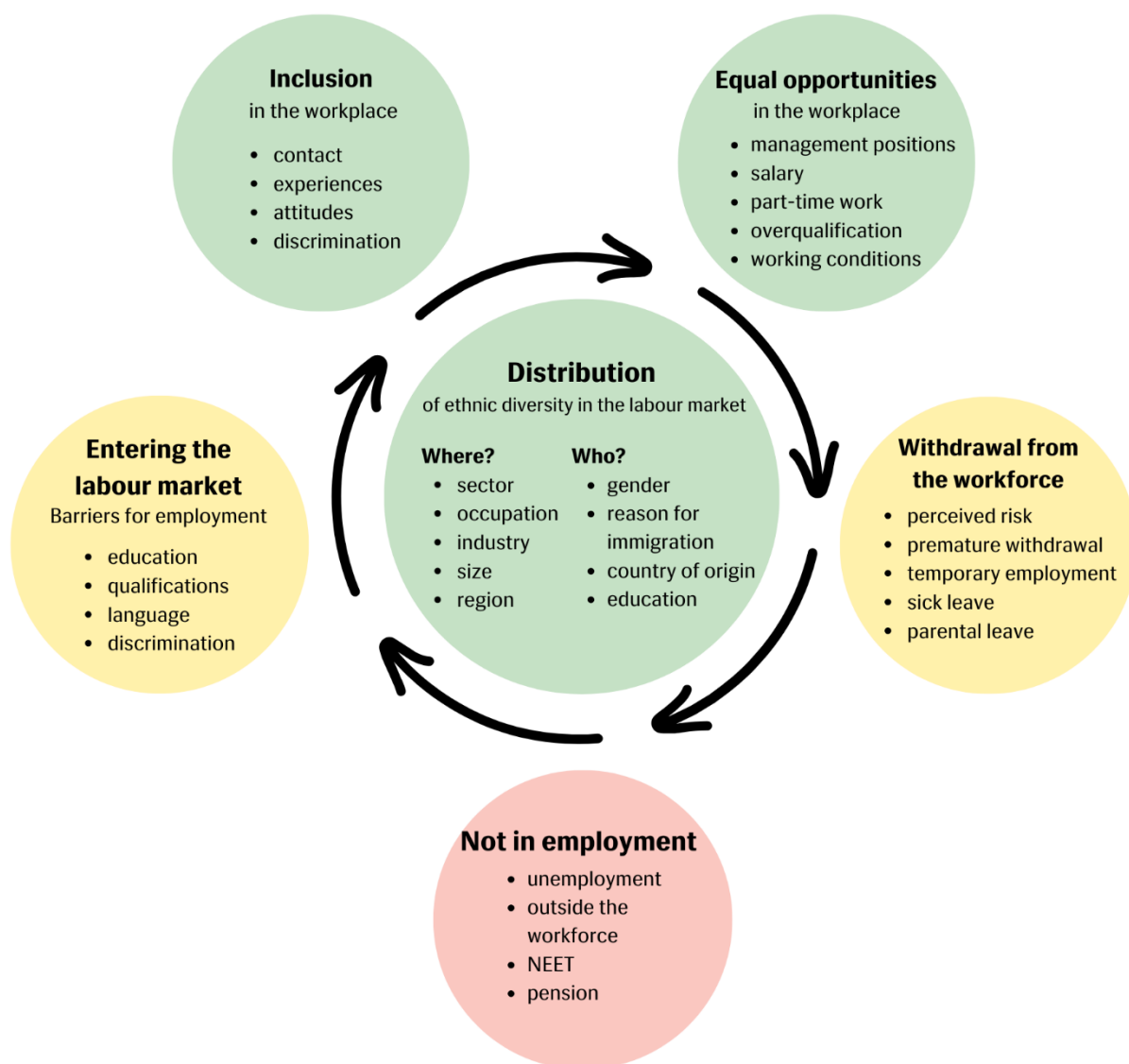
- **Indicators of the extent and distribution of ethnic diversity in the labour market.** These indicators can be used to measure the extent, as well as monitor developments in the representation of people with immigrant background in different parts of the labour market. Among other things, the indicators provide a basis for comparing the share of immigrants between businesses in different industries, sectors or regions in Norway. In addition, it is relevant to compare the situation for different groups of employees with immigrant backgrounds, for example, breaking these down by gender, reason for immigration or period of residence.

- **Indicators for inclusion of people with immigrant backgrounds in the labour market.** These indicators can provide an overview of the efforts that are being made to promote ethnic diversity in the Norwegian labour market, and describe the experiences different groups with immigrant backgrounds have when it comes to workforce participation. The indicators in this section are divided in such a way that they can highlight inclusion and equality in different phases both in and outside of the labour market.

Among those who are in employment, it is relevant to look at structural differences in working conditions, rewards and career opportunities between employees with and without immigrant backgrounds. In addition, the framework covers more subjective aspects of being an ethnic minority in the workplace. For example, this may involve experiences of belonging, discrimination, as well as attitudes among employers and employees.

People with immigrant backgrounds may experience various barriers when entering the labour market and have a higher probability of losing their job. This can result in more of them remaining outside of the workforce, either for short or longer periods. The challenges when entering or exiting the workforce also influence the types of jobs immigrants are able to obtain, as well as the extent to which they experience inclusion and equal opportunities at their workplaces. Therefore, the framework includes indicators of various forms of exclusion, barriers when entering the workforce, and risk factors for dropping out of the labour market. Figure 1 provides a schematic representation of the set of indicators.

Figure 1. Indicators of ethnic diversity in the labour market



The table below presents a complete list of the indicators included in the set of indicators.

Table 2. Indicators for ethnic diversity and inclusion of people with immigrant backgrounds in the labour market.

Theme	Indicator	Source
Extent and distribution of ethnic diversity in the labour market	Employment rate; Level of education; Representation by occupation; Representation by industry; Representation by sector; Representation by business size; Geographic representation;	Register (Statistics Norway)

	Entrepreneurship	
Not in employment	Unemployment; Outside the workforce; NEET; Pension	Register (Statistics Norway; NAV)
Entering the labour market	Perceived barriers to employment; Discrimination in hiring; Norwegian language skills; Approval of education;	Survey (Eurostat; Statistics Norway; Dalen et al, 2022)
Inclusion in the workplace	Contacts and experiences; Employer attitudes; Employer's measures for inclusion; Discrimination in the workplace	Register and Survey (Statistics Norway; Eurostat; Brekke, Fladmoe, 2022; Andersen, Sterri, 2022; Dalen et al, 2022)
Equal opportunities in the workplace	Salary; Part-time work; Overqualification; Career development, management positions; Board representatives; Physical working environment; Degree of organisation	Register and Survey (Statistics Norway; Nergaard & Ødegård, 2022; Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority)
Departing the workforce	Perceived risk of losing job; Temporary position; Sick leave; Leave; Premature withdrawal from the workforce	Register and Survey (Statistics Norway)

In order to measure the degree of representation in different parts of the labour market, we have chosen to look at the proportion of immigrants in businesses. This is a simplified operationalisation of ethnic diversity that has some limitations. For example, this proportion does not tell us anything about how varied ethnic diversity may be, or how many groups with different ethnic backgrounds are found in the business. In studies of heterogeneity in ethnic backgrounds among employees in companies, it is common to use indexes for diversity such as the Blau index (Umblijs et al., 2022). The indexes provide a more detailed insight into ethnic diversity in the workplace, however require access to detailed data and may therefore be more difficult to update at regular intervals.

The selected indicators in this report are based on data from a variety of data sources, something which is also shown in the table above. The data is collected using different methods and with varying frequency. As a result, the population covered by the various indicators will also vary. For example, for most indicators based on register data, it is possible to measure developments for both immigrants and people born in Norway to immigrant parents. We can also compare the situation of different immigrant groups, such as non-Nordic immigrants or refugees, men or women, young people or the elderly, etc. Detailed break downs at this level are less common in results from surveys.

The data is also updated with varying frequency. Register data is usually updated more frequently than survey-based data. For example, statistics on immigrant wages and unemployment rate are published each month, while the living conditions survey of people with immigrant backgrounds in Norway is only conducted every ten years.

The above disadvantages can thus result in the different indicators not being directly comparable, and it is therefore important to take into account possible weaknesses in the data when looking at the status and development of the indicators, as well as when assessing the need for new knowledge and research in the field.

Part II. Status and development trends

5. Extent and distribution of ethnic diversity in the labour market

This chapter describes the status and development trends of ethnic diversity in the Norwegian labour market. We describe the *extent* of ethnic diversity in the Norwegian labour market by examining the employment rate among people with immigrant backgrounds as of the present date, as well as how the proportion of immigrants in the labour market has changed over time.

The *distribution* of ethnic diversity is operationalised in this report by examining the proportion of immigrants in businesses in different parts of the Norwegian labour market. The Norwegian labour market consists of several sub-labour markets. For example, we can describe the labour market for certain industries, sectors, occupational groups or geographical areas (Norwegian Official Report, 2018). The extent to which employees with immigrant backgrounds are represented in different types of jobs is an important backdrop when analysing ethnic diversity and inclusion in the labour market. This distribution can impact, for example, the disparities in immigrants' connection to work, such as wage levels, working hours or the risk of losing one's job (Olsen, 2019, 2021; Statistics Norway, 2017).

Qualifications and level of education, work experience, language skills etc. play a very important role in employment. There are strong requirements for formal qualifications in the Norwegian labour market, and this is also often the case when concerning proficiency in the Norwegian language. Education at upper secondary school level increases the probability of entering the workforce and offers protection against exclusion, and level of education is therefore included in this section of the report. Among those who are not in work, a large proportion have low formal qualifications and inadequate Norwegian language skills. Formal qualifications are an important factor that helps explain why different immigrant groups are distributed unequally between sectors and occupations. Level of education and formal qualifications are important background factors when looking at different indicators.

The descriptive statistical analyses in this chapter are primarily based on Statistics Norway's register-based employment statistics, and thus the groupings of target groups that are available in these statistics (for example, when categorising according to immigrant category, country of origin, reason for immigration etc) are also used here.

5.1. Extent

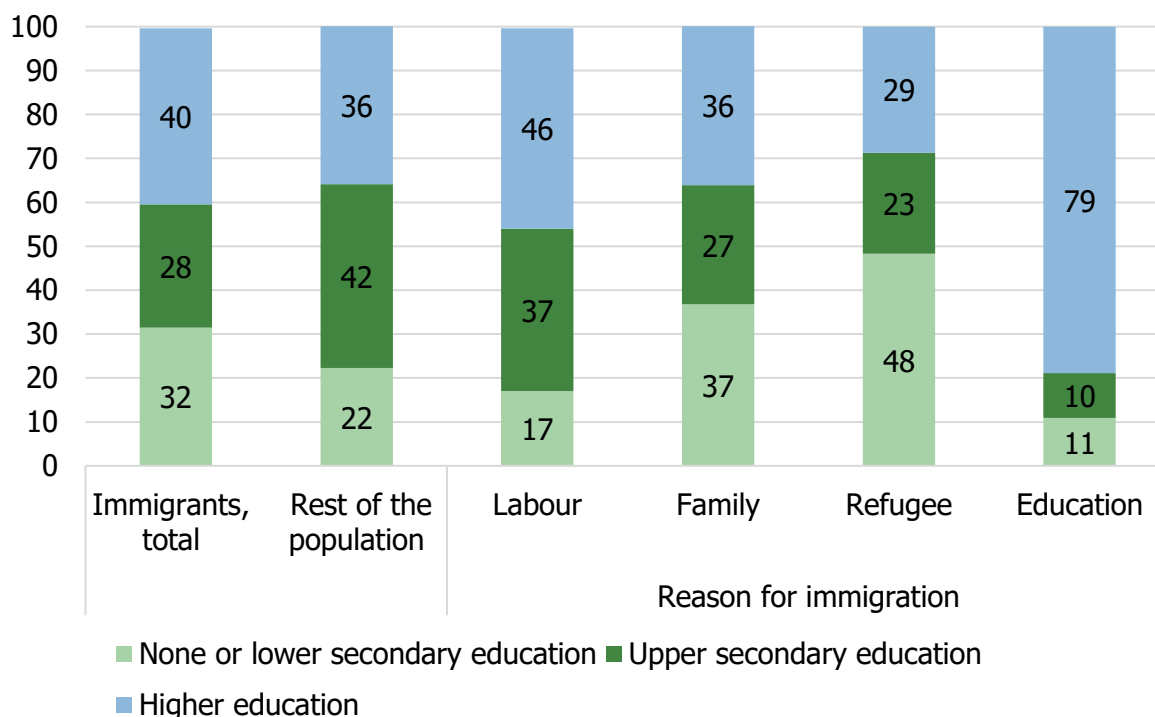
As mentioned, the extent of ethnic diversity in the labour market is described by examining the employment rate over time and for different groups. The level of education in the population and in different groups is described first, because this can tell us a great deal about both the level and distribution of employment. This subchapter also contains a brief description of entrepreneurship and startups as part of the overall employment picture.

Level of education

Formal qualifications and skills are important resources for everyone, including people with immigrant backgrounds, when encountering the Norwegian labour market. Norway has one of the most skills-intensive labour markets in Europe (Official Norwegian Report, 2018). Strengthening and adding formal qualifications through education and qualification are therefore important prerequisites for greater ethnic diversity and inclusion in the labour market. This means that it is difficult for those without formal qualifications to gain a stable connection to the labour market. The differences in level of education help explain the differences in employment rate, working conditions, wages and other indicators for ethnic diversity and inclusion (Bye, 2021; Olsen, 2020).

If we look at the average level of education among the immigrant population, there is a larger share of immigrants who have no education or only have primary and lower secondary school education. At the same time, the proportion of people who have completed university or college education is higher among immigrants. In 2022, 40 per cent of immigrants had higher education, compared to 36 per cent in the rest of the population.

Figure 2. Level of education, by immigrant category and reason for immigration, in the age group of 16 and over. Percentage. 2022. (Statistics Norway, 2022a)



There is major variation in the level of education between different groups within the immigrant population. Almost four out of five immigrants who have come to Norway to study have post-secondary education. Almost half of all labour immigrants have higher education, and only 17 per cent have a primary and lower secondary school education or lower. On average, refugees have significantly lower levels of education when compared to other immigrants. In 2022, 48 per cent had a primary and lower secondary school education or lower (Statistics Norway, 2022a).

Differences in level of education by gender are clear: relatively more women than men have education at university or university college levels, and this applies both among immigrants and the rest of the population. In 2022, 46 per cent of immigrant women had higher education, compared to 36 per cent among male immigrants. In the entire population, the respective proportions were 42 and 32 per cent (Statistics Norway, 2022a).

Over time, the level of education among immigrants particularly relates to changes in the population and the educational background of those who immigrate. On the whole, the proportion who have little or no completed education, and higher education has remained stable since 2014 (Statistics Norway, 2023g).

There is a high number of young people among the those born in Norway to immigrant parents, but there is also now a decent number of adults. They do better than their immigrant peers in several areas, for instance in terms of labour market participation. People born in Norway to immigrant parents also enrol in post-secondary education at higher rates

than the rest of the population and a larger share is more educated than their parents. There is high social mobility compared to their parents' generation (Ekren & Grendal, 2021; Kirkeberg et al., 2019).

At the same time, there is significant variation within the group of people who were born in Norway to immigrant parents. They are overrepresented in the share pursuing higher education, in the share with lower secondary school points, and in the share that has not completed upper secondary school. Low primary and lower secondary school points and lower completion rates at upper secondary school are particularly prevalent among boys (IMDi, 2023a).

Employment rate

Norway has a high employment rate compared to other countries. 77.4 per cent of the population aged 20-66 is employed. The proportion of immigrants who are employed is very high compared to other countries, but still slightly lower than the national average. Employment among immigrants aged 20-66 is 68.9 per cent, while is 79.8 per cent for the rest of the population (Statistics Norway, 2023d), i.e. just under 11 percentage points higher.

What is meant by employed persons?

An employed person is defined as a person who performed income-generating work of at least one hour in duration during the reference week, or has such work, but was temporarily absent due to illness, holiday, paid leave or similar. People doing their military or civil service for the first time are considered employed. People involved in employment initiatives with a salary from an employer are also classified as employed. This is in accordance with the recommendations of the International Labour Organization ILO (Statistics Norway).

The employment rate is 72.7 per cent and 64.7 per cent respectively for men and women who have immigrated. The difference in the employment rate between women and men is greater among immigrants (8 percentage points) than in the rest of the population (4 percentage points). The difference between men and women is generally greater in other countries.

If we look back to 2001, the employment rate across the entire population has fallen by 1 percentage point, while this has increased by 5.9 percentage points among immigrants.

Immigrants make up an ever-increasing proportion of employed persons. In 2022, the proportion was 19.2 per cent of all employed persons aged 20-66, while in 2001 this figure was 6 per cent. In the initial years following the EU expansion, the proportion increased to

10 per cent (2009), and the number and proportion have since increased at a relatively steady rate up to the present day (Statistics Norway, 2023d).

The total Norwegian workforce is increasing due to immigration and immigrants' labour market participation. This means that almost half a million immigrants and 2.1 million people among the rest of the population (aged 20-66) participate in the Norwegian labour market (Statistics Norway, 2023d). Without immigration, the workforce would have gradually decreased in size.

Who is part of the workforce?

The workforce is the sum total of all people who are either employed or unemployed, i.e. anyone who provides their labour in the labour market.

The proportion of immigrants in the labour market in general and many businesses has increased over time. This also applies across sectors and industries. This relates to the fact that immigrants and people born in Norway to immigrant parents make up an increasing larger proportion of both the population and workforce. Since immigrants have a lower employment rate than the rest of the population, they are still, on the whole, underrepresented in the labour market. However, the employment rate varies in relation to immigrants' backgrounds, such as reason for immigration, age, gender, period of residence in Norway and level of education. It also depends on other factors such as demand for labour and business cycles.

Figure 3. Employed persons aged 20-66 by country of origin. Q4, 2001-2022. (Statistics Norway, 2022b)



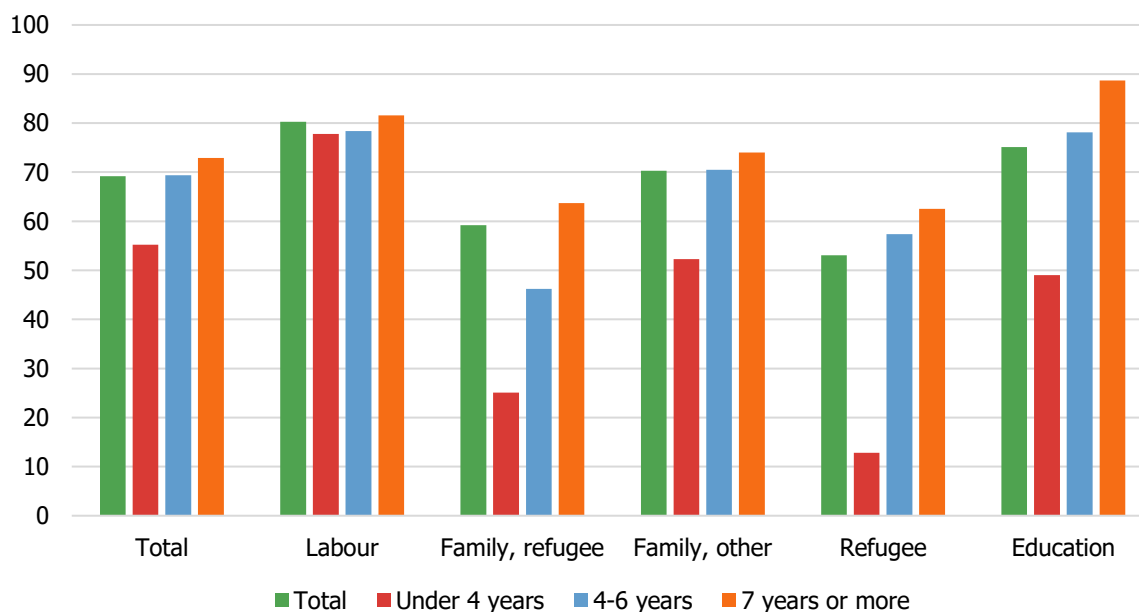
Table 3 shows the employment rate by country of origin in 2022, and the changes from 2021. The employment rate is highest among immigrants from the Nordic countries and the EU/EFTA countries. The employment rate among immigrants from Europe, not including the EU, fell from 2021 to 2022. This is attributed to high refugee arrivals from Ukraine during 2022. It generally takes some time for refugees to learn Norwegian and start working. Employment rates are lowest among immigrants from Asia and Africa, however there are major differences between countries within the different world regions.

Table 3. Employed persons (aged 20-66), by immigration background and world region. Q4 2021 and 2022 (Statistics Norway, 2023d)

	2022		Changes in past year	
	Absolute figures	Percentage in each group	2021 -2022	
			Number of employed persons	Percentage
Population as a whole	2,596.804	77.4	40,733	0.3
Population, excluding immigrants	2,098,605	79.8	12,305	0.6
Total immigrants	497,977	68.9	28,206	0
The Nordic countries except Norway	43,484	79.9	435	-0.1
EU/EFTA until 2004, excluding the Nordic countries	51,340	75.8	3,237	0.9
New EU countries after 2004	141,631	76.5	6,799	1.7
Europe excluding EU/EFTA/UK	44,525	57.4	3,409	-13.8
North America and Oceania	8,139	68.8	394	-0.8
Asia	139,403	64.2	9,195	1.7
Africa	52,688	61.2	3,821	2.7
Latin America and the Caribbean	16,767	72.0	916	1.2

When broken down according to reason for immigration, the employment rate is naturally higher among those who have come to Norway in connection with work. In this group, about eight out of ten are in employment and there are minor differences in the employment rate between groups with different periods of residence in Norway. For other immigrant groups, period of residence in Norway has a greater influence on the employment rate. Figure 4 shows that the proportion who are in employment is higher among immigrants with longer periods of residence. This mostly applies to refugees and their family members.

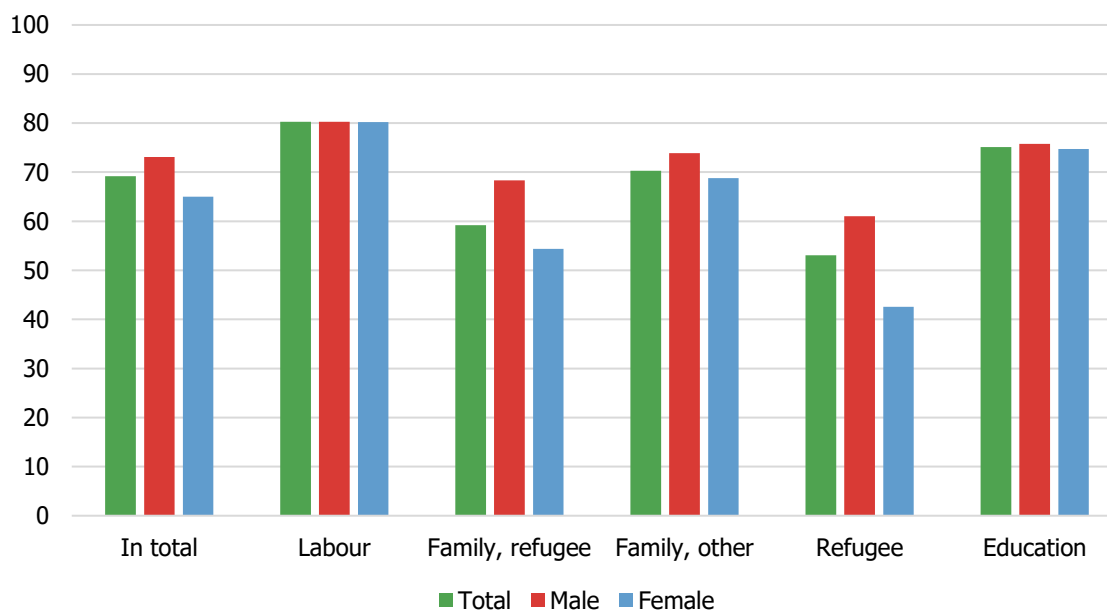
Figure 4. Employed immigrants aged 20-66, by reason for immigration and period of residence in Norway. Percentage. Q4 2022. (Statistics Norway, 2022q)



In other words, the development in the employment rate over time relates to changes in the composition of the immigrant population. If there are high numbers of refugees within a short period of time, this will bring down the average employment rate. If there are large numbers of new labour immigrants, this will increase the employment rate.

The employment rate is higher among men who have immigrated than women. Women who have come to Norway as refugees or through family immigration as refugees have particularly low employment rates (see Figure 5).

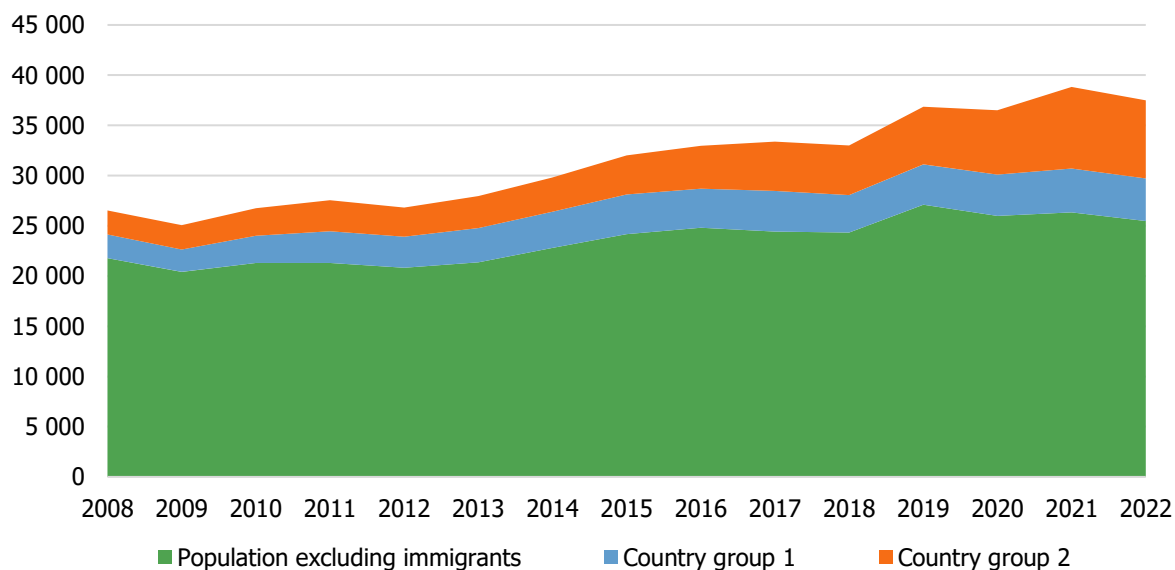
Figure 5. Employed immigrants (aged 20-66) by country of origin as a whole and gender. Percentage. Q4 2022. (Statistics Norway, 2022f)



Entrepreneurship and startups

Starting one's own business provides the opportunity to be self-employed and secure an income. There may be several reasons for starting one's own business, such as unemployment, poor economic conditions, or various barriers when encountering the Norwegian labour market. There may also be a desire to start something one has had previous experience with, or something completely new for which there are perceived commercial opportunities. Some immigrants come from societies where there is a low threshold for starting up their own business. However, this threshold can be high in Norway. There are thus various initiatives from both public and non-profit actors that are designed to stimulate entrepreneurship among immigrants (Oxford Research, 2023).

Figure 6. Startups of sole proprietorships, by immigrant background. (Statistics Norway, 2023e)



In 2022, immigrants accounted for 31 per cent of startups, compared to 17 per cent in 2008 (among actors in personal owned enterprises that reside in Norway) (Statistics Norway, 2023e). Immigrants with backgrounds from Country Group 1 (EU/EEA Member States, the UK, as well as the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand) accounted for 11 per cent of all those who established sole proprietorships in 2022, while immigrants from Country Group 2 (Asia, Africa, Latin America, Oceania, except for Australia and New Zealand, and Europe, except for the EU/EEA and the UK) accounted for 21 per cent. In other words, immigrants are overrepresented among people who establish their own businesses in Norway.

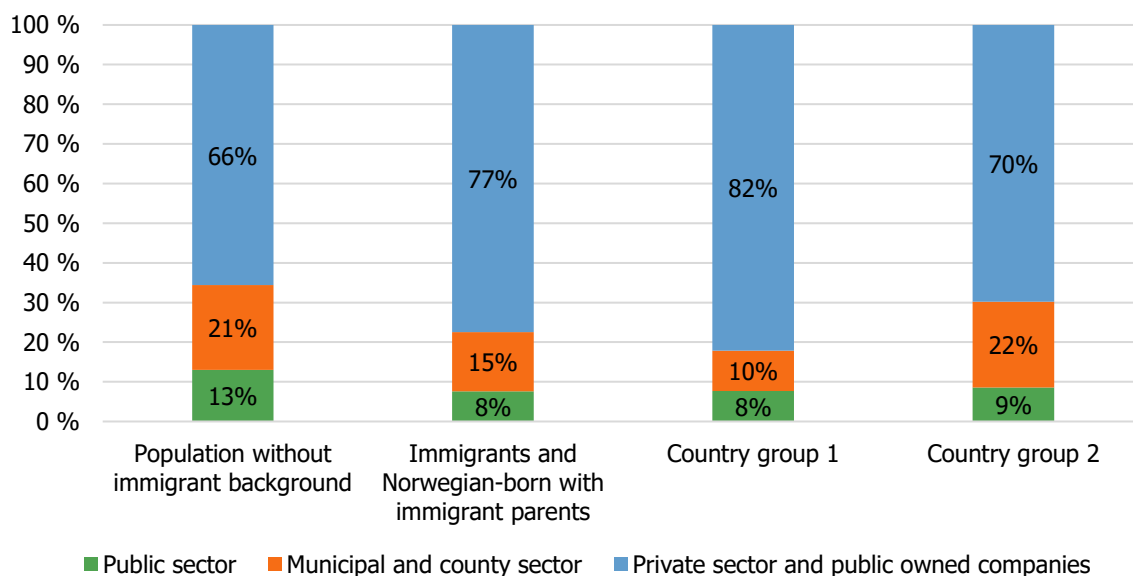
5.2. Distribution

This subchapter describes the distribution of ethnic diversity between different parts of the Norwegian labour market. We take a closer look at representation in different sectors, as well as industry and occupational groups. We also present the representation of immigrants in businesses in different geographical regions of the country.

Representation in sectors

In addition to different immigrant groups having differing levels of participation in the labour market, as we have seen above, there are significant differences in how immigrants are divided among the different parts of the labour market. The private sector clearly employs the most people from the Norwegian population. However, like other Scandinavian countries, Norway has a relatively large public sector. In 2022, about two out of three employees worked in the private sector, while almost one in three were employed in the public sector (Statistics Norway, 2022g). In comparison, an average of 16 per cent of EU employees work in the public sector (Eurostat, no date.)

Figure 7. Distribution by sector and immigrant category among employed persons aged 20-66. Percentage. 2022 (Statistics Norway, 2022g)

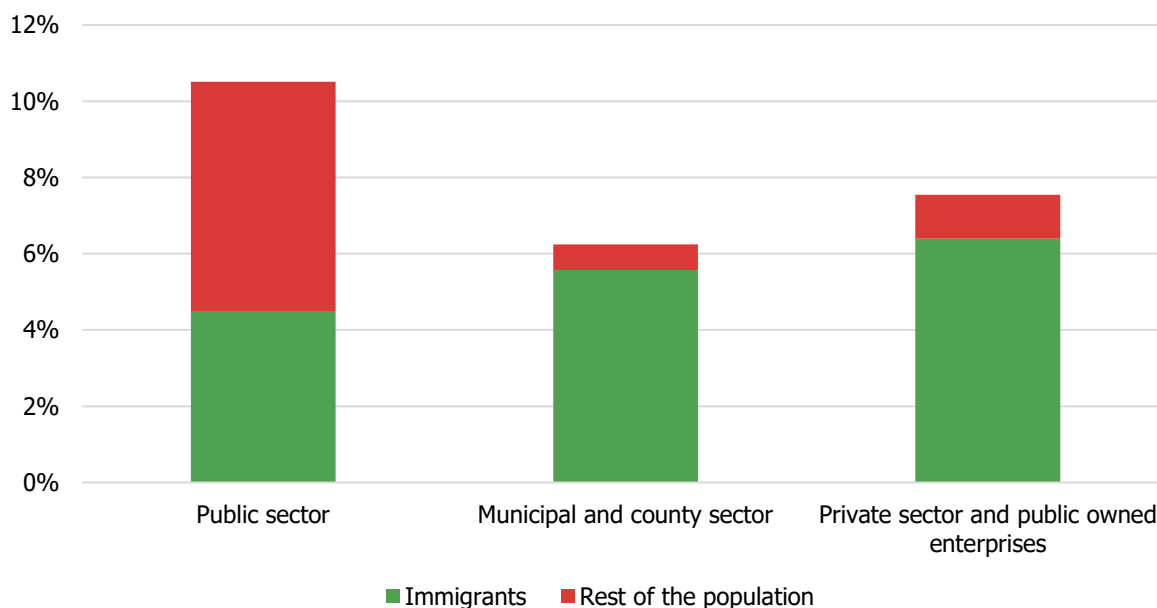


When compared to the private sector, the government authorities have a greater impact on decisions related to recruitment in the public sector. Increased employment of people with immigrant backgrounds in the public sector can promote the integration of this group in the labour market and throughout society as a whole. For example, by hiring more people with immigrant backgrounds, the state can serve as a role model for other employers. In addition, an increased proportion of employees with immigrant backgrounds in the public sector can contribute to better multicultural understanding and equitable public services to the population with immigrant backgrounds (OECD, 2009).

Immigrants differentiate themselves from the rest of the population in terms of their representation in different sectors. The proportion of employees with immigrant backgrounds is relatively higher in the private sector, and this group is underrepresented in the public sector. In 2022, three out of four people with an immigrant background worked in the private sector compared to two out of three people in the rest of the population.

Since 2015, the proportion of immigrants has increased at approximately the same pace in the public, municipal and private sectors (Olsen, 2023). However, if one looks at the contribution immigrants make to overall growth in the number of employees, there are differences between the different sectors. In the years 2015-2022, immigrants accounted for most of the growth in the private and municipal sectors. However, employment growth in the public sector was primarily driven by non-immigrants. This is shown in the figure below.

Figure 8. Growth in the proportion of immigrants among employed persons, by sector, 2015-2022 (Statistics Norway, 2022g)

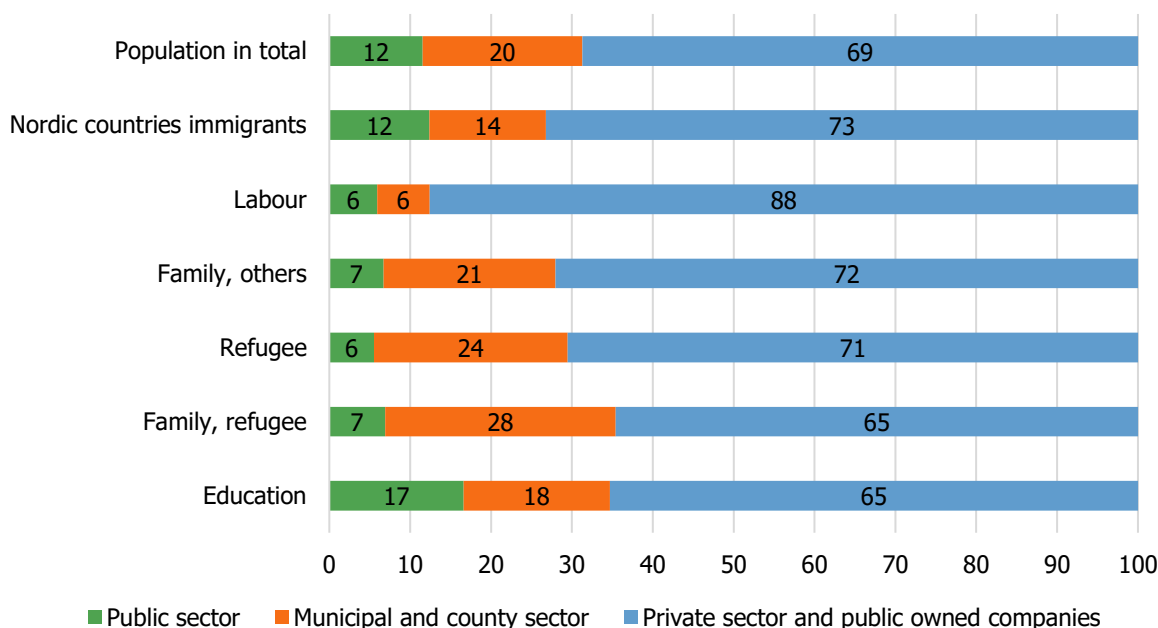


When broken down according to reason for immigration we find that the proportion who work in the public sector is particularly low among labour immigrants. Close to nine out of ten in this group worked in the private sector in 2021.

The proportion employed in the public administration is highest among immigrants from Nordic countries (12 per cent) and people who had immigrated to Norway to study (17 per cent). In other words, the proportion working for the state is higher in these two immigrant groups than in other immigrant groups and in the rest of the population. On the other hand, there are relatively few refugees, family immigrants and labour immigrants. Among these groups, between 5 and 7 per cent were employed by the state in 2021.

For their part, a relatively high proportion of refugees and family immigrants work in municipal and county municipal administration (Figure 9).

Figure 9. Distribution by sector and reason for immigration among employed persons. Percentage. 2022. (Statistics Norway, 2023d)



The distribution of employed immigrants according to sector can be partly explained by differences in levels of education within the immigrant population, and this is also discussed in Chapter 5.1. There is a clear preponderance of jobs in the public sector that normally require completion of higher education or equivalent relevant experience. In 2022, 84 per cent of all public servants worked in academic occupations and university college and military occupations. As mentioned above, immigrants in general, and refugees and family immigrants in particular, are underrepresented in these occupations. In the private sector, there is a more uniform distribution between different occupational groups, and the proportion who work in the occupations referred to above is somewhat lower at around 39 per cent (Olsen, 2023).

In addition to the differences in level of education, immigrants with higher education have somewhat different backgrounds in terms of their fields of education. Immigrants are over-represented in natural sciences and technical study programmes, and these specialist fields are more widespread in jobs found in the private sector. However, in the rest of the population, a relatively higher number of people study social sciences and legal subjects, which are more common in public administration. It is therefore also probable that the disparities in specialist fields contribute to increasing the proportion of immigrants in the private sector (Olsen, 2023).

Whether education is completed in Norway or abroad can also influence the sector in which someone is employed. Highly educated immigrants who work for the state have, in relative terms, more often completed their education in Norway, compared to highly educated immigrants in the private sector. Among immigrants with university or college education who

work in the public administration, 47 per cent completed their education in Norway, while the corresponding figure in the private sector was 21 per cent (Olsen, 2023).

Statistics Norway publishes annual statistics of the proportion of immigrants and people born in Norway to immigrant parents working in the public administration. This includes the total figure and broken down by government entity. The figures show that the proportion of immigrants varies significantly between different government entities (ministries, directorates, universities, courts etc.) (Statistics Norway, 2022o). For example, 7 per cent of those working in the ministries had an immigrant background, and this proportion did not change between 2016 and 2022. State research and educational institutions have a high and increasing proportion of employees with immigrant backgrounds. In the period 2016-2022, this proportion increased from 21 to 26 per cent.

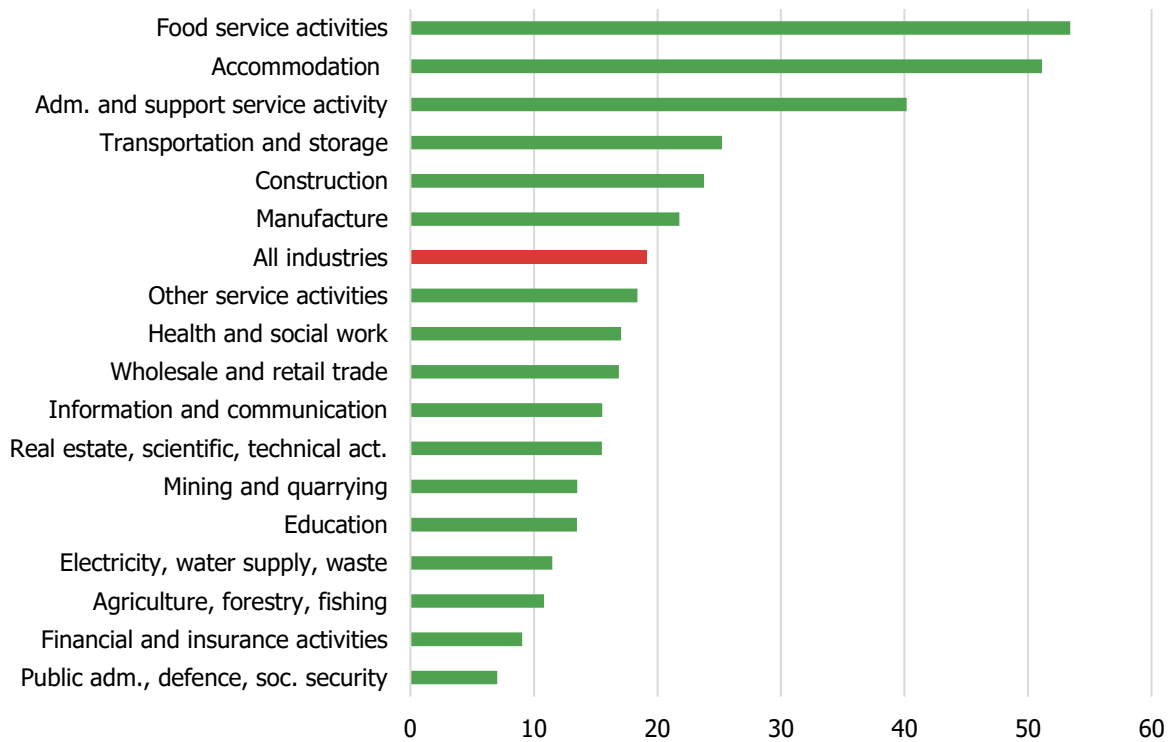
When concerning the proportions of immigrants in the municipal and private sectors, there are relatively few detailed public statistics showing the proportion of immigrants in enterprises. One of the reasons for this is limitations with regard to confidentiality in the legislation, including in the Statistics Act. This Act does not permit the direct or indirect identification of data pertaining to individual businesses and companies (Statistics Norway, 2021a).

Representation in industries

As shown in Figure 10, there is considerable variation in the proportion of immigrants between the different industries in the Norwegian labour market. The industry groups that stand out as having the highest concentration of immigrants among those employed are accommodation and hospitality businesses, as well as commercial service providers (which include the hiring of labour and cleaning activities). In 2022, about half of those working in accommodation and hospitality were immigrants. Other industries with a high proportion of immigrants among those employed are transport and storage, building and construction and industry. The lowest proportion of immigrants is found within public administration and defence. In 2022, the proportion of immigrants in this industry group was 7 per cent.

Many immigrants therefore work within industries that are sensitive to business cycles, and industries where part-time work is widespread (Offical Norwegian Report, 2018).

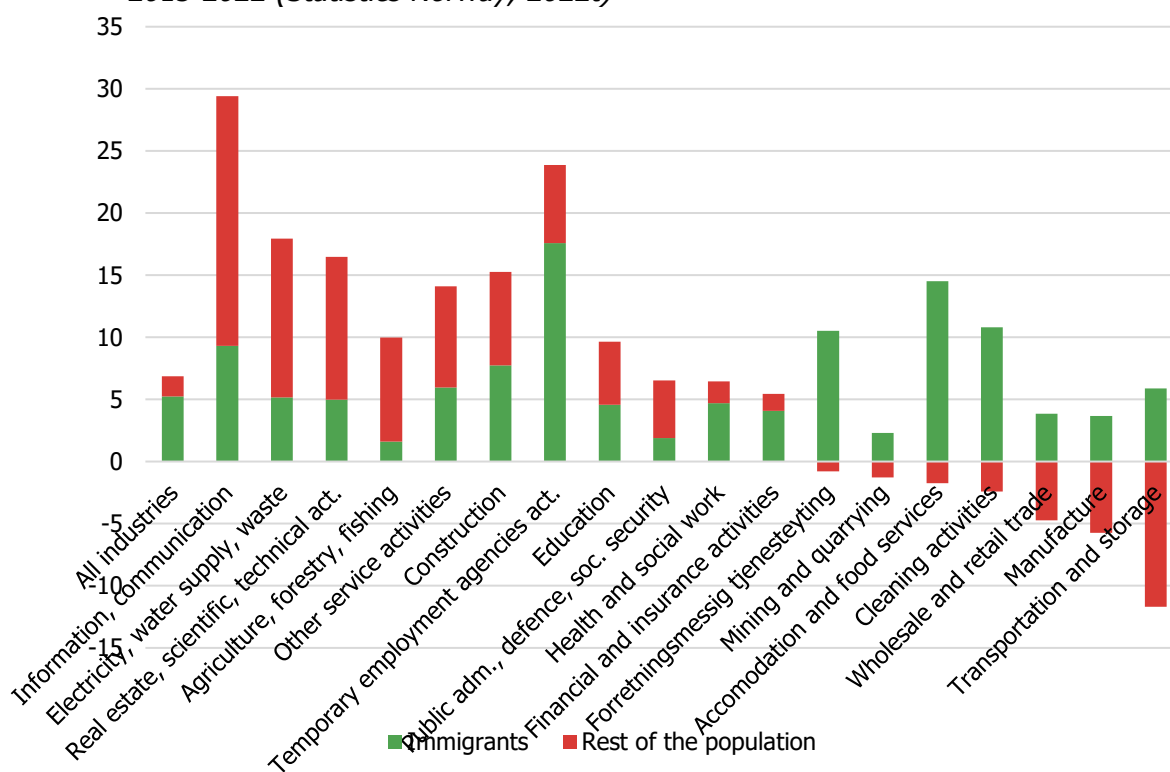
Figure 10. Proportion of immigrants among people employed in different industries. Percentage. 2022 (Statistics Norway, 2022t)



Representation in industries also varies between different groups within the population with immigrant backgrounds. Employment by industry structure relates to a number of personal characteristics of immigrants, such as country of origin, reason for immigration or gender. For example, one in three immigrants from Africa work in health and social services, compared to one in five in the entire population (Statistics Norway, 2022v). Compared to other immigrants, labour immigrants are heavily overrepresented in building and construction, as well as in industry. For their part, refugees and their reunited family members work relatively more frequently in retail, transportation and storage, as well as in health and social services.

Despite there being somewhat higher representation of immigrants within industries with a relatively small proportion of immigrants, there are clear trends towards a more divided labour market. The industries that employ a high proportion of immigrants have also had the strongest growth in the proportion of immigrants among those employed in the industry. This is shown in the figure below.

Figure 11. Percentage change in employment, by industry and immigration background. 2015-2022 (Statistics Norway, 2022t)

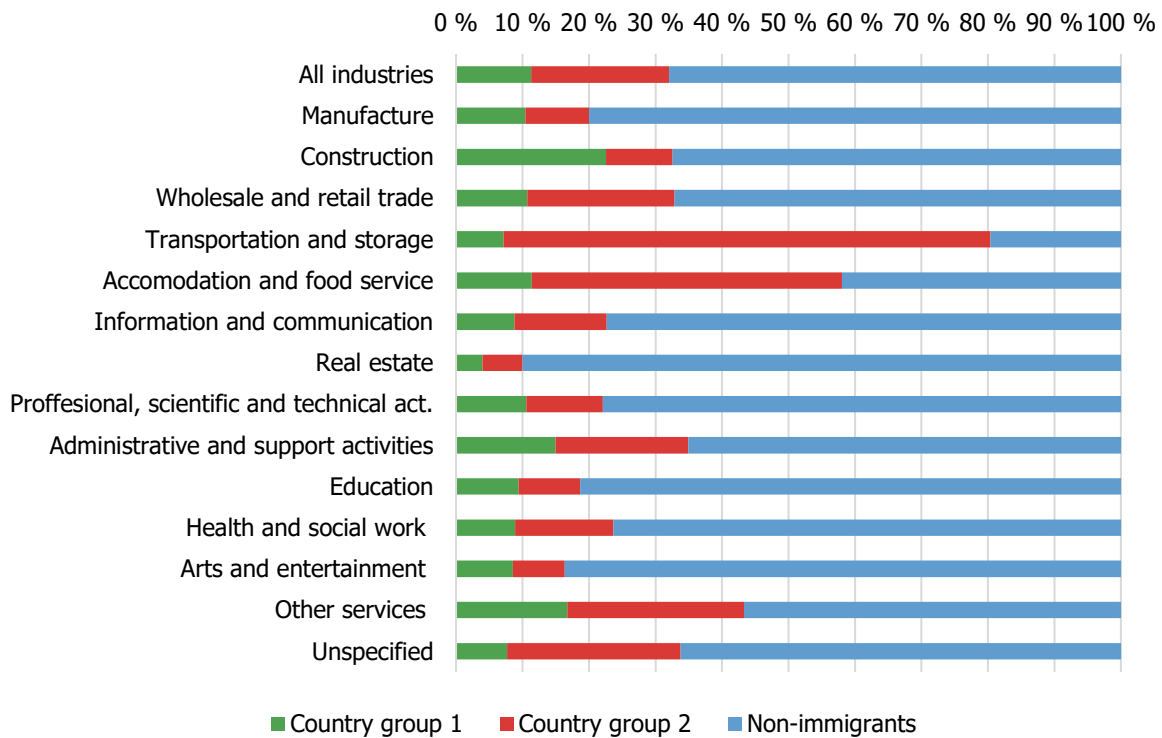


Analyses show that there are some industries which employ a large number of immigrants, and in the industries where there has been growth in employment of immigrants, there have been fewer people employed from the rest of the population. Among other things, this applies to retail, accommodation and hospitality businesses and cleaning businesses (Samfunnsøkonomisk analyse, 2020). The contribution immigrants make to employment growth is particularly seen in accommodation and hospitality businesses and cleaning businesses. The industries that have experienced strong growth in employed immigrants over the past seven years also typically have a high proportion of immigrants.

When it comes to entrepreneurship, immigrants establish businesses within many industries, however the pattern differs somewhat from businesses that are established by people who have not immigrated. In 2022, eight out of ten new transport and storage businesses were started by people with immigrant backgrounds (Statistics Norway, 2023e). Immigrants are also overrepresented as founders of accommodation and hospitality businesses and personal service providers (Figure 12).

There is also a difference in startups for women and men with immigrant backgrounds. Men with immigrant backgrounds most often establish companies in transport and storage, as well as building and construction. Startups founded by women with immigrant backgrounds are more widespread than men’s startups in many industries, however there is some overrepresentation within health and care services, and personal service providers.

Figure 12. Actors in personal owned enterprises. New established enterprises, by industrial classification (SN2007). Percentage. 2022. (Statistics Norway, 2023e)



Studies show that the proportion of self-employed persons is lower in Norway than in other European countries (Statistics Norway, 2023c). In addition, the tendency to start one's own business is high among those with a more marginal position in the labour market and lower pay, however there is an increasing proportion of people with higher pay and much higher levels of education who start their own business, including among immigrants.

Representation in occupations

Increased ethnic diversity in different occupations results in labour market integration for immigrants themselves, and contributes to a more inclusive society in which more people experience trust and a sense of belonging. From an integration perspective, and to engender trust between different groups, it is important to have good representation in the labour market. This is especially the case in certain key positions such as police, teachers, doctors, journalists, lawyers and policy makers. Good representation in these types of occupations may help to promote dialogue and trust in the services and between people across groups in society, and prevent discrimination and stigmatization. People with immigrant backgrounds in these key positions may also appear as positive role models for others in the minority population.

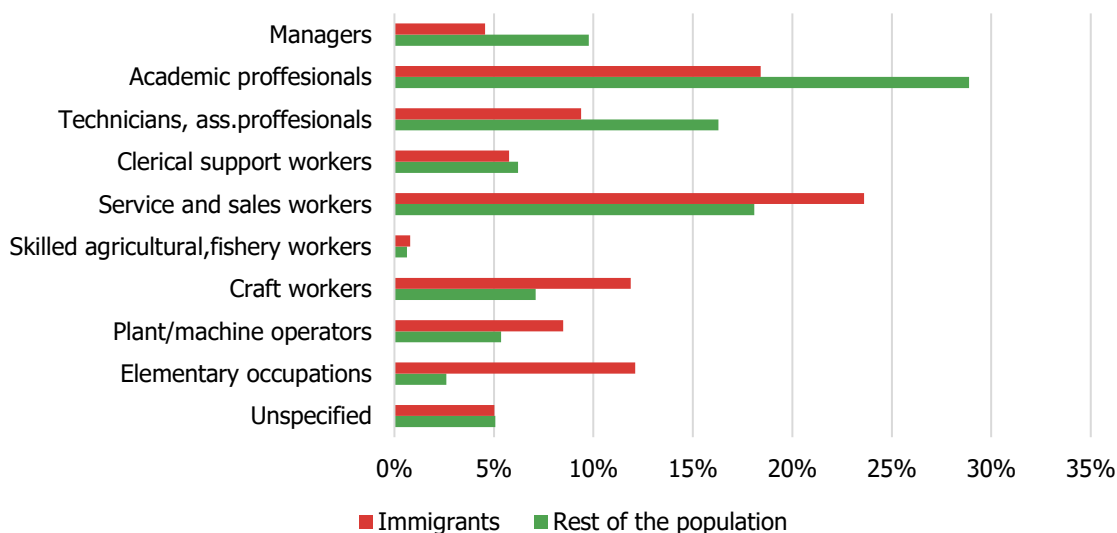
In addition to good representation, there is an ever-increasing need for knowledge of diversity in different parts of the labour market, i.e. knowledge of diversity in the population and how this should be achieved to ensure equitable services, and demand for different

goods and services (OECD, 2009). While representation and knowledge of diversity cannot be equated, both are required to create good diversity in the labour market.

On the whole, employees who are immigrants have a different distribution by occupation in the Norwegian labour market when compared to employees in the rest of the population. Ethnic diversity, when measured in terms of the proportion of immigrants in different occupations, is more pronounced in certain occupational groups than in others.

As shown in the figure below, immigrants are significantly underrepresented in managerial, academic, university college and military occupations. The common feature of these occupational groups is that a high level of formal qualifications is often required, i.e. qualifications equivalent to completed higher education. In 2022, 55 per cent of the population, excluding immigrants, were employed in these occupations, while the corresponding proportion among immigrants was 32 per cent (Statistics Norway, 2022n).

Figure 13. Distribution of employed persons (aged 20-66) by occupation and immigrant category. Percentage. 2022 (Statistics Norway, 2022n)



On the other hand, immigrants are overrepresented in occupations for which there are not normally the same strict requirements for formal qualifications as in the occupations mentioned above. These include, for example, occupations related to sales, nursing and care services, tradespeople, construction workers, transport workers, etc. Studies of the Norwegian labour market show that these occupations are characterised to a greater extent by temporary, part-time work, as well as more burdensome physical and mental working environments (Bore et al., 2013; With, 2019).

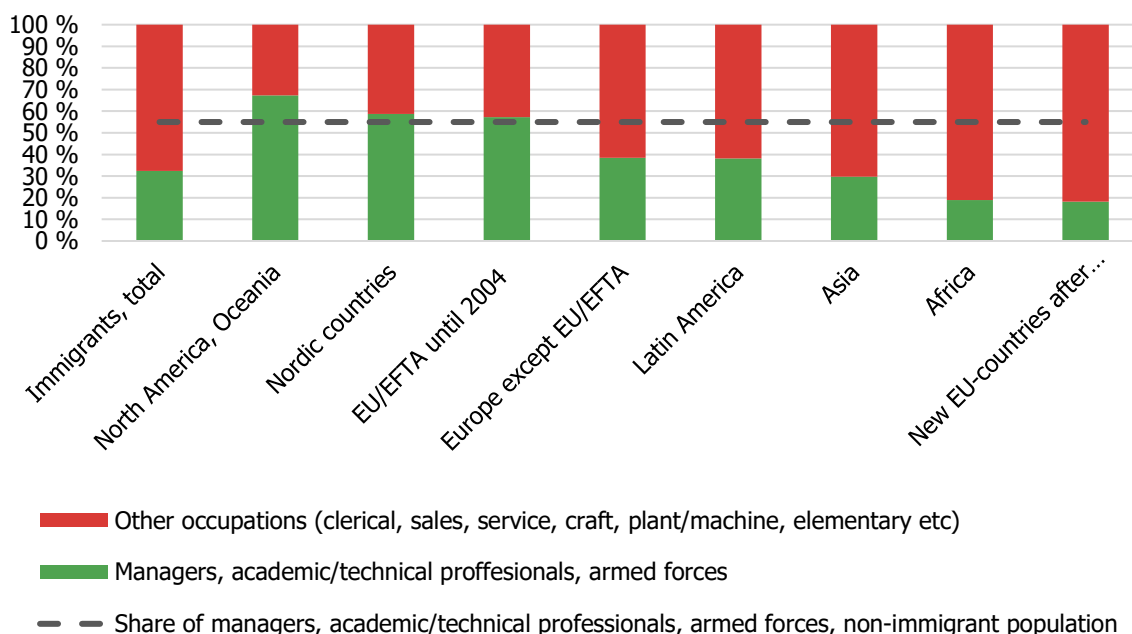
In 2022, immigrants were heavily underrepresented in academic professions, as 18 per cent of all employed immigrants worked in these professions compared to 29 per cent in the rest of the population. The highest preponderance of immigrants is found in the occupational group "Elementary occupations" which includes cleaners, relief workers, etc. 12 per cent of

immigrants were employed in these occupations, compared to 3 per cent in the rest of the population. The differences in labour force participation described above have remained largely unchanged over the past ten years (Statistics Norway, 2022n).

At the same time, it is important to note that the differences in occupational distribution shown in the figure above apply more to certain groups of immigrants than for others, for example when comparing immigrants with different countries of origin and reasons for immigration.

Employees who immigrated from Nordic and Western European countries, as well as from North America and Oceania, have approximately the same occupational distribution in the labour market as the majority population. Among immigrants from these country groups, over half work in occupations in which higher demands for formal qualifications (managerial, academic, military and university college occupations) are common. The proportion employed in these occupations is lowest among immigrants from new EU Member States following the expansion in 2004, which is at 18 per cent. This proportion is also relatively low among immigrants from countries in Africa (19 per cent) and Asia (30 per cent). This is shown in Figure 14. The figure also illustrates significant variation in choice of occupation between different groups of immigrants, and clearly demonstrates that the differences within the immigrant population are greater than the average differences between immigrants and the rest of the population.

Figure 14. Employed immigrants, distributed according to two occupational groups. Percentage. 2022 (Statistics Norway, 2022n)



There is also significant variation in occupations between immigrants according to their reasons for immigrating to Norway. Among refugees and family immigrants, four out of five work in occupations with lower requirements for formal qualifications. The most common

occupations for these groups are care workers, cleaners, shop assistants or kindergarten and school assistants. A relatively high number of labour immigrants work as tradespeople - 24 per cent compared to 7 per cent in the majority population in 2022. People who come to Norway to study are clearly overrepresented in academic occupations, both when compared with other immigrants and with the population as a whole (Statistics Norway, 2022p).

The occupations in which immigrants work also vary by gender and period of residence in Norway, and naturally also relate to their level of education and qualifications. In Chapter 6.4 concerning overqualification, we take a closer look at whether the differences in level of education can help to explain the differences in occupational choices between immigrants and the rest of the population.

Size of the business

In addition to representation in different sectors and industries, it is of interest to examine how the proportion of immigrants varies between businesses of different sizes, which in this context is measured by looking at the number of employees in the business.

Small and medium-sized businesses, i.e. businesses with up to 100 employees, employ approximately 70 per cent of all employees in the Norwegian labour market. There are many in the private sector in particular (3 out of 4) who work in businesses of this size. The opposite is the case in the public sector, where as many as 79 per cent are employed in large enterprises with more than 100 employees. In municipal and county municipal administration, about half work in small and medium-sized businesses (Register-based employment statistics, Statistics Norway).

Figure 15. Proportion of immigrants in businesses, by sector and number of employees in the business. Percentage. 2022 (Register-based employment statistics, Statistics Norway).

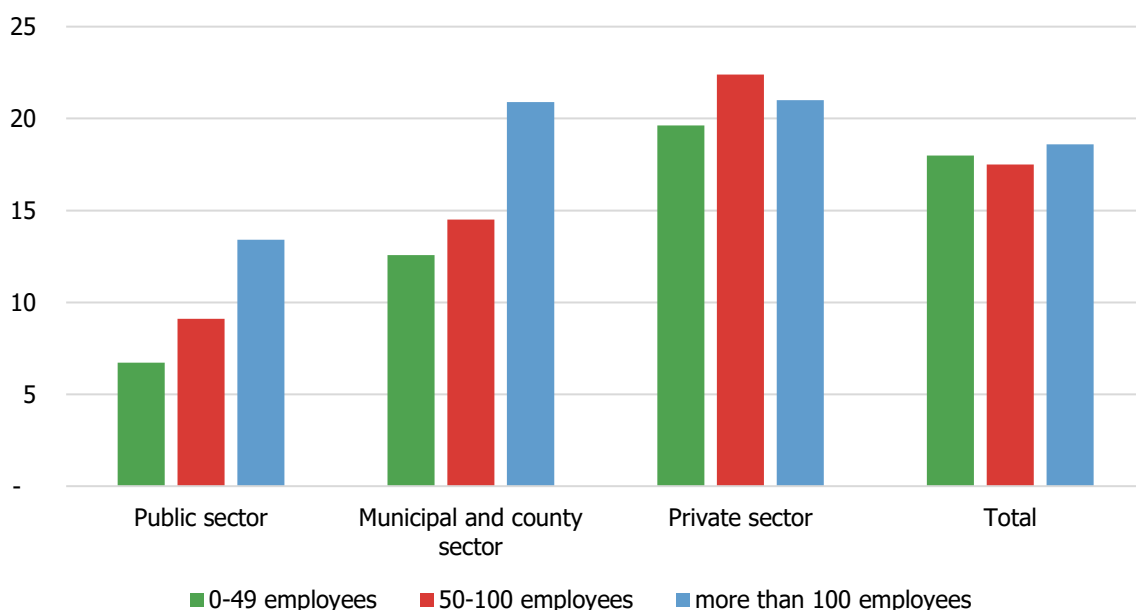
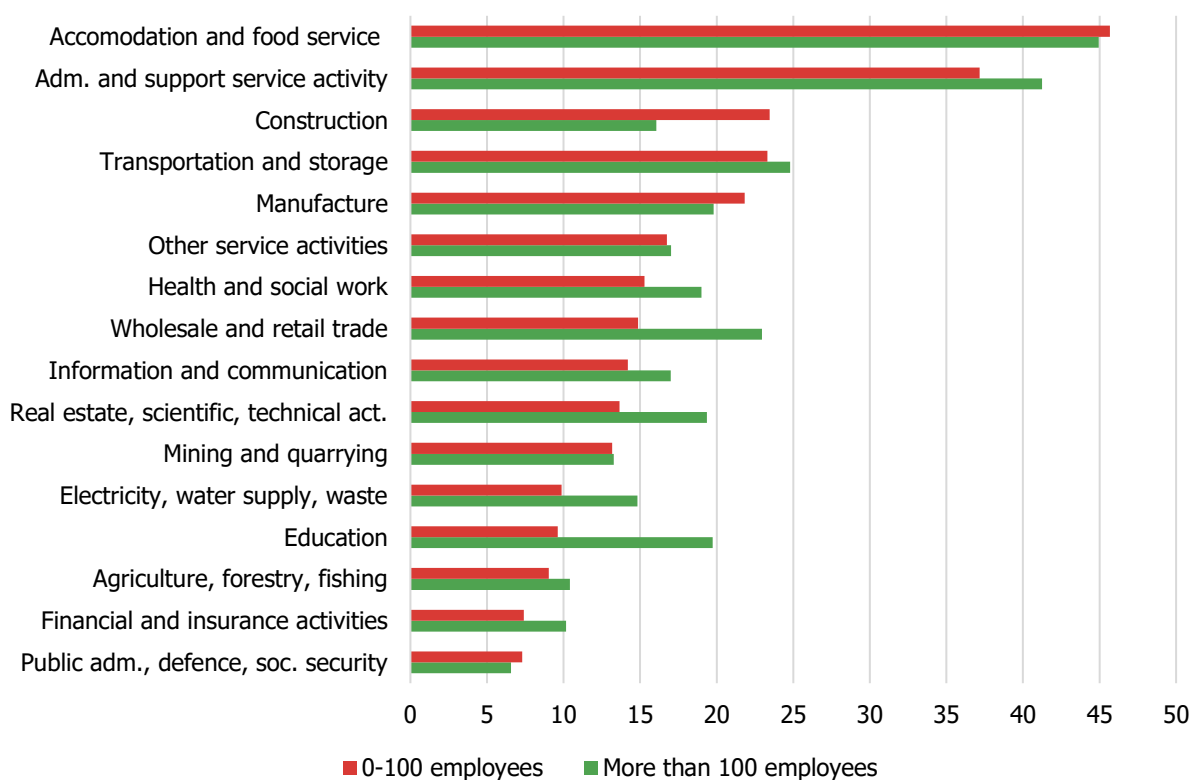


Figure 15 shows a clear correlation between the size of the business and the proportion of immigrants for the businesses within public administration. In both the public and municipal sectors, the proportion of immigrants is significantly higher in large businesses than in small and medium-sized businesses. In the private sector, we see less variation in the proportion of immigrants between companies with different numbers of employees. This proportion is lowest among small businesses with less than 50 employees.

In addition, if we look at companies in different industries, there is a higher proportion of immigrants among the employees of large businesses in most of the industry groups. For example, in teaching, the proportion of immigrants in large businesses was twice as high as in small and medium-sized businesses (20 per cent versus 10 per cent in 2022). Similar trends are also found in other large industries such as retail, as well as health and social services. The opposite is the case for businesses within building and construction or industry. In these industries, immigrants are, in relative terms, better represented in small and medium-sized businesses (see Figure 16).

Figure 16. Proportion of immigrants in businesses, by industry and number of employees in the business. Percentage. 2022 (Register-based employment statistics, Statistics Norway).



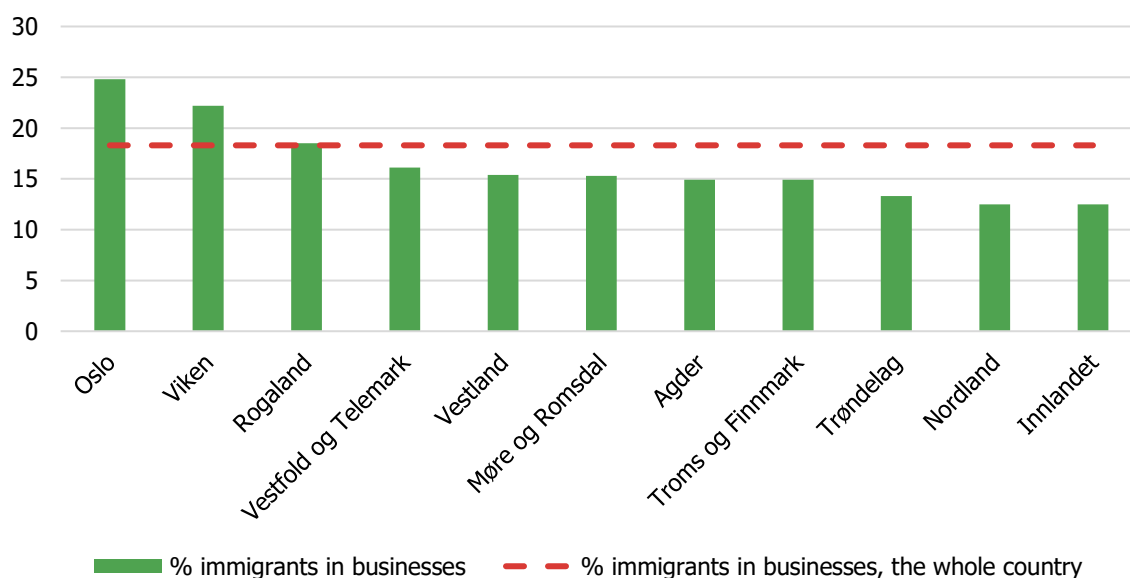
Geographic representation

Another important dimension of ethnic diversity in the labour market is how the members of the labour force with immigrant backgrounds are distributed among different regions in Norway. NAV's external environmental analysis has identified the need for geographic

mobility in order to meet future labour force demands. Geographic mobility may involve moving, commuting, or working across municipalities or counties to find or retain a job. Geographic mobility can contribute to reducing unemployment, increasing employment and adapting the labour force to changes in the industry structure (NAV, 2023c). Immigrants in Norway have both higher geographical and occupational mobility than the rest of the population (Statistics Norway, 2020a, 2023a; Tønnesen, Marianne, 2022). Research also shows that there are regional differences in employment rates of people with immigrant backgrounds, and that there may be various challenges associated with inclusion in the labour market depending on the parts of the country in which immigrants live and work (Søholt et al., 2015).

As shown in Figure 17, the proportion of immigrants among employees in businesses varies between different counties. This is also the case when comparing businesses within the same sector or industry. This proportion may depend on the characteristics of immigrants living in the region (for example, reason for immigration, gender or level of education), the features of the local companies (for example, the skills they require), as well as other conditions in the local labour market.

Figure 17. Proportion of immigrants in businesses, by county. Percentage. 2022 (Register-based employment statistics, Statistics Norway).



However, it is a known fact that immigrants have somewhat different settlement patterns in comparison with the rest of the population. They more often live in large cities and more central areas (IMDi, 2023a). The settlement patterns relate to the reason for immigration, or in other words, whether individuals have arrived as refugees and been settled in specific municipalities, or whether they have arrived in connection with work or family immigration. Since one of the goals of integration policy is managed and dispersed settlement, refugees are settled in municipalities across the country. Immigrants who have come to Norway due to education most often reside in more central municipalities where university colleges and universities are located. Labour immigrants are particularly inclined to settle in coastal

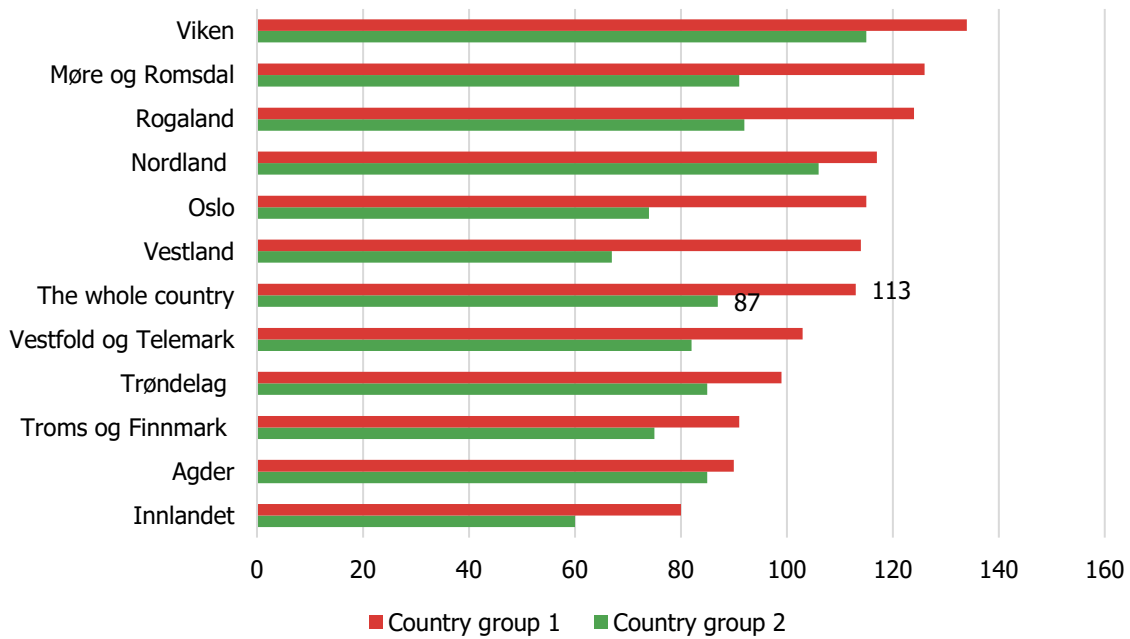
municipalities in Northern and Western Norway. There is often a correlation between the proportion of family immigrants in the municipality and the proportion of labour immigrants and/or refugees living in the same municipality (Guldbrandsen et al., 2021). Over time, the proportion of immigrants has increased in businesses as a whole throughout the entire country.

The settlement patterns described above also influence the labour supply that employers in different regions encounter when recruiting employees. In other words, when comparing the proportion of immigrants in businesses in different geographical regions, it is necessary to take into account how many immigrants live in the region where the company is located.

An indicator has been prepared for the representation of immigrants in businesses when viewed in relation to the proportion of immigrants who reside in the same county (Horgen, 2012). The indicator is equal to 100 when the proportion of immigrants in the business is the same as the proportion of immigrants who reside in the region where the business is located. If the indicator is below 100, this indicates that immigrants are underrepresented among employees in businesses when viewed in relation to the proportion of immigrants in the population within the same economic region. The figure below shows results for this indicator for all of the counties in Norway in 2022, including when broken down according to immigrants' country of origin (divided into two country groups).

The figure shows that there are significant differences in representation between the counties and between immigrants from different country groups. Immigrants from Country Group 1 are strongly represented among the employees of businesses when we look at the entire country and several of the counties. When it comes to immigrants from Country Group 2, the indicator is below 100 both at national level and for most of the counties in the country. This means that the proportion of immigrants from Country Group 2 in businesses is generally lower than the proportion who reside in the region where the businesses are located. In 2022, this group was underrepresented in businesses in all counties except for Viken and Nordland. This was linked to the generally lowest employment rate in this group, cf. Chapter 5.2.

Figure 18. Indicator for the businesses that employ immigrants, by county. 2022
(Statistics Norway, 2022c)



The indicator for representation can be a useful tool for comparing regional differences in ethnic diversity in the labour market. However, as mentioned above, there may be several different reasons for over or under-representation that the indicator does not take into account. For example, the indicator does not take into account the level of education and language skills among immigrants who reside in different counties. Therefore, it also cannot provide any information about whether the skills that immigrants have match with the needs of local employers. In addition, there may be other factors that affect the recruitment of immigrants, including discrimination on the basis of ethnicity.

6. Inclusion and equal opportunities in the labour market

As shown in the previous chapter, even if a workplace has many employees with immigrant backgrounds, this does not necessarily mean that the workplace is inclusive. Inclusion in the workplace is about employees experiencing a sense of belonging, and being respected and valued by colleagues and employers as an individual with a unique identity and abilities. It is also about experiencing being rewarded for their efforts and having opportunities to perform and develop in their role. Inclusion in the labour market is also about reducing barriers to participation and risk of falling outside the workforce, and thus involves as many people as possible being able apply their skills and have a lasting connection to the labour market.

The topics in this chapter follow from Figure 1 of Chapter 4.2: Not in employment (Chapter 6.1.), Entering the labour market (Chapter 6.2.), Inclusion in the workplace (Chapter 6.3), Equal opportunities in the workplace (Chapter 6.4.), and absenteeism and withdrawal from the workforce (Chapter 6.5.). These topics are described in more detail in the following, including the status and development of relevant indicators.

6.1. Not in employment

While the employment rate among immigrants is relatively high in Norway, an overarching objective of integration policy is for more immigrants to find employment, and that the proportion who are outside the labour market is reduced, cf. Chapter 3. While we have previously shown how the employment rate varies in terms of country of origin, gender, reason for immigration, period of residence in Norway and educational background, in this chapter we examine the various reasons for why immigrants are temporarily or permanently outside the labour market. We also provide a description of the status and development of indicators relating to registered unemployment, being outside the labour market, and recipients of retirement pensions.

Unemployment

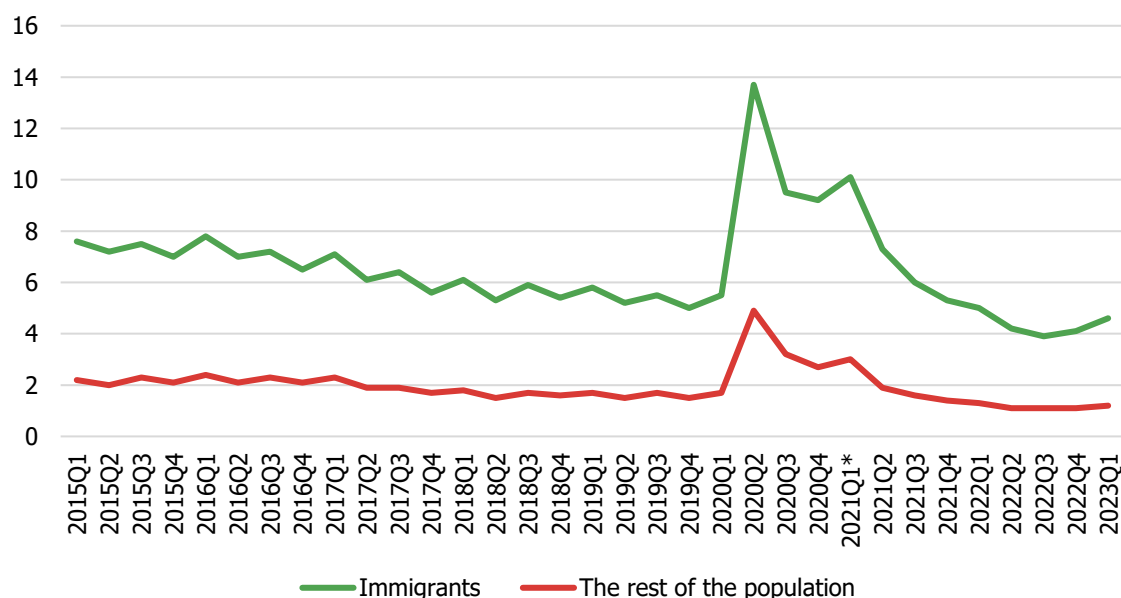
Unemployment among immigrants is more than three times as high as in the rest of the population (Figure 19). In March 2023, the unemployment rate was 4.6 per cent among immigrants, while the corresponding figure for the rest of the population was 1.2 per cent. Since 2015, we have seen a trend towards decreasing disparities in the unemployment rate between immigrants and the rest of the population. The exception to this was the pandemic year in 2020. Immigrants were among the groups hardest hit by unemployment during the COVID-19 pandemic (Bratsberg et al., 2020).

What does unemployment mean?

Being unemployed means that the person is actively looking for work and is available to start work but has not received a job offer. Statistics compiled by NAV of the "totally unemployed", which constitute the primary source in this context, include people who have been out of income-generating work for the past two weeks, and who are looking for and available to work (NAV, 2023b).

Men have a higher unemployment rate than women, both in the immigrant population and in the rest of the population. If we look at country of origin, it is particularly immigrants from countries in Africa who are overrepresented among unemployed immigrants. 7.1 per cent of people with backgrounds from this continent were unemployed in the first quarter of 2023 (NAV, 2023).

Figure 19. People registered as totally unemployed as a percentage of the workforce (NAV, 2023a; Statistics Norway, 2020b)

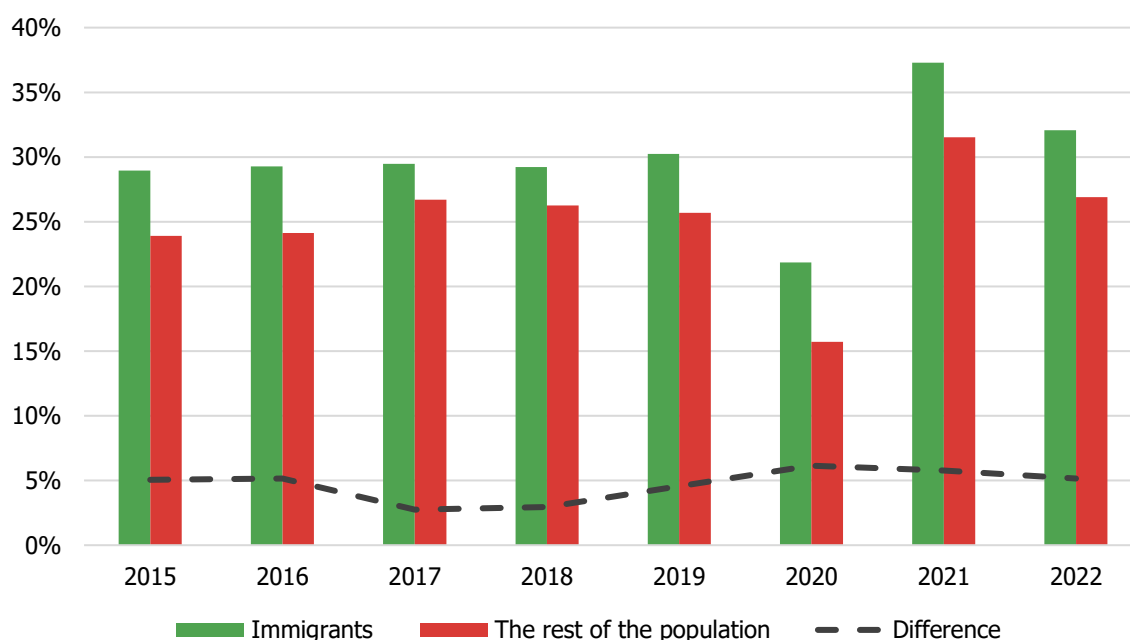


* Prior to 2021, the statistics for people registered as totally unemployed were compiled and published by Statistics Norway. NAV has assumed responsibility for publishing these statistics since 2021. Therefore, the figures from before and after 2021 are not directly comparable.

Duration of unemployment is an important indication of the extent to which different people or groups experience barriers to employment. People who have been unemployed for longer are less likely to transition to work, while the probability of them transitioning to health-related benefits increases (Kann et al., 2019). The length of time a person can be unemployed varies significantly. In 2021, one in four unemployed people in Norway were unemployed for less than a month. On the other hand, 15 per cent had been unemployed for a consecutive period of more than one year (NAV, 2023a).

When measuring the duration of unemployment, it is common to distinguish between the short-term and long-term unemployed. Long-term unemployed applies to totally unemployed people who have been unemployed for a consecutive period of at least 26 weeks (NAV, 2022b). As shown in Figure 20, there is a higher probability of immigrants being long-term unemployed when compared to the rest of the population. Following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, in the spring of 2020 several invasive measures and restrictions were implemented that had a significant impact on the Norwegian labour market. Many new unemployed people were registered during this period, which resulted in the proportion of long-term unemployed among the unemployed falling in 2020, and then increasing sharply in 2021. In 2022, long-term unemployment was at about the same level as before the pandemic. 32 per cent of unemployed immigrants were long-term unemployed, compared to 27 per cent in the rest of the population.

Figure 20. The proportion of long-term unemployed among the unemployed, by immigrant category. (NAV, 2022a)



Immigrants from Europe, except the Nordic countries, and Africa have a higher probability of being unemployed longer. 35 per cent and 31 per cent of the totally unemployed from these respective regions were registered as long-term unemployed in 2022.

In addition to a higher risk of long-term unemployment, immigrants are increasingly experiencing negative consequences of being unemployed, such as lower future wages or challenges in finding a new job. These effects are often referred to as “scarring” or “branding” (Birkelund et al., 2017; Kann et al., 2019).

Unemployment among immigrants depends more on business cycles. It rises more rapidly during economic downturns and deterioration in the labour market, but falls more slowly during economic upturns and improvements in the labour market. This is partly due to the fact that many immigrants work in industries that are more exposed to business cycles, and partly due to the fact that they more often have a weaker connection to the labour market in the form of, among other things, shorter employment arrangements and part-time work (Ministry of Children and Families, 2011; IMDi, 2023a; Vidal-Gil, 2017).

Unemployment is not expected to be at a permanently high rate in the future due to the fact that an aging population means a shift towards labour shortages (NAV, 2023c). However, restructuring in the labour market can result in periods of unemployment, particularly in industries and occupations that are particularly impacted. However, unemployment is expected to be highest among those with little education, and at a persistently high level for people who have not completed upper secondary school. Despite Norway having a low unemployment rate, immigrants have a persistently higher registered unemployment rate than the rest of the population. This partly relates to the level of education and formal qualifications, but these are not the only factors. It is therefore important to focus on both qualifications and measures to reduce other barriers for immigrants in the labour market.

Outside the workforce

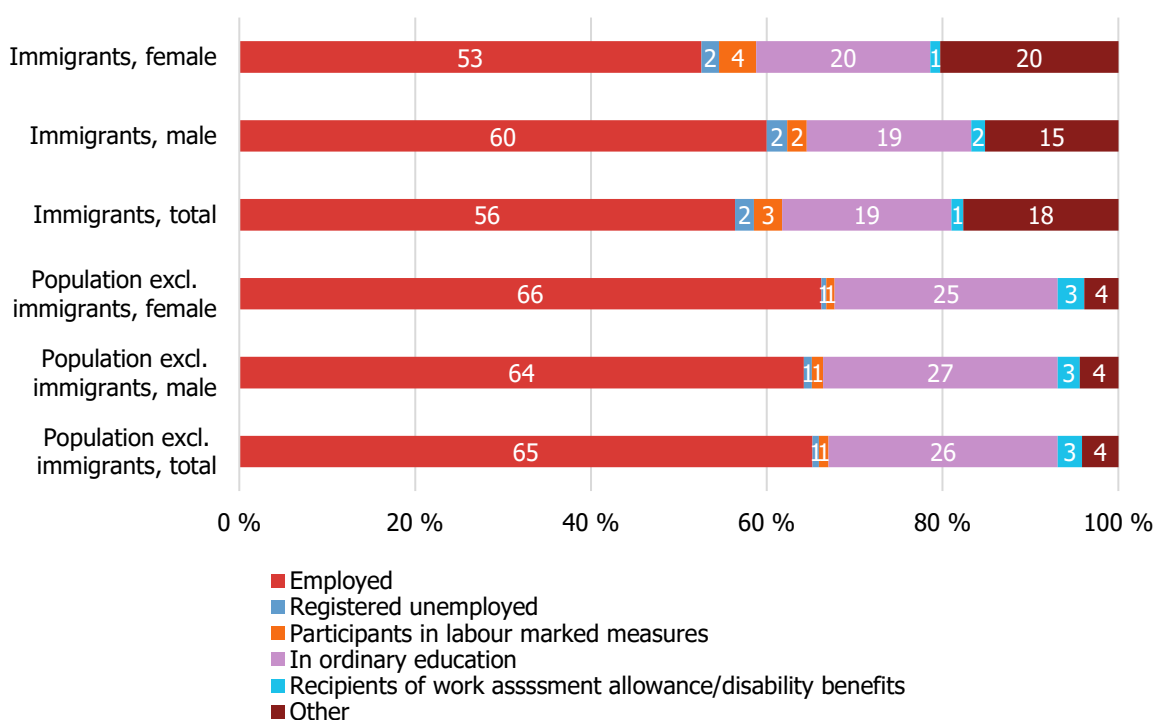
Registered unemployment does not present the full picture when looking at those who are not in employment. There are many people who are unemployed and are also not in education, who do not register as unemployed for various reasons. Statistics Norway’s statistics of connection to work, education and welfare benefits show that immigrants are more likely than others to be outside of work and education.

There can be many reasons for why someone is neither in work nor has registered as looking for work. These reasons may relate to the ability to work, belief in the ability to find a job, knowledge of the support and help NAV can offer in finding work, attitudes to seeking support from NAV, rights to unemployment benefits, etc.

The “distance” to the labour market can also be different. Individuals who are in education or involved in work-oriented initiatives have a higher probability of transitioning to work in the near future than those who, for example, receive health-related benefits. Many people find themselves in different life situations, and some are recipients of disability benefits or health-related benefits. Some may be in a poor condition to work for various reasons, such as their own health or family members’ health and life situation, or they themselves are supported by others. This is why some people are not registered as having any type of income, activity or source of livelihood.

Figure 21 illustrates the prioritised workforce status of young people based on Statistics Norway's register statistics. The figure shows that, when compared to young people in the rest of the population, in 2022 there was a lower proportion of young immigrants who were in employment, in ordinary education, and recipients of work assessment allowance/disability benefits.

Figure 21. Residents aged 15 - 29, by prioritised workforce status, immigration category, and gender. 2022 (Statistics Norway, 2022j)



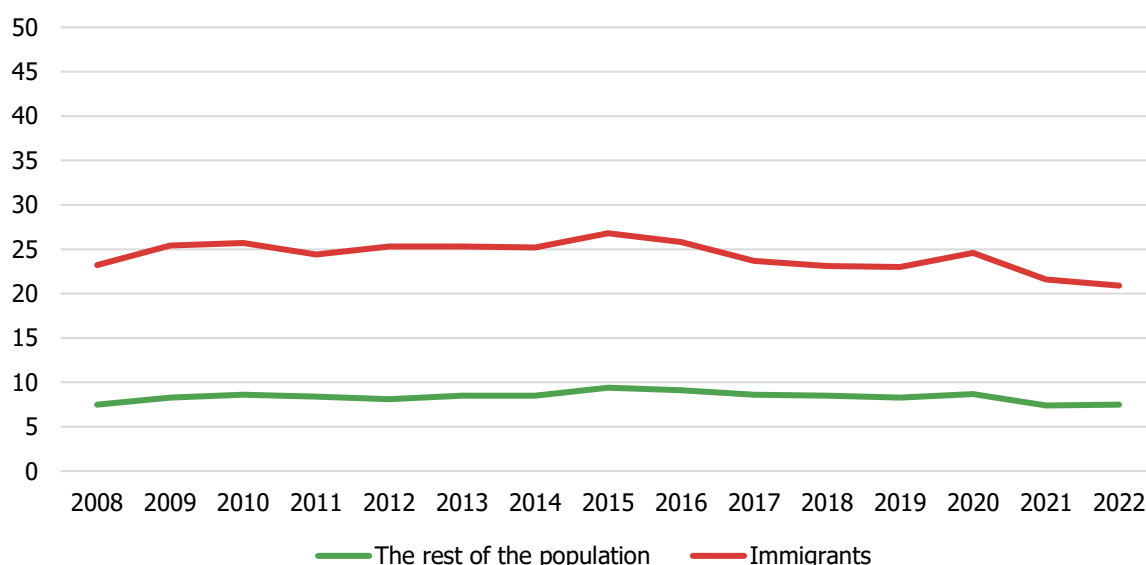
There is a much higher proportion of young immigrants in the "other" category, i.e. those who have no registered activity/source of livelihood. This includes people who are recipients of social welfare, cash-for-care benefit, or have no registered income. There is also a higher proportion among immigrants who are registered as unemployed or participating in labour market initiatives.

People who are not in employment, education or employment schemes are often referred to as "NEET" (Not in Employment, Education or Training). NEET is generally used to describe young people aged 15-29 who are not in employment and education (Fyhn et al., 2021). There is a higher probability of young immigrants ending up in the NEET group than young people in the rest of the population, and they more often experience long-term exclusion. Prolonged exclusion is also linked to a weaker connection to the workforce and poorer income development later in life (Normann & Hetland, 2021). The proportion of young people in the 15–29 age group who were, as a whole, in the NEET categories in Norway in

2022 was between 7 and 11 per cent, depending on which figures and data sources are used as a starting point².

The proportion of NEETs among young immigrants is far higher than among young people in general. The proportion in this group is between 11 and 20 per cent, which again depends on the data that is used. Figure 22 is based on workforce status in Statistics Norway's personal data system, and uses, among other things, register-based employment statistics. We can see here that the proportion who are not in employment or education is 20.9 per cent among immigrants aged 15-29, while the figure is 7.5 per cent for the rest of the population.

Figure 22. Residents aged 15-29, who are not in employment, education or labour market initiatives, by immigration category and prioritised workforce status (incl. NEET for people aged 15-29). 2008-2022. (Statistics Norway, 2022j)



The high proportion of NEETs among young immigrants is associated with a higher proportion of young immigrants only having a primary and lower secondary school education. Low educational attainment and dropping out of upper secondary school are the greatest risk factors for NEET status among young people in Norway (OECD, 2018). Other risk factors for exclusion include socioeconomic background of parents, as well as physical and mental health (Fyhn et al., 2021; IMDi, 2023a).

In terms of international comparisons, reports from the OECD/Eurostat provide good information about and insight into how NEETs in Norway differ from other comparable

² The number and proportion will be higher in register data than in sample surveys, such as the Labour Force Survey (AKU). The AKU is better at including those people who are in informal education, and to a lesser extent those who are far outside the workforce and who cannot be reached through questionnaires. Register data may include people who are registered in the National Population Register but are not engaged in activities and who may, in reality, be residing abroad or involved in more informal training activities etc.

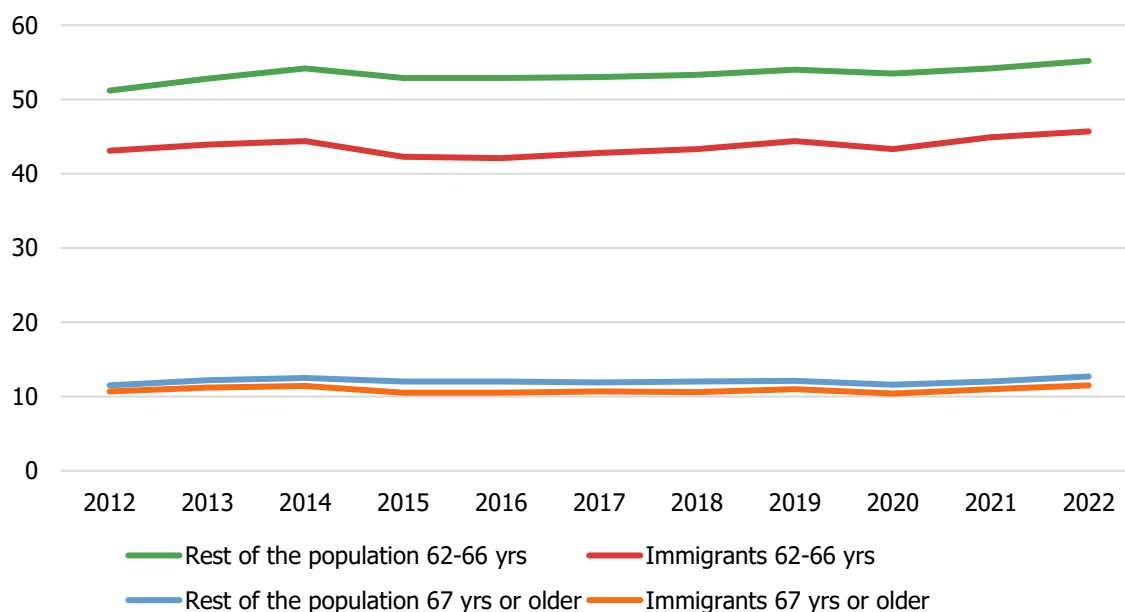
countries. The OECD uses a combination of figures from the Labour Force Survey (AKU) and register statistics from Statistics Norway. These figures show that the overall proportion that is not in employment or education is lower in Norway than in other European countries (6.8 per cent versus 11.7 per cent), while the proportion of immigrants who are not in employment or education more closely resembles what we see in other countries in Europe (Eurostat, 2023).

More knowledge is required about the many young people who are without any registered activity and without any source of livelihood, including the factors that contribute to them being left without registered activity and source of livelihood, and what was the most recent registered activity. There is strong political will to get this group active and in work, cf. for example, NAV's Youth Guarantee scheme (ungdomsgaranti). This is a group that can be difficult to reach with targeted measures from the public service.

Retirement pension

Immigrants who are approaching retirement age have a lower employment rate than people of the same age in the rest of the population. Labour force participation among older immigrants also varies in terms of country of origin, and is lower among women than among men (Dzamarija, 2022). On average, 46 per cent of immigrants aged 62-66 were employed in 2022, compared to 55 per cent in the rest of the population (Figure 23).

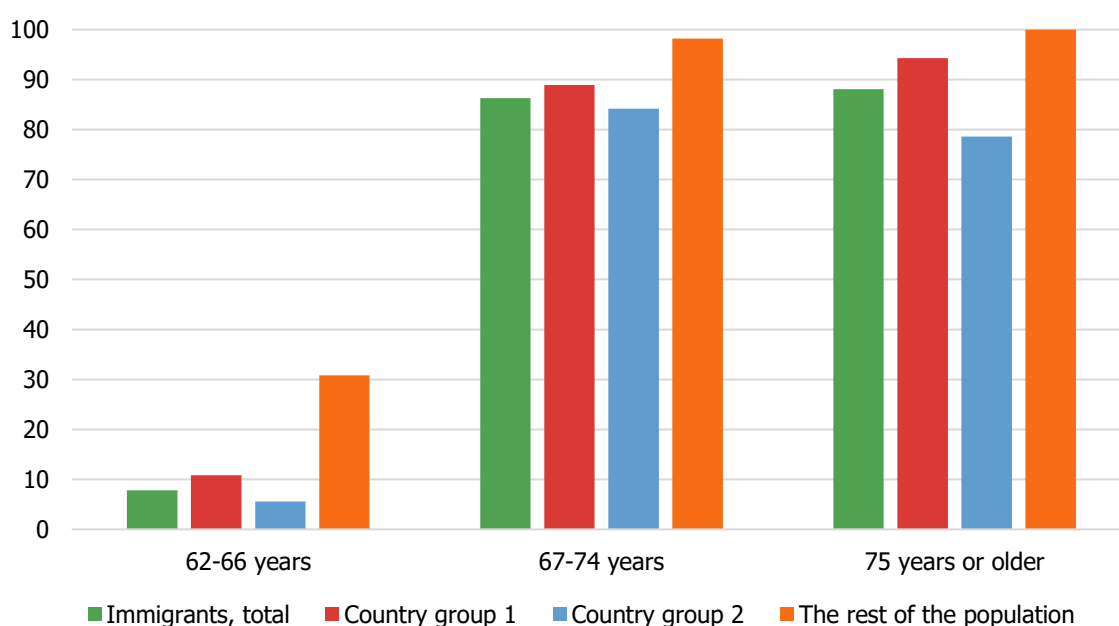
Figure 23. Employment rate among older immigrants. Percentage. (Statistics Norway, 2022k)



Among people of retirement age, there are slight differences in the employment rate between immigrants and the rest of the population. In 2022, just over 10 per cent of people in both groups were in employment (Statistics Norway, 2022k).

At the same time, Figure 24 shows that immigrants receive the retirement pension to a lesser extent than the majority population in the same age group. The proportion of recipients of retirement pensions is lowest among immigrants from Country Group 2. The reason for this is that different groups in the immigrant population have different access to pension entitlements. Compared to the rest of the population, older immigrants more often leave the workforce before they have accrued full retirement pension entitlements from the National Insurance Scheme. One of the reasons for this is shorter period of residence in Norway. People with a National Insurance period of less than 40 years are not entitled to access a full retirement pension. In this context, National Insurance period refers to period of residence in Norway from the age of 16 until the age of 67 (Jensen, 2016).

Figure 24. Recipients of retirement pension as a proportion of the population, by immigrant category and age. 2022. (Statistics Norway, 2022h)



Immigrants of retirement age who receive no pension or a reduced pension due to short period of residence are entitled to supplementary benefits. This arrangement ensures that the recipients receive a total income equivalent to the National Insurance Scheme's minimum pension level. In 2023, approximately 2,700 immigrants received supplementary benefits, and 61 per cent of the recipients were women (NAV, 2023d). A feature of this group is low incomes, and the proportion of recipients of supplementary benefits who live in low income households has increased over time (Omholt, 2019).

Among those who have accrued the right to receive a full retirement pension, the amount of the pension depends on previous workplace participation, pensionable income, age the pension is accessed, degree accessed and income level of spouse (Dzamarija, 2022). Many pensioners of retirement age with immigrant backgrounds have the minimum pension level, i.e. the lowest retirement pension that can be received through the National Insurance Scheme. This is particularly the case for immigrants from Country Group 2.

Figure 25. Proportion of retirement pensioners living in low-income households, by immigrant background. (Statistics Norway, 2021c)

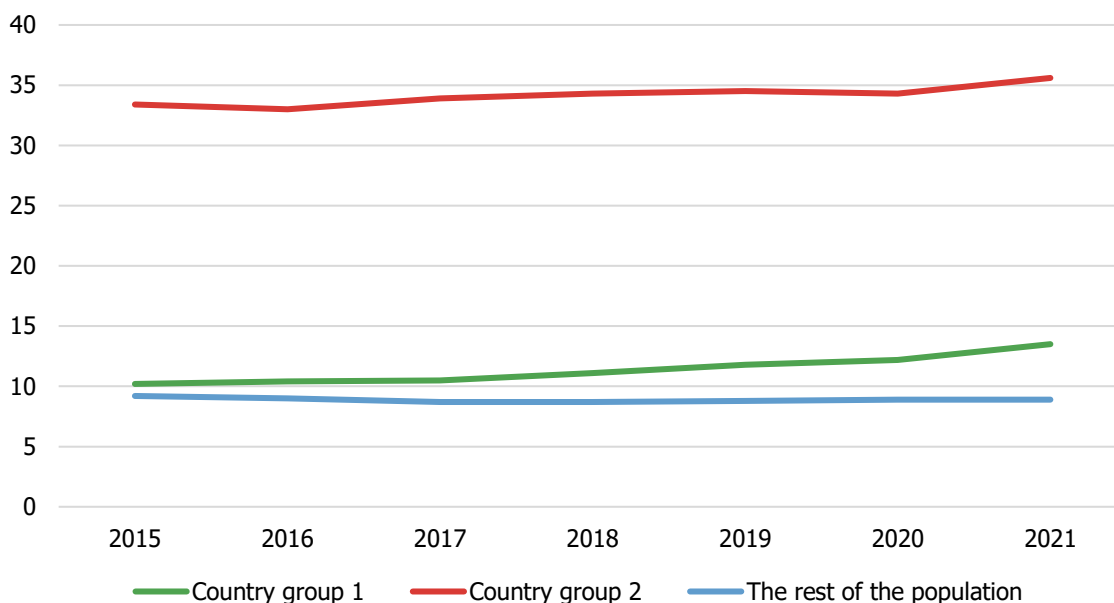


Figure 25 shows that immigrants who receive retirement pensions are overrepresented in low-income households, and this particularly applies to immigrants from Country Group 2. 36 per cent of the retirement pensioners who have immigrated from countries in Asia, Africa etc. lived in low-income households in 2021. The corresponding figure among the non-immigrant population was 9 per cent. In other words, retirement pensioners from Country Group 2 have four times the risk of living in low income households than retirement pensioners in the majority population. The proportion of retirement pensioners with persistent low incomes among immigrants has increased somewhat over the past few years.

These differences thus relate to shorter earnings period, period of residence and labour force participation, which again illustrates the importance of high employment for all groups and initiatives that promote diversity in the labour market.

6.2. Entering the labour market

There are a wide range of measures and schemes that have the objective of getting more people into the labour market. NAV has several labour market initiatives such as wage subsidies, labour market training courses, training initiatives, and tools such as the qualification programme and others. However, several studies show that labour market initiatives have less of an effect for immigrants, particularly immigrants with few formal qualifications, and that there is a certain risk of lock-in effects and negative stigmatisation (Bore et al., 2013). There are also initiatives and schemes that specifically target newly arrived refugees, such as the Introduction Programme with Norwegian language training and practical work experience. Many organisations and companies also offer various mentor and trainee schemes that focus on immigrants and other groups with weaker workforce

participation. Jobbsjansen (Job Opportunity) is an example of one such initiative and targets women with immigrant backgrounds who are not in employment or involved in other measures.

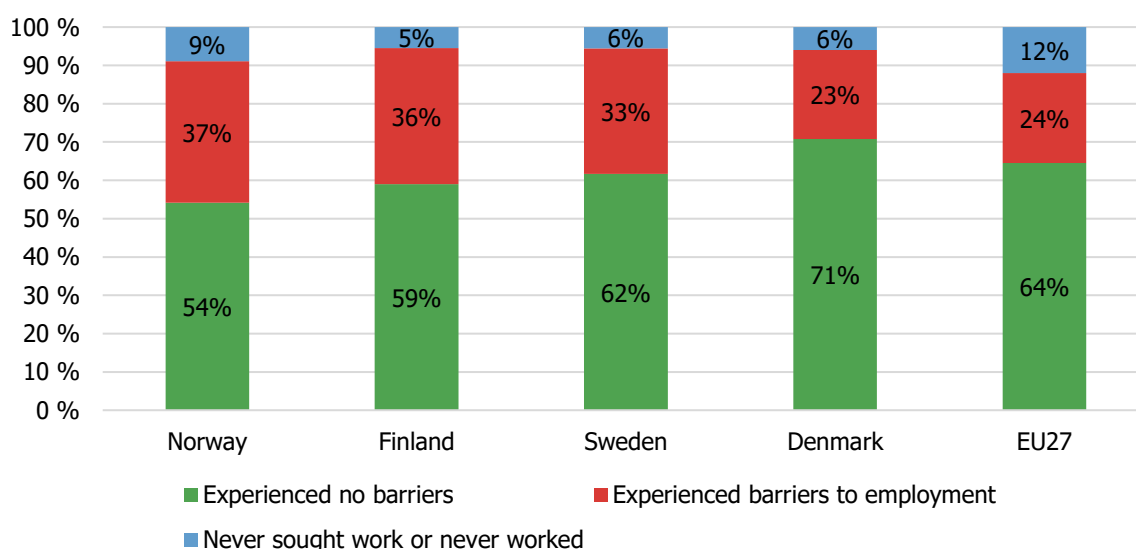
The road to employment is often more demanding for people with immigrant backgrounds. Immigrants who are looking for work in Norway may face a number of challenges related to their own life situation and skills, employer requirements and preferences, as well as other conditions in the labour market. The barriers we describe in more detail in this section particularly relate to Norwegian language skills, relevant qualifications, approval of education from abroad, employer requirements and discrimination in hiring. Other barriers to workforce participation may be lack of network, inadequate knowledge of the opportunities in the labour market or informal social codes (Dale-Olsen et al., 2014). These barriers may also include poor health, demanding care responsibilities or lack of motivation to work.

The same barriers that immigrants may encounter when entering the labour market can also have an inhibiting effect on labour market integration following employment. For example, a lack of formal qualifications or discrimination can contribute to poorer working conditions, weaker wage and career development, or limit opportunities for developing skills at the workplace.

Perceived barriers to employment

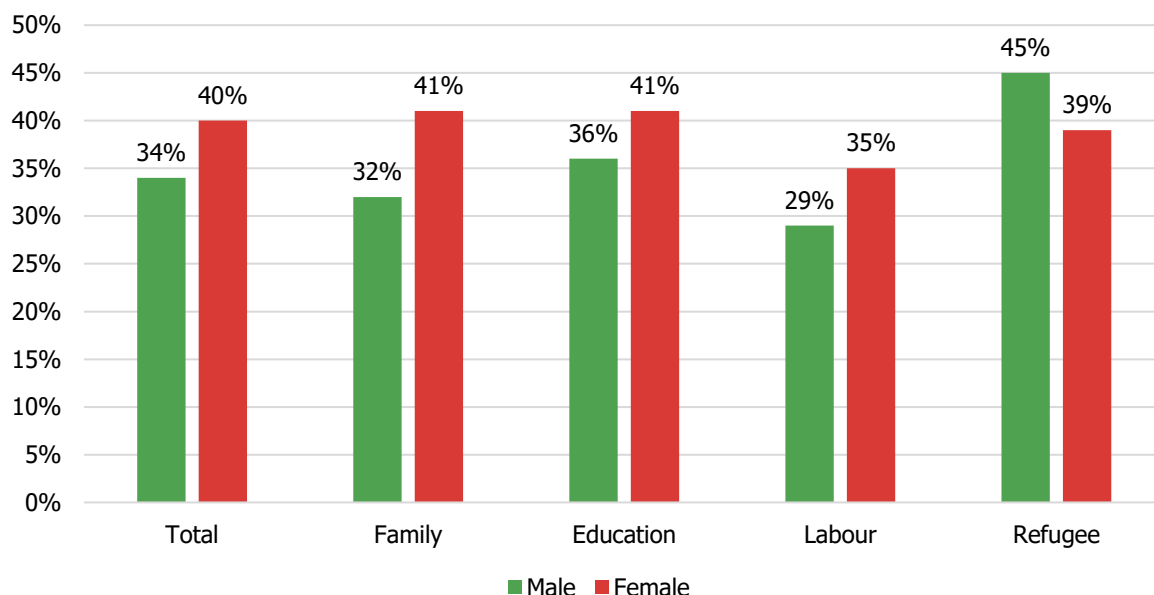
In the 2021 European Union Labour Force Survey, 37 per cent of immigrants in Norway responded that they experience different types of barriers to finding suitable employment, such as inadequate Norwegian language skills, lack of approval of foreign education, absence of appropriate job offers and discrimination on the basis of foreign origin (Eurostat, 2023). As shown in Figure 26, this proportion was higher in Norway compared to other Nordic countries, as well as the EU average.

Figure 26. Proportion of immigrants experiencing barriers to finding suitable employment in selected countries. 2021 (Eurostat, 2023)



Immigrant women in Norway experience barriers to employment to a greater extent than immigrant men. This applies to all immigrants, with the exception of refugees. 45 per cent of male refugees report encountering barriers to employment in Norway, which was higher than all groups when broken down by gender and immigrant category. Male labour immigrants, on the other hand, experience the least barriers to employment.

Figure 27. Proportion of immigrants who experience barriers to finding suitable employment in Norway, by gender and reason for immigration. 2021 (Eurostat, 2023)



Norwegian language skills

Norwegian language skills are an important prerequisite for being able to participate in the labour market and in other social arenas. Research shows a positive correlation between immigrants' Norwegian language skills and their health, formal and informal networks, and participation in education. This particularly applies to refugee women, refugees with low levels of education and immigrants with long periods of residence in Norway (Cheung & Phillimore, 2016; Kjøllesdal et al., 2023; Lunde & Lysen, 2022). In the labour market, inadequate Norwegian language skills can lead to insufficient or incorrect information about employee rights, poor communication and little cooperation between colleagues, and in some cases, illness and workplace accidents (Ødegård & Andersen, 2020).

Pursuant to the Act relating to integration through education, training and work (Integration Act), some immigrant groups have the right to access and obligation to attend Norwegian language training and social studies classes. Groups included under the scheme are refugees, their reunified family members and reunified family members of Norwegian citizens. In other words, the target group does not include all immigrants in Norway. The Labour Immigrant Committee recommended strengthening the Norwegian language training offered to labour immigrants to better integrate this group into the Norwegian labour market and civil society (Norwegian Official Report, 2022).

In 2022, 28,400 people from 160 different countries participated in Norwegian language training under the Integration Act. This represents a 30 per cent increase in the number of

How is the proficiency level measured after the Norwegian language test is taken?

The Norwegian language test consists of four segments in listening comprehension, reading comprehension, written presentation and oral communication. It is possible for a person to take the test segments multiple times during a calendar year. The results of the Norwegian language test are evaluated based on a framework that divides language skills into three overall levels: basic user (A), independent user (B) and advanced user (C). Each of these levels consists of two sub-levels (A1 and A2, B1 and B2, C1 and C2).

participants compared to the previous year. One in three participants were from Ukraine. Other large groups included immigrants from Syria, Eritrea, Afghanistan and Thailand (Lunde, 2023). Approximately 34,200 Norwegian language tests were taken during the same period.

The proportion of women among those who take Norwegian language tests has increased significantly over the past few years in line with a higher proportion of women among participants in the Introduction Programme. In 2022, two-thirds of Norwegian language tests were taken by women. In comparison, approximately 50 per cent of the tests in 2017 were taken by female participants. Half of the candidates were under the age of 36 in 2022. At the same time, there has been an increasing proportion in older age groups among those taking the tests. 44 per cent of tests were graded at independent user level, i.e. B1 or B2. This was an increase compared to 2019, when 32 per cent completed the test at level B1 or higher (Statistics Norway, 2022e).

Immigrants with higher education more often achieve proficiency level B1 or higher after having completed Norwegian language training. Furthermore, the Norwegian test results vary by gender and age. Just under half (46 per cent), of the tests completed by women were graded at independent user (B1 or higher) compared to 40 per cent of the tests completed by men. The cohort aged 26-35 has the largest share of tests graded at level B (51 per cent). Thereafter, the share of tests at this level declines for older age groups (Statistics Norway, 2022e).

Figures from the survey of living conditions among the immigrant population in 2016 show that the majority of immigrants, including those not covered by the Integration Act, participate in some form of Norwegian language training after arriving in Norway. In the survey, 87 per cent responded they had received Norwegian language training. Over half, 52 per cent, rated their Norwegian language skills as good, while one in five believed their Norwegian was poor. The proportion that participates in Norwegian language training and that consider their Norwegian language skills to be good varies by country of origin, and is

lowest among immigrants from Poland. 77 per cent of Polish immigrants received Norwegian language training, and 40 per cent rated their Norwegian language skills as poor (Vrålstad & Wiggen, 2016). A recent survey among Polish and Lithuanian labour immigrants from 2020 also showed that about four in ten spoke little or no Norwegian (Ødegård & Andersen, 2020).

Norwegian language training and good Norwegian language skills are becoming increasingly more important requirements for immigrants' participation and inclusion in the labour market. In some occupations, the requirements for proficiency in Norwegian are regulated by law, and an increasing number of employers set formal requirements for Norwegian language skills in their employment processes. However, surveys of employers show that they have little knowledge of the Norwegian language tests and what the different proficiency levels mean in practice (Birkeland et al., 2019). Norwegian language test results are also not among the most widespread criteria for assessing Norwegian language skills among applicants with immigrant backgrounds. However, employers place an emphasis on the language skills of applicants in job interviews, in application texts or through references. In addition, research indicates that employers associate languages with several other skills, such as the applicant's communication skills or whether the person "fits in" at the workplace (Bjørnset et al., 2021).

Many immigrants, especially newly arrived immigrants, have limited Norwegian language skills. For most people, it takes time to learn Norwegian, and Norwegian language skills therefore represent a major barrier to immigrants' entry into the labour market.

Formal qualifications

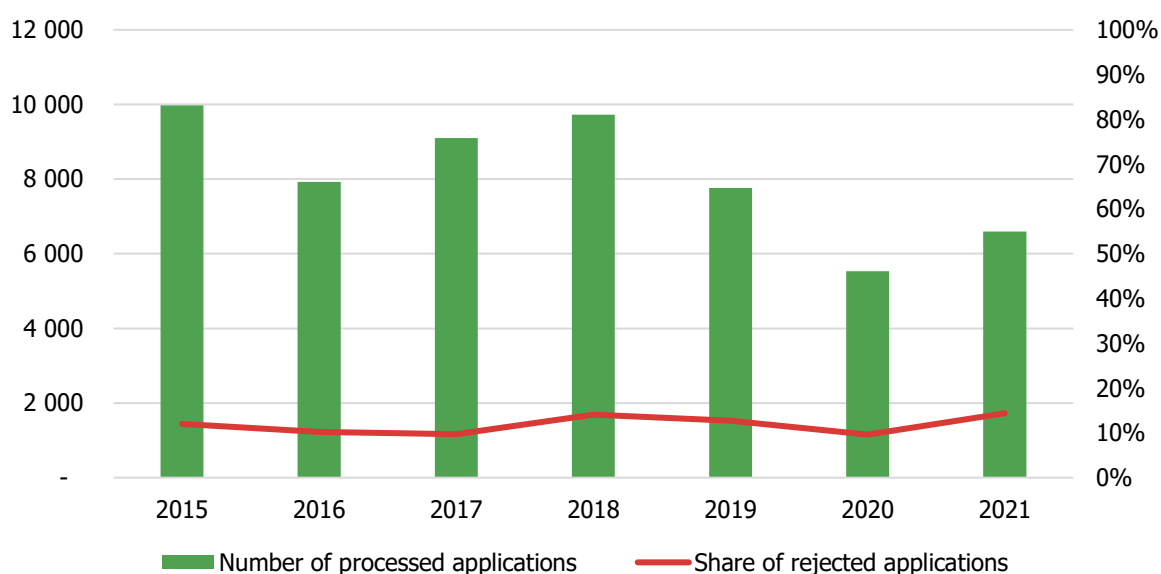
Over the years, the labour market in Norway has become more skills intensive. It is becoming an increasingly more common requirement in employment processes to document formal qualifications. This can make the path to employment demanding for those who do not have education, lack documentation of completed education or are not able to have their education approved in Norway (Søholt, 2016).

Research suggests that education from abroad is not valued in the labour market to the same extent as education completed in Norway. Education taken in Norway, regardless of level, has a positive impact on employment for both immigrant men and immigrant women (Bratsberg et al., 2017). The employment rate among refugees with education from Norway is higher than those with education from their country of origin, even if the education from Norway is at a lower level than the education from the country of origin (Olsen, 2020).

Immigrants can apply to have their education approved in Norway, and some educational qualifications also require special authorisation for immigrants to be able to practice their occupations or use their professional titles in Norway. Examples of such regulated occupations are doctors, nurses, electricians or lawyers.

There were 171 regulated occupations in Norway in 2021, and 18 different public authorities are responsible for approving qualifications within these occupations. The Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT) has statistics from all of the certification authorities in the period 2015-2021 for applications from EU/EEA countries and Switzerland. The figures show that approximately 56,400 applications were processed between 2015 and 2021, and 88 per cent of these were approved (NOKUT, 2022).

Figure 28. Number of decisions relating to foreign educational qualifications from EU/EEA countries, and proportion that were rejected. (NOKUT, 2022)



Increased standardisation of educational systems across countries, and closer cooperation with educational institutions in other countries has gradually made it easier to compare and approve education from a foreign country. Several steps have been taken to simplify application and approval procedures, establish better guidelines and digital systems, and improve the possibility of supplementing education programmes taken abroad (NOKUT, 2020).

Studies of certification schemes also indicate that immigrants still experience some barriers related to approval of the qualifications they bring with them from abroad. Among other things, these include a lack of coordination between different certification authorities, complicated regulations and insufficient information for the applicants. There are also limitations in terms of knowledge and statistics relating to case processing and approval, which make it difficult to assess the extent of the challenges that applicants may experience (Lunde & Rogstad, 2016).

Immigrants and their Norwegian-born children who complete their education in Norway may also experience greater challenges when transitioning to employment than the majority population. For example, it takes longer for young people with immigrant backgrounds to enter the labour market after completing their education, compared to young people in the majority population. This also applies when taking into account their educational

background, place of residence or family situation (Birkelund et al., 2014; Støren, 2010). It has also been documented that applicants with immigrant backgrounds are less likely to receive apprenticeships in companies than other applicants (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2019).

Discrimination in hiring

There is comprehensive research literature both in Norway and internationally pertaining to discrimination against people with immigrant backgrounds in employment processes (see, among others, Baert, 2018; Wollscheid et al., 2022). Many studies of discrimination in the recruitment process highlight the phenomenon through experiments and observation (Birkelund et al., 2020; Larsen & Di Stasio, 2021; Midtbøen, 2015; Midtbøen & Rogstad, 2012). These studies confirm that unfair differential treatment of people with immigrant backgrounds can occur at all stages of the recruitment process. Applicants with a minority background are less likely to be called in for an interview compared to identical applicants from the majority population. Discrimination can also take place in the job interview itself and in the final selection of potential applicants (Bjørnset et al., 2021). Research also indicates that there is no evidence of change in the extent of discrimination in hiring over time, and that there is an equally high barrier for people born in Norway to immigrant parents as there is for immigrants (Midtbøen & Quillian, 2021).

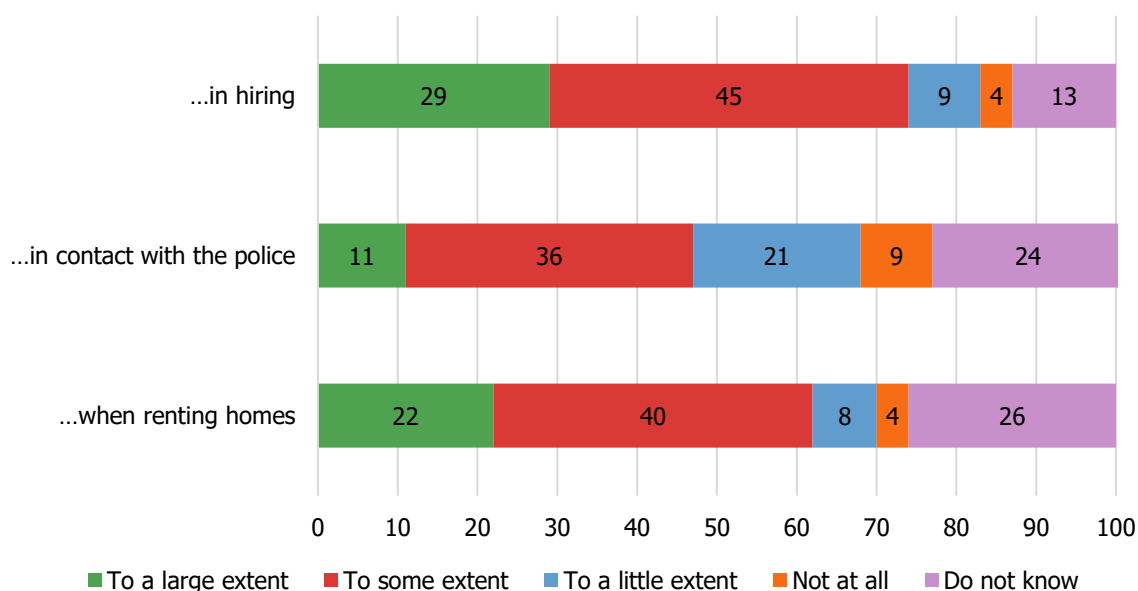
Discrimination is considered one of the biggest barriers to integration, both among immigrants themselves and in the Norwegian population (J.-P. Brekke & Fladmoe, 2022; Dalen et al., 2022). When it comes to immigrants' own experiences of discrimination, people with immigrant backgrounds report far more often that they are subjected to worse treatment than others. Studies show that the probability of experiencing discrimination is more than twice as high among people with immigrant backgrounds than in the rest of the population (Dalen et al., 2022; Oppøyen, 2022). This also applies in connection with job application processes. In 2021, a pilot survey was conducted among selected immigrant groups regarding perceived discrimination in various arenas. 26 per cent of the immigrant sample responded that they had experienced worse treatment than others when they applied for a job. In the population without an immigrant background, the corresponding proportion was 7 per cent (Dalen et al., 2022).

When concerning perceived causes of unlawful differential treatment, research indicates that skin colour and religiosity are two of the mechanisms that produce discrimination (Dalen et al., 2022; Di Stasio et al., 2021). Immigrants and their Norwegian-born children with backgrounds from Africa, Asia, the Middle East and South America are more susceptible to discrimination in connection with looking for work than those with backgrounds from Europe (Midtbøen & Quillian, 2021).

In the Integration Barometer (Integreringsbarometeret), a survey of attitudes towards immigration and integration, one in three of the population responded in 2021 that discrimination against immigrants occurs to a large extent (Figure 29). This is a more than three-fold increase from 2013, when 9 per cent gave the same response. In addition, almost

half of the respondents (46 per cent) stated that discrimination occurs to some extent. This indicates that there is a growing and relatively common perception among the population that discrimination of immigrants takes place (J.-P. Brekke & Fladmoe, 2022).

Figure 29. Proportion of the population who agree or disagree that discrimination occurs in three arenas. Percentage. 2021 (J.-P. Brekke & Fladmoe, 2022)



When divided among different arenas, the majority, seven out of ten, believe that discrimination against immigrants occurs in connection with employment. In comparison, four out of ten people responded that discrimination takes place in contact with the police, and six out of ten believe it occurs when renting homes.

The research has shown that employees with immigrant backgrounds have limited opportunities to counteract the unlawful differential treatment that they are exposed to. Initiatives for reducing discrimination should therefore be focussed on employers and their preferences (Vernby & Dancygier, 2019). In studies of employer preferences in hiring, it is common to distinguish between statistical and preference-based discrimination. In instances of statistical discrimination, employers reject applicants with minority backgrounds because their backgrounds are linked to stereotypes or knowledge that one already has about the competence or productivity of certain groups. For example, employers who have had negative experiences with employees with immigrant backgrounds may be less inclined to give people with immigrant backgrounds a second chance (Birkelund et al., 2020; Friberg & Midtbøen, 2018). Another example of statistical discrimination is when the applicant's foreign-sounding name is used as an indicator of inadequate Norwegian language skills or little knowledge of the Norwegian labour market. Another explanation in the research literature is based on the theory that some employers have a preference for discrimination (Becker, 1971). In other words, the employer is willing to employ a person who is less qualified than another candidate because this other candidate has characteristics (such as

skin colour, name or religious affiliation) that the employer does not want to have represented among its employees (Midtbøen, Rogstad, 2012).

Discrimination in hiring can have several negative consequences for people with immigrant backgrounds. It restricts access to the labour market and results in more and longer periods of unemployment (Wollscheid et al., 2022). When concerning those people who are employed, more knowledge is required about correlations between discrimination and working conditions. For example, there is currently little research into the extent to which discrimination in hiring is associated with overqualification and temporary employment among ethnic minorities.

6.3. Inclusion in the workplace

As previously mentioned, ethnic diversity among employees in a business is not necessarily the same as the workplace being considered inclusive. Inclusion is about employees experiencing respect and a sense of belonging, and that their skills and experience are valued by both colleagues and managers in the organisation.

Better inclusion in the workplace contributes to more cooperation, higher productivity and committed and dedicated employees. On the other hand, an exclusionary social environment and experiences of unlawful differential treatment can result in diminished trust and belonging, psychological problems and absenteeism.

Indicators described in this sub-chapter relate to contact with immigrants in the workplace, discrimination in the workplace, and employer attitudes towards and initiatives for employees.

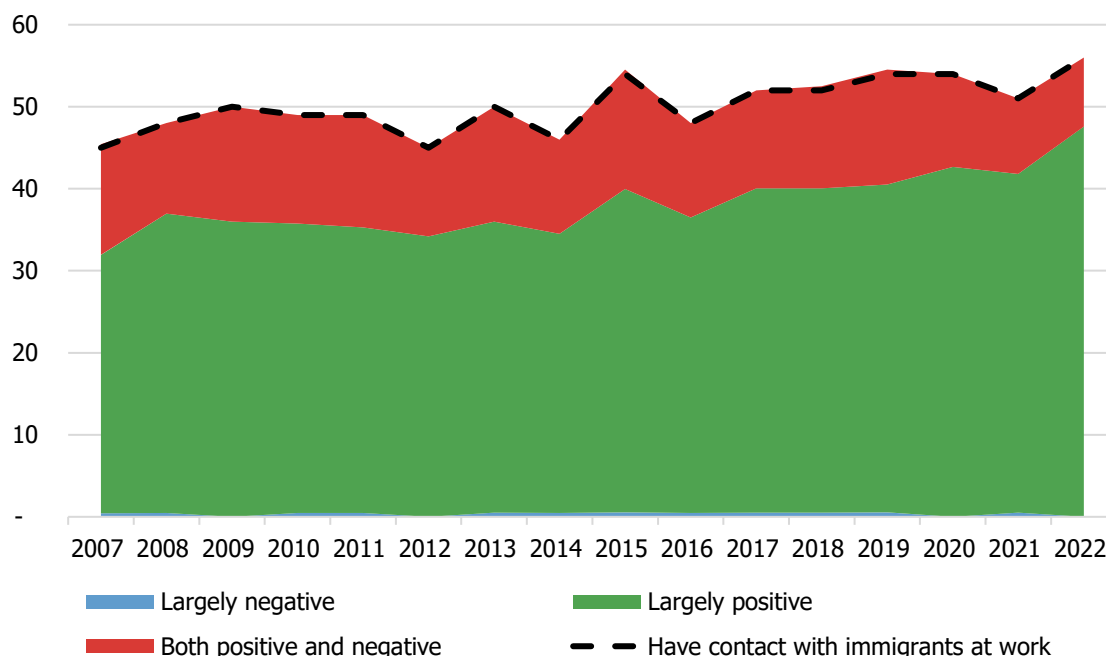
Contact with immigrants in the workplace

The increasing proportion of immigrants in the Norwegian labour force has meant that an ever-increasing number of people have had contact with immigrants in the workplace. Research shows that there is a correlation between experiences related to this contact and attitudes towards immigrants. Employees who have had positive experiences when in contact with people with immigrant backgrounds are also more likely to support diversity values and practices in their own business (Abramovic & Traavik, 2017; Birkelund et al., 2020). It is especially important for people with immigrant backgrounds to feel a sense of social belonging and support from managers and colleagues. There is a positive correlation between forming emotional bonds and social relationships in the workplace and the mental health and work satisfaction of employees (Svalund & Berglund, 2018).

The proportion of people who have contact with immigrants at work increased from 45 per cent in 2007 to 55 per cent in 2023 (Statistics Norway, 2023f). A clear majority of those who have had contact with immigrants at work consider their personal experiences to be largely

positive. This proportion has also trended in a positive direction over time. In 2022, more than eight out of ten stated their experiences had been largely positive, compared to seven out of ten in 2007.

Figure 30. Personal experience of contact with immigrants at work. Percentage. (Statistics Norway, 2023f)



At the same time, contact with immigrants varies between different types of workplaces. Studies of segregation in the labour market indicate that immigrants more often have other immigrants as colleagues than non-immigrants. This particularly applies to immigrants with the same country of origin and common language (Andersson et al., 2014). The degree of concentration is clearly dependent on the industries and the types of businesses that one looks at. In some industries such as primary industries, cleaning, transport, accommodation and hospitality, there is a high concentration of people with immigrant backgrounds among the employees in the businesses (Statistics Norway, 2022d). In addition, this concentration is more common in smaller rather than larger businesses, and in the least central municipalities in Norway (Stambøl, 2019).

Discrimination in the workplace

In Norway, the labour market is the arena in which there has been the most research into the existence of racism and discrimination against people with immigrant backgrounds. At the same time, the research focuses to a large extent on discrimination in connection with employment processes. There are relatively few studies into other aspects of inclusion in the labour market, such as wage development, promotion, workload or working environment (Wollscheid et al., 2022).

In the pilot study on discrimination conducted in parts of the immigrant population in 2021, 26 per cent reported having experienced discrimination in the workplace. The corresponding share in the rest of the population was 9 per cent (Dalen et al., 2022). In addition, 16 per cent of the sample group of immigrants reported that they had experienced hate speech in the workplace, compared to 6 per cent in the rest of the population. Hate speech is degrading, threatening, harassing or stigmatising speech which affects an individual's or a group's dignity, reputation and status in society (Equality and Anti-discrimination Ombud, 2015). The most important causes of discrimination or hate speech are linked to visible minority characteristics such as ethnic background, skin colour or religion (Dalen et al., 2022; Di Stasio et al., 2021).

Available studies on discrimination and racism in the labour market following employment note that this can occur in many different work situations, for example, in contact with colleagues or customers (Fangen & Paasche, 2013). Unlawful differential treatment can also occur in connection with salary determination and development. Research findings indicate that employers have greater power in the labour market vis-à-vis immigrants than other employees, and therefore have opportunities to treat the former group differently with regard to pay (Dale-Olsen et al., 2014). However, the extent of the discrimination can vary significantly in terms of sectors, industries and job types. For example, in professional occupations such as doctors, dentists, nurses or teachers, immigrants have a significantly lower risk of being discriminated against in connection with recruitment or salary determination, while discrimination is more prevalent within accounting, insurance and finance (Drange, 2016; Drange & Helland, 2018; Midtbøen & Rogstad, 2012).

Discrimination and racism in employment can have negative consequences, not only for wage and career development, but also correlate with a weakened sense of belonging and trust, and poorer physical and mental health among people with immigrant backgrounds (Midtbøen & Kitterød, 2019; Aambø, 2021).

Employer's attitudes and initiatives

Attitude studies of the Norwegian labour market show that a large proportion of employers describe ethnic diversity as being positive for both reputation and relationships with customers and users (Brekke 2020; Andersen, Sterri, 2022). A majority of employers are of the view that recruiting people with immigrant backgrounds is both important as part of social responsibility and beneficial to their business. In a representative survey of attitudes conducted in 2022, 69 per cent of employers responded that businesses miss out on valuable expertise by not employing people with immigrant backgrounds. 57 per cent agreed with the claim "Businesses should, as part of social responsibility, have a goal of recruiting people with immigrant backgrounds". In addition, three out of four were of the opinion that ethnic diversity is good for the business' reputation (R. K. Andersen & Sterri, 2022).

In terms of the consequences of ethnic diversity for the business, a significant proportion of employers stated that ethnic diversity has a positive effect, for example when concerning well-being (55 per cent believe this), innovation (45 per cent) and productivity (43 per cent).

On the other hand, 17 per cent stated that ethnic diversity makes it more difficult to manage their employees. In the same survey, almost half of employers were of the view that ethnic diversity has neither negative nor positive significance for their business (R. K. Andersen & Sterri, 2022).

At the same time, research shows that some employers express stereotypes and sometimes negative attitudes towards people with immigrant backgrounds, and especially towards “visible minorities”. Among other things, there are perceptions that ethnic minorities need to be better qualified or have certain distinctive qualities in order to be viewed as equal to job seekers from the majority population (Midtbøen & Rogstad, 2012).

Employers’ attitudes towards ethnic diversity vary between different industries and different types of businesses. There are trends towards more positive attitudes among managers in the public sector than in the private sector. Employers in large businesses with many employees also often have positive attitudes towards ethnic diversity. Several studies also point out that employer attitudes relate to their experiences when coming into contact with people with immigrant backgrounds. Managers who have employees with immigrant backgrounds or have had positive experiences with these employees, are more positive about ethnic diversity than employers who have had less contact with ethnic minorities (Abramovic & Traavik, 2017; R. K. Andersen & Sterri, 2022; Birkelund et al., 2020)

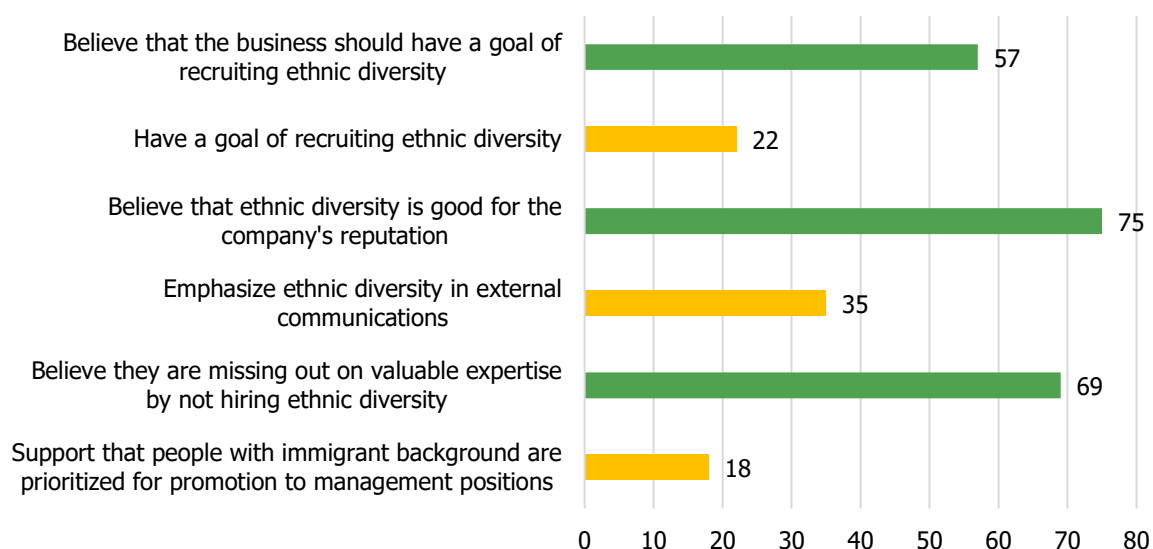
Positive attitudes among employers are not sufficient for ensuring inclusion in the labour market for people with immigrant backgrounds. There is also a need for concrete measures and proven strategies that can promote ethnic diversity (Berg et al., 2012). Employers can initiate both proactive measures targeted at increasing the proportion of people with immigrant backgrounds in the business, and measures intended to prevent discrimination. Examples of the tools that can be used are mentoring schemes, NAV's financial instruments related to workforce inclusion, and training in ethnic diversity and diversity management in the workplace.

What is diversity management?

The term diversity management is about an organisation taking the initiative to actively recruit and retain employees with different backgrounds, and thus create a positive working environment where similarities and differences between individuals are valued (Drange, 2014). Inclusive management also emphasises the importance of managers listening to different feedback and needs, and facilitating dialogue and assurance in order to elicit expectations, needs and perspectives from employees with different backgrounds (Umblis et al., 2022).

There is some variation in employer support for concrete measures and practices that have the objective of promoting diversity. The figure below shows that despite more than half of employers expressing positive attitudes towards ethnic diversity in their businesses, the proportion that has implemented concrete measures is much lower.

Figure 31. Employer attitudes towards ethnic diversity in the business and support for concrete measures. Percentage. 2022. (R. K. Andersen & Sterri, 2022)



One example of a measure that can promote ethnic diversity in businesses is actively prioritising people with immigrant backgrounds for promotion to management positions. In 2022, 18 per cent of Norwegian employers agreed with this. In the same study, employers were asked to take a position on a practice in which businesses actively prioritize women for promotion. 33 per cent supported this. In other words, there was greater support to actively prioritize women for promotion to management positions, compared to people with immigrant backgrounds (R. K. Andersen & Sterri, 2022).

Other examples of measures that can contribute to better inclusion in the workplace are Norwegian language training and mentor or sponsor schemes. 28 and 35 per cent of employers respectively offer these schemes in their businesses (R. K. Andersen & Sterri, 2022).

6.4. Equal opportunities in the workplace

Inclusive labour market, equal opportunities and equitable distribution that reduce social differences are among the key political objectives in Norway (cf. Chapter 3). The workplace is the most important arena for integration for people with immigrant backgrounds. At the same time, not all employees have the same opportunities to develop their skills, ensure wage growth, build networks and attain a secure and long-term connection to work.

Research indicates that some immigrant groups are more often “trapped at the entrance” to the labour market. They are more likely to remain in low-paying jobs with few skills requirements, where it is easy to get in, but where there is little to learn and easy to fall out again (Proba, 2020).

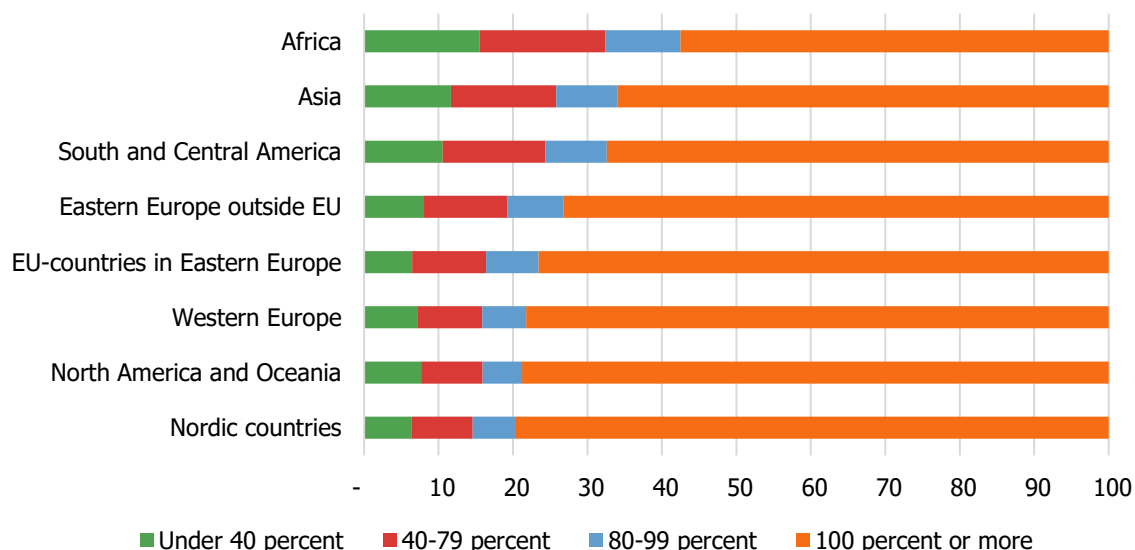
In this chapter, we take a closer look at developments in differences between immigrants and the rest of the population in terms of working conditions, wages and careers, in the form of management positions, overqualification, working environment and degree of organisation.

Part-time work

Working part-time, both voluntary and involuntary, can have consequences for the integration and inclusion of immigrants in the workplace. Part-time jobs are often lower paid than full-time jobs, even if the salary is pro-rated to be equivalent to a full-time position (Fløtre & Tuv, 2022). Part-time work, especially with a low position percentage, can diminish an individual's financial situation and reduce opportunities for professional, salary and career development. In addition, it can result in weakening the sense of belonging in the workplace, contact with colleagues and the ability to influence decisions made during the working day (Nicolaisen & Bråthen, 2012).

A larger share of the immigrant population is employed in part-time positions than the rest of the population. In 2022, 27 per cent of immigrants worked part-time, compared with 22 per cent of the rest of the population. Since 2015, the proportion of part-time employees has decreased, both among immigrants and the population in general, however the differences in working hours between these two groups have not changed. In 2022, the difference between immigrants and the rest of the population in terms of the proportion of part-time employees was the same as it had been in 2015 (Statistics Norway, 2023i).

Figure 32. Distribution by percentage of FTE, employed immigrants by country of origin. 2022. (Statistics Norway, 2023i)



In general, women are more likely to work part-time than men. In 2022, women had twice the rate of part-time employment compared to men. This was true for employees both with and without immigrant backgrounds. The highest proportion of part-time employees is found

among immigrant women (37.5 per cent). Among women with a majority background, 31 per cent work part-time. Among immigrant men, 17 per cent are employed part-time compared to 14 per cent for people with a majority background (Statistics Norway, 2023i). The differences described above can be partly explained by the fact that immigrants are overrepresented in occupations where part-time work is widespread, for example, cleaning, nursing and care services and sales. This mostly applies to women from Country Group 2 (Olsen, 2019).

For some, part-time work is voluntary, whereby one chooses not to work full-time for various reasons, such as combining education and work, or balancing work and other commitments. However, some people work part-time because they do not have the option of a full-time job. Part-time employees who want and have tried to obtain longer working hours, and who can start doing so within one month, are also referred to as underemployed. Involuntary part-time work is more prevalent among immigrants than in the rest of the population. In 2021, 11 per cent of employed immigrants wanted longer working hours, compared to 5.5 per cent in the rest of the population (Lien, 2022).

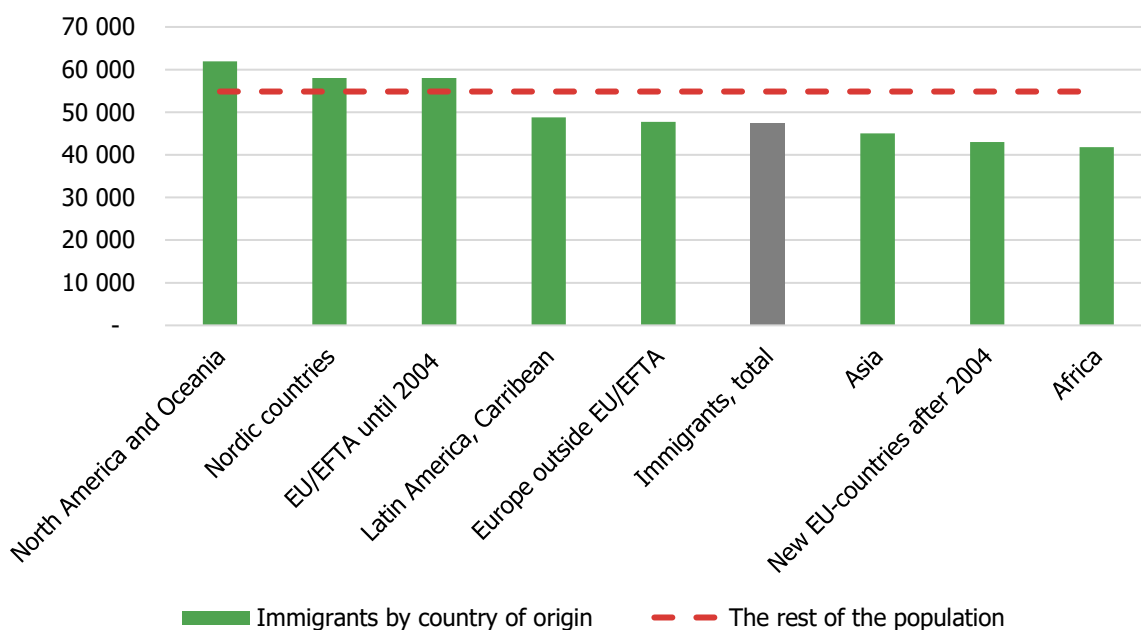
Earnings

Immigrants have lower average salaries than the rest of the population. At the end of 2022, immigrants earned an average of NOK 47,600 per month, while the average monthly salary³ for the rest of the population was NOK 55,800 (Bye, 2023). In other words, on average, immigrants earn salaries that are 15 per cent lower than the rest of the population. These average differences in salary level have remained largely unchanged since 2015 (Statistics Norway, 2022i).

In line with other indicators in this report, we find considerable variation between different groups within the immigrant population, including with regard to salary level.

³ In line with Statistics Norway's definition, monthly salary includes agreed gross monthly salary, irregular additional payments and bonuses. Overtime allowances are not included in monthly salary.

Figure 33. Average monthly salary, by country of origin. 2022. (Statistics Norway, 2022m)

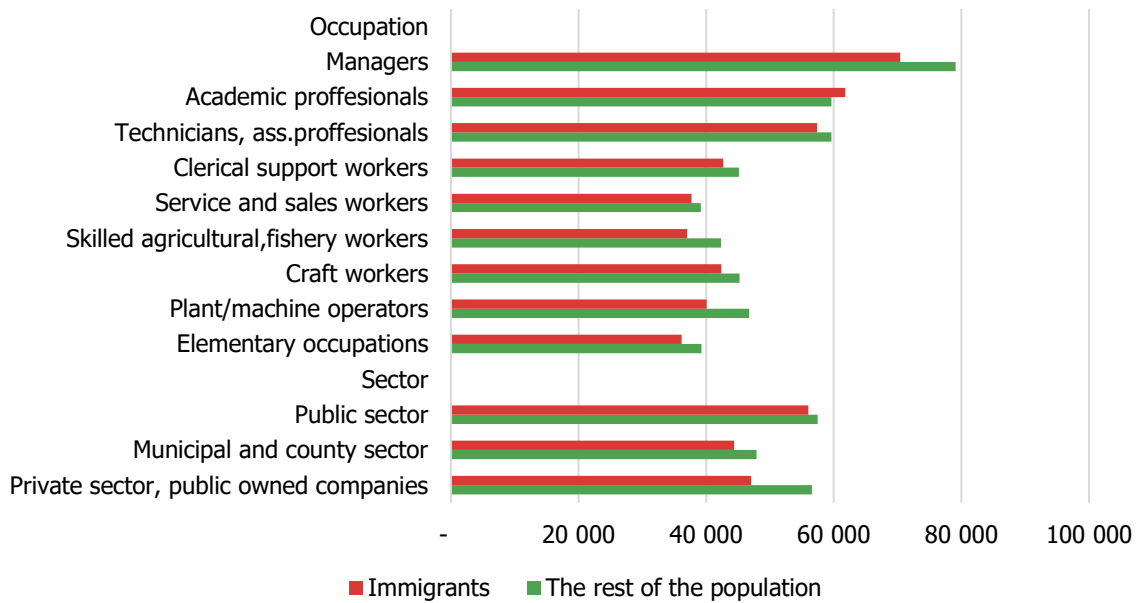


When broken down by world region, immigrants from North America, the Nordic countries and Western European countries have an average monthly salary that is at the same level or higher than the rest of the population. As shown in Figure 33, on average, immigrants from Africa, Asia and new EU Member States in Eastern Europe earn the least. Refugees and their reunited family members have the lowest salaries when compared to other immigrants, and earned an average monthly salary of approximately NOK 42,000 in 2022.

The average differences in salary levels correlate with representation in different sectors and occupations described in Chapter 5. Immigrants, and especially immigrants with backgrounds from Asia and Africa, are overrepresented in low-paid occupations within accommodation, hospitality, cleaning, etc.

The pay gap decreases significantly when we compare the salaries between immigrants and the rest of the population who work in the same sector or occupational group, however does not completely disappear. On average, immigrants earn less than the rest of the population in all occupational groups other than academic professions. When broken down by sector, the pay gap is largest in the private sector, while there is almost no difference in salary levels within public administration (Figure 34).

Figure 34. Average monthly salary in NOK for immigrants and the rest of the population, by occupation and sector. 2022 (Statistics Norway, 2022I)



Several studies have documented that pay differences exist between employees with and without immigrant backgrounds who are otherwise equal in terms of a wide range of characteristics, such as education, gender, age and career path. The differences occur both within the same industry, occupation, and even within individual businesses (Kolsrud et al., 2016).

Furthermore, research shows that salaries increase in accordance with period of residence and number of years in the labour market, but this increase is weaker for refugees and their families than for other immigrants and the majority population. In other words, the pay differences increase the longer the refugees have lived and worked in Norway, including when compared to Norwegian-born employees with the same level of education and work experience (Barth et al., 2012; Kolsrud et al., 2016). Among other things, this may be due to immigrants from low-income countries having lower mobility out of low-wage jobs when compared to the majority population. They are also more susceptible to involuntary job changes (for example as a result of downsizing) and have more periods of unemployment between jobs (Bratsberg et al., 2018; Røed et al., 2019).

Another factor that can help explain the differences in pay levels and pay development is the pay employees with immigrant background are offered in various businesses and industries. Research has documented that there is a connection between an increased proportion of immigrants in the Norwegian labour market and lower salary development (Bratsberg et al., 2014; Iversen et al., 2017). In other words, employers hire cheaper labour without reducing productivity to increase profitability in their companies. For their part, foreign-born employees are in a weaker position in the labour market than the majority population, and continue to work in underpaid positions because they have few alternative job opportunities. This mostly applies to immigrants from low-income countries with few formal qualifications

(Dale-Olsen et al., 2014). Research in the field indicates that immigrants are more susceptible to wage discrimination, social dumping and various forms of labour market crime in comparison with other employees. We have little knowledge about the extent and development of these phenomena in Norway, but some risk factors have been identified, such as a large proportion of unskilled and/or foreign labour in the industry, a high proportion of temporary employment, the absence of collective agreements and that the work is carried out in private homes (Brunovskis & Ødegård, 2019).

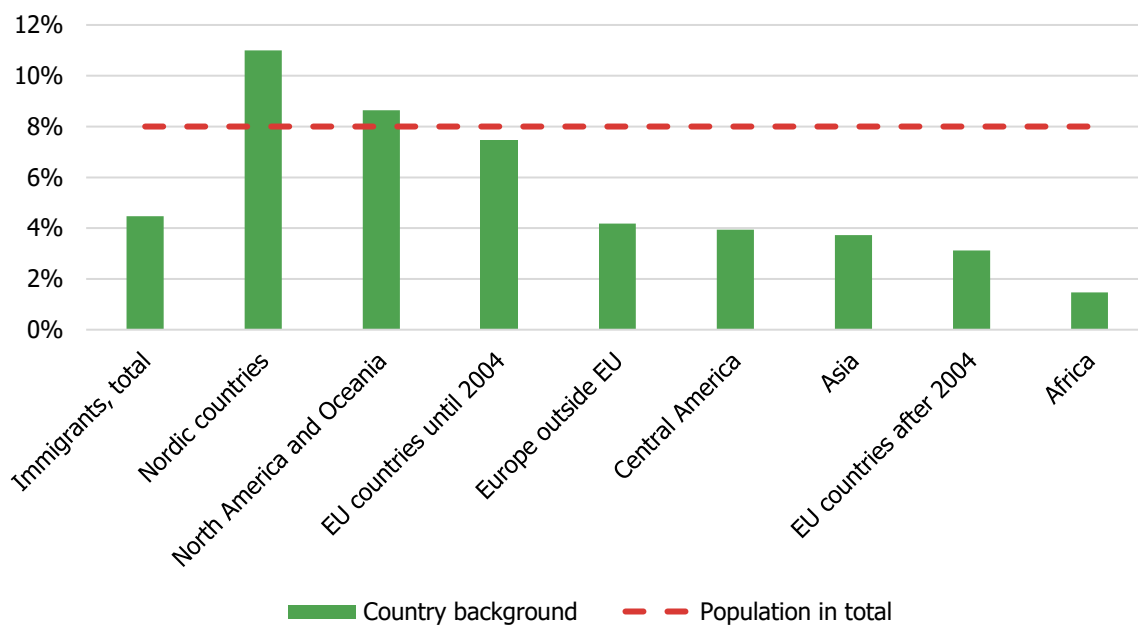
Management positions

Equal opportunities and inclusion for vulnerable groups are key objectives in the labour market and Norwegian society in general. This includes the opportunities different groups have for career development and promotion. Diversity in management can contribute to a more inclusive labour market and influence employee expectations for their career development opportunities (J.-P. Brekke et al., 2023; Umblijs et al., 2022)

Statistics Norway publishes annual statistics of employed persons in various occupational groups, including in management positions. The statistics can be used as an indication of how well immigrants are represented in management positions. The figures show that immigrants are underrepresented among managers in the Norwegian labour market. The proportion who work in management positions is half as low among immigrants as it is in the rest of the population. In 2022, an average of 4 per cent of employed immigrants worked in management positions, compared to 8 per cent in the population as a whole (Statistics Norway, 2022n).

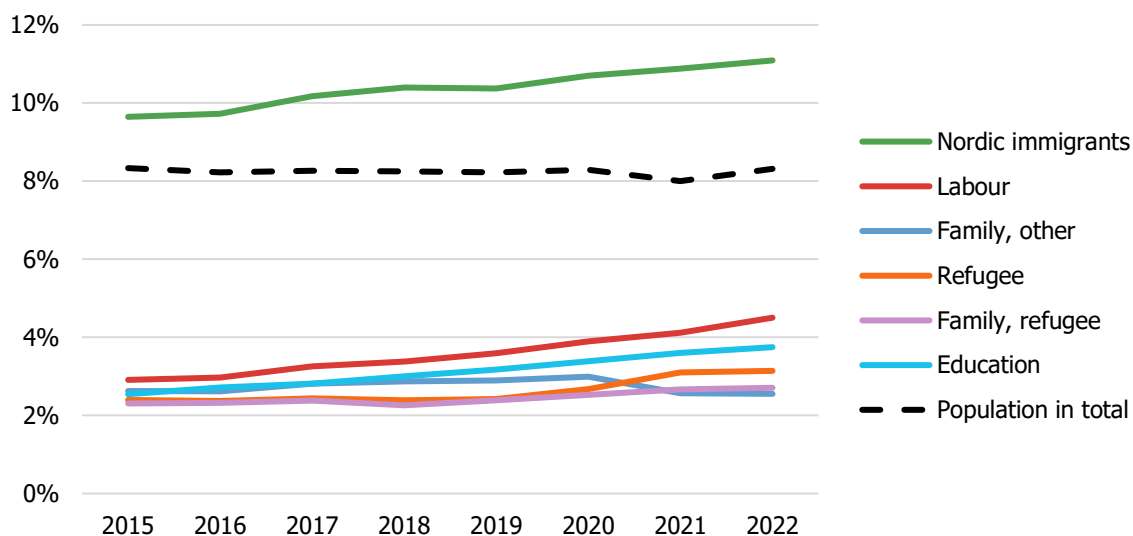
Immigrants from Nordic countries have a higher probability of working as a manager compared to both other immigrants and the rest of the population. 11 per cent of Nordic immigrants were employed in management positions in 2022. As shown in Figure 35, immigrants from North America and the EU countries (until 2004) are represented in management positions at the same level as the rest of the population. On the other hand, the lowest proportion in management positions was among immigrants from Africa, new EU Member States in Eastern Europe and Asia.

Figure 35. Proportion employed in management positions, by country of origin. 2022. (Statistics Norway, 2022n)



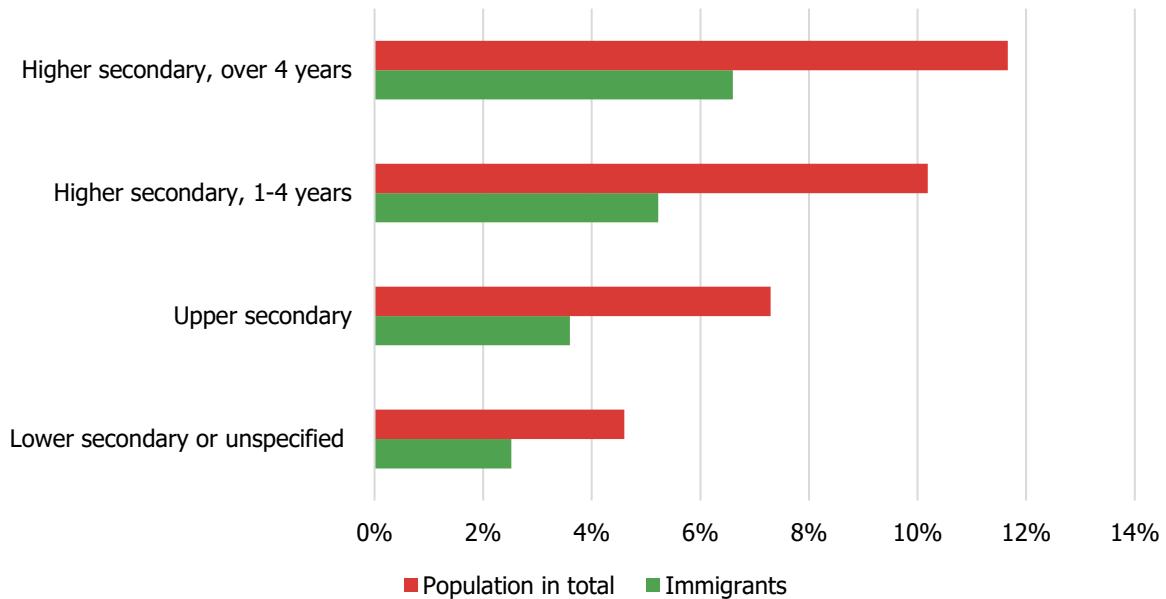
Since 2015, there has been a slight increase in the proportion of immigrants in management positions, and this has led to marginally lower differences in representation in these positions (Statistics Norway, 2022n). In 2022, every tenth manager in Norway was an immigrant, compared to one in fifteen in 2015. However, the figure below shows that this positive development applies more to some immigrant groups than to others. The proportion in management positions is highest – and rising – among immigrants from the Nordic countries. On the other hand, refugees and reunified family members are the least likely to have management jobs; only 3 per cent were registered as managers in 2022, which was approximately the same level as in 2015.

Figure 36. Proportion of employed immigrants in management positions, by reason for immigration. Percentage (Statistics Norway, register based employment statistics).



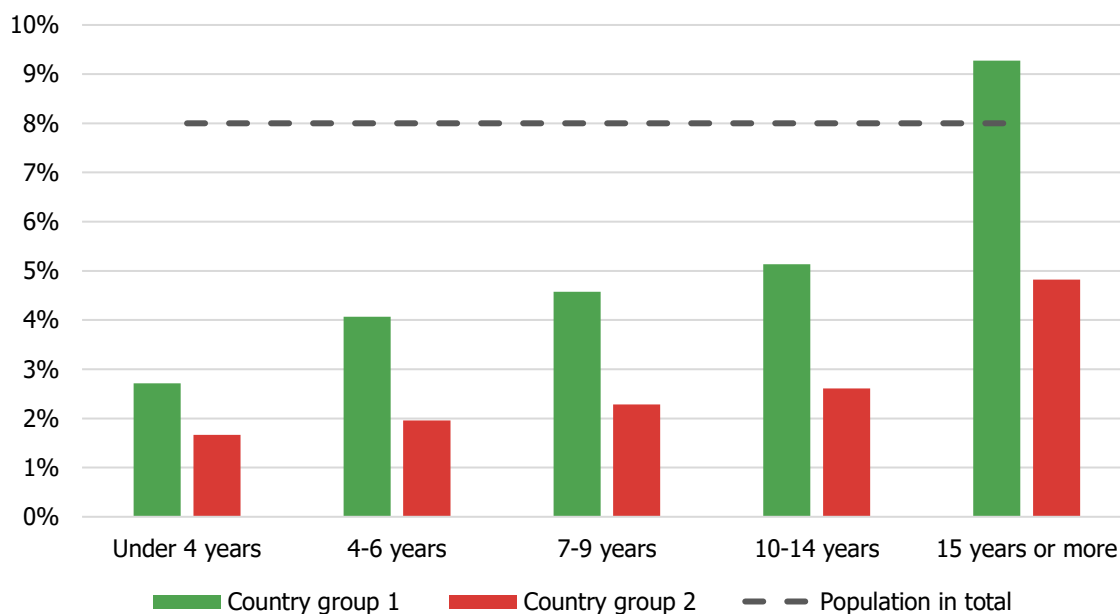
There may be several possible reasons for different degrees of representation in management positions among different groups in the immigrant population. Working as a manager is associated with a number of demographic and socioeconomic characteristics such as age, gender and level of education. In addition, period of residence and the number of years of work experience in Norway will influence one's opportunities for becoming a manager. Furthermore, women are less represented in management positions than men, and this applies both in the populations with and without immigrant backgrounds. People with higher education work relatively more often as managers. At the same time, Figure 37 shows that immigrants who have a high level of education are also underrepresented in management positions when compared to the rest of the population. For the population as a whole, 12 per cent of people educated at a master's degree level or higher were employed in management positions, compared to 7 per cent of immigrants with similar educational backgrounds.

Figure 37. Proportion in management positions among employed immigrants and the entire population, by level of education. 2022. Percentage (Statistics Norway, register-based employment statistics)



There are very few managers among newly arrived immigrants. In 2022, only 2 per cent of employed immigrants with a period of residence of less than 4 years worked in management positions. The proportion of managers among immigrants increases in line with period of residence, and this trend is stronger for immigrants from Country Group 1 than for immigrants from Country Group 2. The proportion in management positions among immigrants from Country Group 1 with a period of residence of 15 years or more was approximately 9 per cent in 2022. This was higher than the average for the entire population, which was at 8 per cent. The corresponding proportion for people with a long period of residence and background from Country Group 2 was approximately 5 per cent.

Figure 38. Proportion in management positions among employed immigrants, by period of residence and country group. 2022. (Statistics Norway, 2022p)

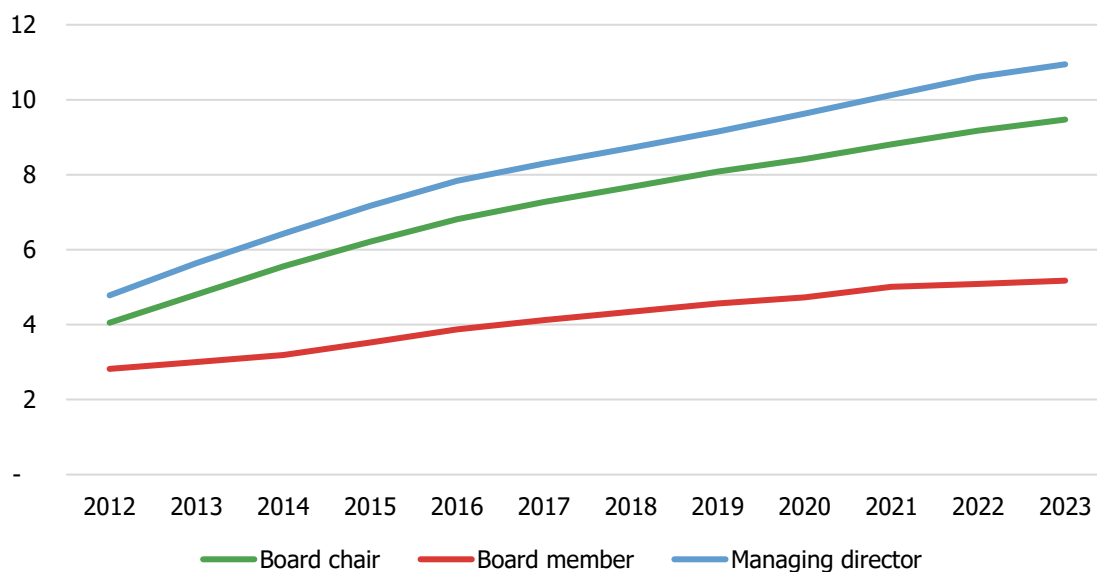


There may be a number of different reasons that immigrants and their Norwegian-born children are underrepresented in management positions. As described above, this may be associated with characteristics such as level of education, age or period of residence. It may also be due to multiple factors in the labour market and barriers that this group encounters in the workforce. For example, there may be more limited opportunities for career development in some occupations than in others. Another example is discrimination in connection with promotion to management positions. Among other things, research shows that students with immigrant backgrounds from Asian countries are more likely to experience that they have problems attaining management positions when compared to Norwegian students. This is despite the fact that students with backgrounds from Asian countries have higher ambitions for their career development than students in the majority population (Abrahamsen & Drange, 2014).

Board representatives

Immigrants are underrepresented on the boards of Norwegian companies, however the proportion is increasing (Statistics Norway, 2023h). In 2023, 9 per cent of board chairs and 11 per cent of managing directors of limited liability companies were immigrants. Ten years earlier, the proportion of immigrants who were board chairs was 5 per cent and the figure for managing directors was 6 per cent.

Figure 39. Proportion of immigrants in various roles on the boards of Norwegian limited liability companies (AS). Percentage. (Statistics Norway, 2023h)



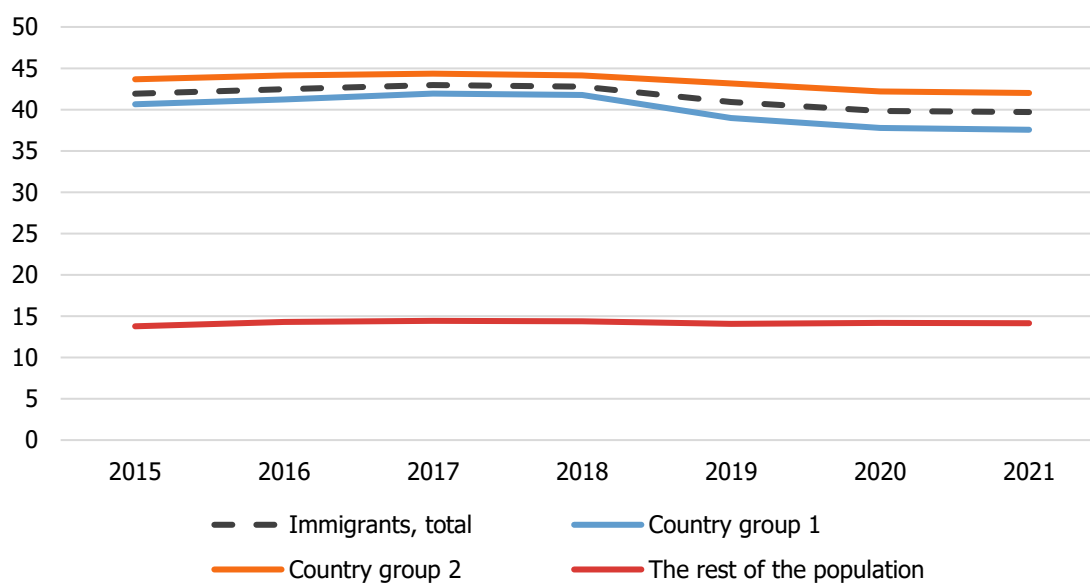
The proportion of immigrants among those who operate and manage businesses varies significantly between different industries. In the industry group “International organisations and bodies”, immigrants make up 67 per cent of the managing directors and 70 per cent of the board representatives. In addition, there is a high proportion of immigrants among general managers within accommodation and hospitality (37 per cent) and transportation and storage (22 per cent) (Bartsch, 2023). As shown in Chapter 5, these industries have a high proportion of employees with immigrant backgrounds.

Overqualification

Overqualification refers to an employee who has higher formal education and qualifications than what are required for the job he/she has obtained, i.e. is unable to use his/her qualifications (Official Norwegian Report, 2011). For the individual, overqualification may limit opportunities for future pay and career development, reduce motivation and performance in the workplace, and result in poorer health and quality of life (Erdogan & Bauer, 2021; Larsen et al., 2018). Overqualification has negative consequences for all of society, because it means less efficient use of resources and expertise (Official Norwegian Report, 2011).

Immigrants in Norway are more likely to be overqualified for their jobs than the majority population. In 2021, 40 per cent of highly educated immigrants worked in occupations with lower requirements for formal qualifications. This figure was 14 per cent in the rest of the population. These figures have remained largely unchanged since 2015 (Statistics Norway, 2021b).

Figure 40. Proportion of overqualified employees, by immigrant category. Percentage (Statistics Norway, 2021b)



Immigrants are more often overqualified for their jobs than other employees, even within the same industry, and when comparing almost identical positions. This applies to immigrants from all world regions, however immigrants from Country Group 2 are particularly overrepresented among the overqualified. There are minor differences in terms of overqualification by gender and the sector immigrants are employed in (Edelmann & Villund, 2022; Larsen et al., 2018)

Immigrants with shorter periods of residence in Norway are most at risk of overqualification. In 2021, half of those with a period of residence of less than 10 years were overqualified. Among immigrants who have resided in Norway for ten years or more, one third were overqualified for their jobs. In other words, the probability of being overqualified decreases in line with period of residence, however immigrants with a long period of residence receive a lower return on their education when compared to the majority population (Edelmann & Villund, 2022).

There may be multiple reasons for why immigrants are more susceptible to overqualification than the rest of the population. For example, challenges may arise in connection with approval of foreign education, or the education may not be directly transferable to Norwegian labour market conditions. A lack of Norwegian language skills and ever-increasing requirements related to this may also limit opportunities for immigrants to utilise the qualifications they bring with them. In addition, discrimination may result in immigrants unable to find employment that matches with their qualifications (Edelmann & Villund, 2022; Larsen et al., 2018).

Physical working environment

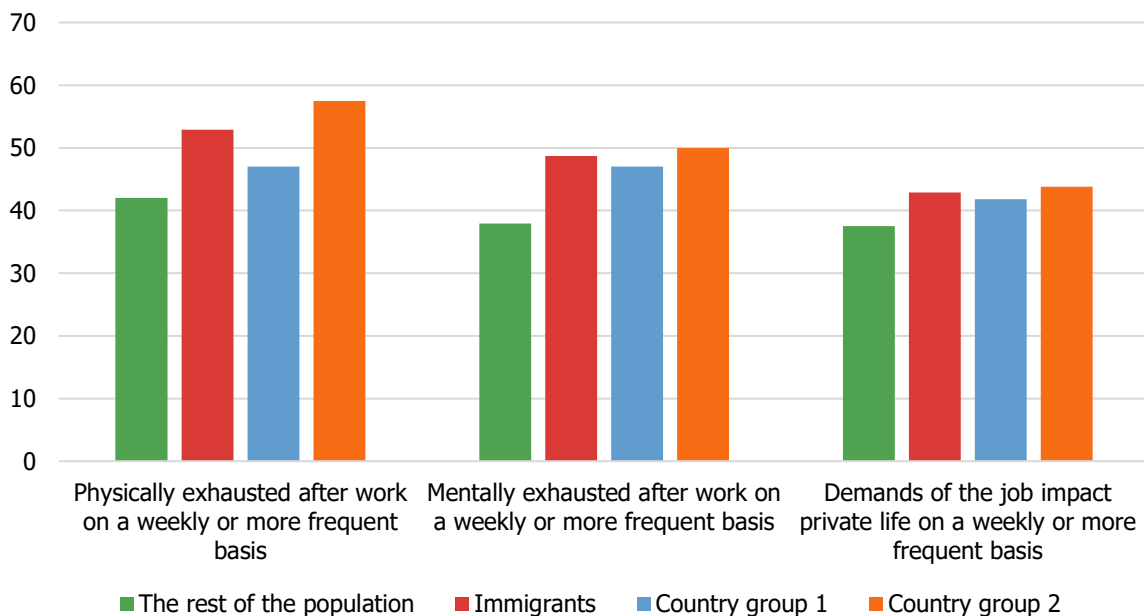
Demanding physical working conditions may have a negative impact on the well-being and health of employees, and contribute to increased risk of injury, illness, disability and withdrawal from the labour market (Akay & Ahmadi, 2022; Ugreninov, 2023). Examples of such risk factors are heavy, static or repetitive work, as well as exposure to noise, vibrations or chemicals.

What is meant by physical working environment?

Physical working environment relates to working conditions that impact employees either directly, through the use of their bodies, or indirectly, as a result of the characteristics inherent at the workplace and the work tools (STAMI, 2021).

Figures from Statistics Norway's annual quality of life survey indicate that immigrants are more often exposed to a poorer working environment than the rest of the population, and this applies to the greatest extent to immigrants from Country Group 2. Approximately 58 per cent of this group experience on a weekly or more frequent basis that they are physically exhausted after work, and half are mentally exhausted after work on a weekly or more frequent basis. The equivalent figures were 42 per cent and 38 per cent respectively for the rest of the population. Immigrants also more often experience that the demands of the job impact their private lives when compared with the rest of the population, however there are only slight differences between these two groups (Figure 41).

Figure 41. Selected working environment indicators, by Country Group, percentage. 2022 (Quality of Life Survey, Statistics Norway)



The physical working environment will depend on the type of work tasks performed, and different occupations and industries therefore have different risk factors related to the working environment. As mentioned in Chapter 6.4, immigrants are overrepresented in occupations in which physically burdensome work tasks are more prevalent (Statistics Norway, 2019a; Sterud et al., 2018; With, 2019). Figures from the Living Conditions Survey show that immigrants are more often exposed to loud noise, skin-irritating substances, chemicals, dust or gas. 53 per cent of immigrants were exposed to at least one of the aforementioned factors in their daily work, compared to 38 per cent of the population at large. In addition, the proportion who lift items in uncomfortable positions is four times as high among immigrants compared to the population at large, i.e. 17 per cent versus 4 per cent (Vrålstad & Wiggen, 2016).

When looking at those working in the same industry, immigrants also have more physically demanding working conditions. For example, foreign nationals are heavily overrepresented in work accidents that occur in building and construction activities. 42 per cent of people injured in fall accidents that occurred between 2019 and 2021 had foreign citizenship. When looking at deaths as a result of work injuries during the same period, five of the seven deceased were foreign workers (Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority, 2022b).

If there are violations of health, safety and environmental rules, or when wages and other benefits are unacceptably low compared to what other employees normally earn, this often involves social dumping, and in some cases also human trafficking in the labour market. The term social dumping refers to the practice of foreign employees who perform work in Norway having significantly poorer pay and employment conditions than Norwegian workers (Norwegian Government, 2022). Human trafficking involves people being forced into performing work or services through the use of coercion, violence, threats or abuse of a vulnerable situation. It is difficult to document and quantify the extent of these phenomena in Norway, however studies show that employees in some industries are particularly vulnerable. This applies to industries with few requirements for formal qualifications, a high proportion of immigrants, a low proportion of permanent employees, a low degree of organisation and the absence of collective agreements (Brunovskis & Ødegård, 2019; Samfunnsøkonomisk analyse, 2020). For example, the research calls attention to building and construction, accommodation and hospitality, cleaning and transportation as some of the industries with a higher risk of social dumping.

Degree of organisation

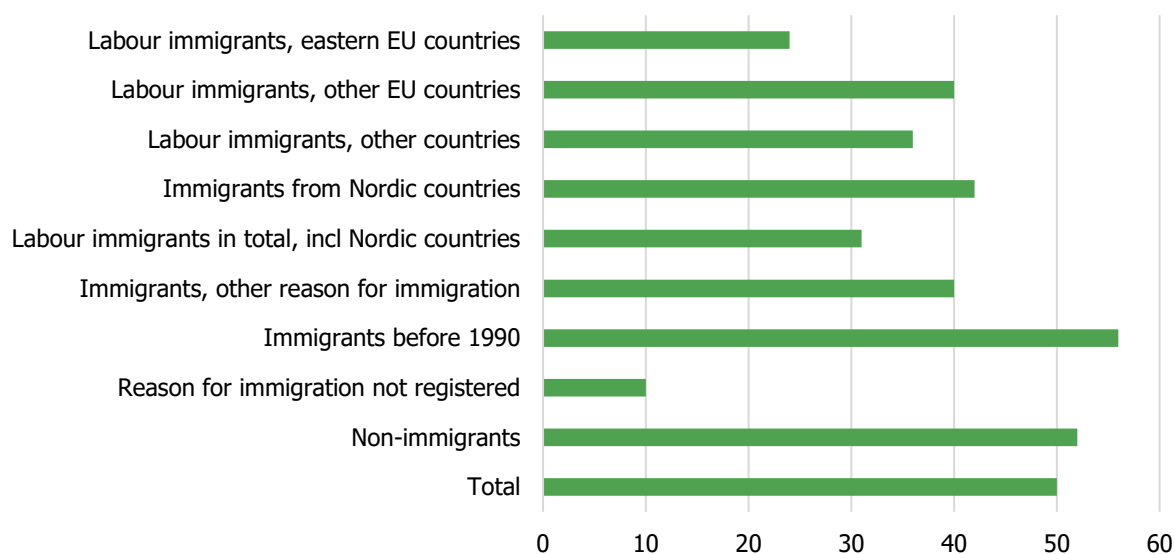
In relative terms, immigrants are less likely to be members of employee organisations than the rest of the population. This can be partly explained by the industries and occupations in which they work. Immigrants are overrepresented in industries with a low degree of organisation and low collective agreement coverage (Nergaard & Ødegård, 2022).

Degree of organisation and collective agreements

Degree of organisation is the proportion of employees who are members of an employee organisation (trade union).

Collective agreement is an agreement between a trade union and either an employers' association or an individual employer for employment and pay conditions or other working conditions. A collective agreement regulates pay levels and other working conditions, such as working hours, shift work and overtime work, periods of notice, holidays, pensions and leave.

Figure 42. Degree of organisation among employees in different immigrant groups. Percentage. 2019 (Nergaard & Ødegård, 2022)



These include the industries within building and construction, retail, accommodation and hospitality. However, relatively fewer immigrants work in the public sector, where there is a high degree of organisation. At the same time, research shows that there are several industries in which the degree of organisation is 10–20 percentage points lower among labour immigrants than among employees without an immigrant background in the same industry (Norwegian Official Report, 2022).

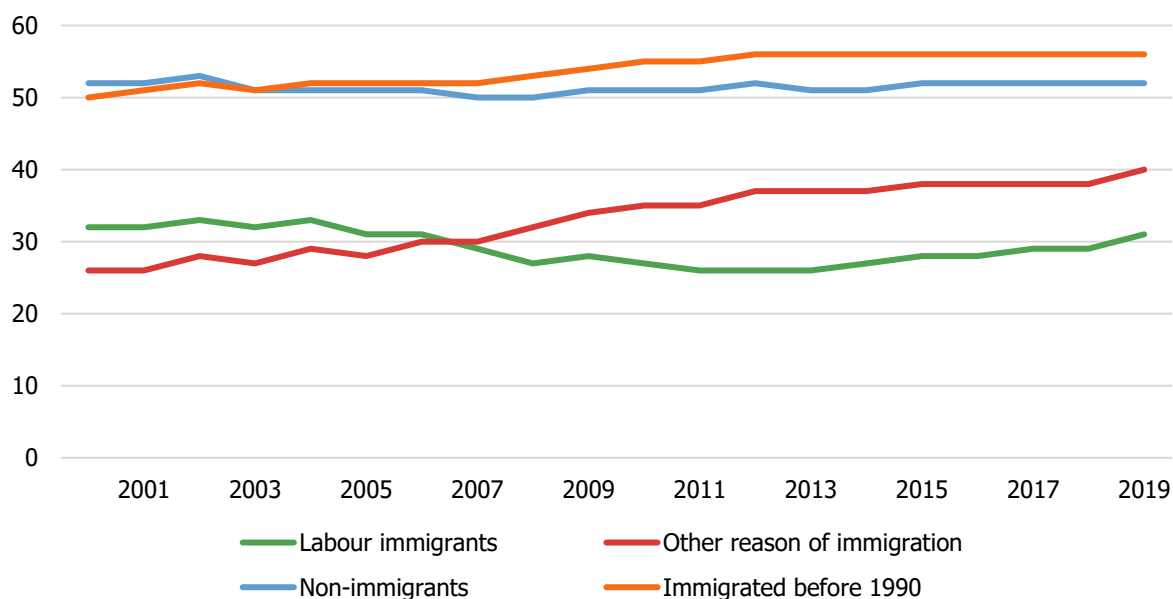
In addition, the probability of being a member of a trade union is higher for women than for men. This applies both to immigrants and the rest of the population, and is associated with women being more often employed in the public sector. 41 per cent of female and 27 per

cent of male labour immigrants were members of trade unions in 2019 (Nergaard & Ødegård, 2022).

Labour immigrants have a lower degree of organisation compared to those who have immigrated for other reasons. In 2019, 31 per cent of labour immigrants and 40 per cent of other immigrants were members of a union. This figure was 52 per cent in the rest of the population. There is a strong positive correlation between period of residence and the probability of being a member of a trade union. For example, 16 per cent of labour immigrants with short periods of residence (up to two years) were organised in 2019. Among those who have been in Norway for more than 20 years, the corresponding proportion was 53 per cent (Nergaard & Ødegård, 2022).

The figure below shows the development in the degree of organisation over time. For the majority population, this remained relatively unchanged from 2000 to 2019. For labour immigrants, the proportion was also at the same level in 2019 as in 2000, however there was some variation in the percentage who were organised during the period. For other immigrants, the degree of trade unionism has increased.

Figure 43. Development in degree of organisation, by immigration background. Percentage. (Nergaard & Ødegård, 2022)



In other words, in the period 2000-2019, there were minor differences between immigrants and the rest of the population when concerning the degree of organisation. We have less information about trade union membership among different immigrant groups since 2019, and updated statistics are required in this area.

6.5. Absenteeism and withdrawal from the workforce

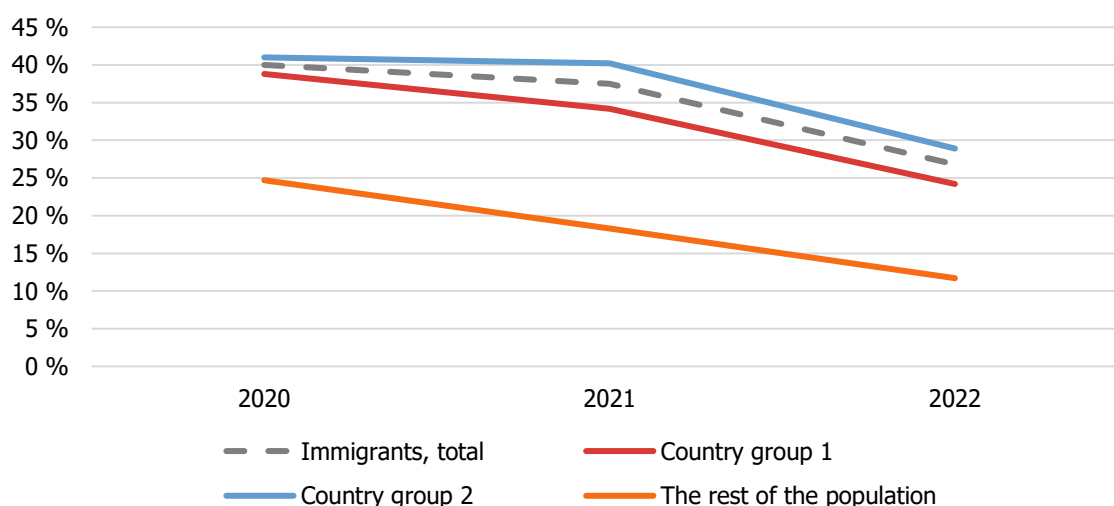
Several studies of immigrants in the labour market note that low employment rates in this group are not exclusively caused by barriers when entering the labour market. Immigrants are also more likely to stop working after a few years in the labour market, and this is particularly the case for male refugees (Bratsberg et al., 2011, 2014). For example, Bratsberg et al (2017) found that the probability of losing one's job in the private sector in Norway is more than twice as high for immigrants than for the rest of the population. The consequences of losing one's job are also greater for immigrants when concerning, for example, future employment and wage development.

There may be various reasons for why immigrants are more likely to end up outside the labour market. These include high levels of temporary employment, inadequate Norwegian language skills and qualifications or poor health. In this chapter, we describe factors such as perceived risk of losing one's job, premature withdrawal from the labour market, temporary employment, sick leave and leave.

Perceived risk of losing job

In Statistics Norway's Quality of Life Survey, respondents were asked if they believed they were at risk of losing their job. The results suggest that immigrants, and especially those from countries in Asia, Africa etc. (Country Group 2), more often experience the risk of losing their job than the rest of the population.

Figure 44. Proportion who believe they are at risk of losing their job (Quality of Life Survey, Statistics Norway).



The restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic had a greater impact on the everyday work lives of immigrants than the rest of the population. This is also clearly evident when it comes to concerns about losing their job. In 2020 and 2021, four out of ten

immigrants believed that they were at risk of losing their job, compared to two out of ten in the rest of the population. In 2022, this percentage decreased for both groups. Nearly three in ten immigrants in Country Group 2 also experienced that they were at risk of losing their job, compared to just over one in ten in the population at large.

A 2018 study shows that immigrants are twice as likely to lose their jobs (in the private sector) as people without immigrant backgrounds (Bratsberg et al., 2018). Among other things, this has negative consequences for future employment and wage development. Immigrants from low-income countries are most at risk of remaining outside the labour market after losing their job.

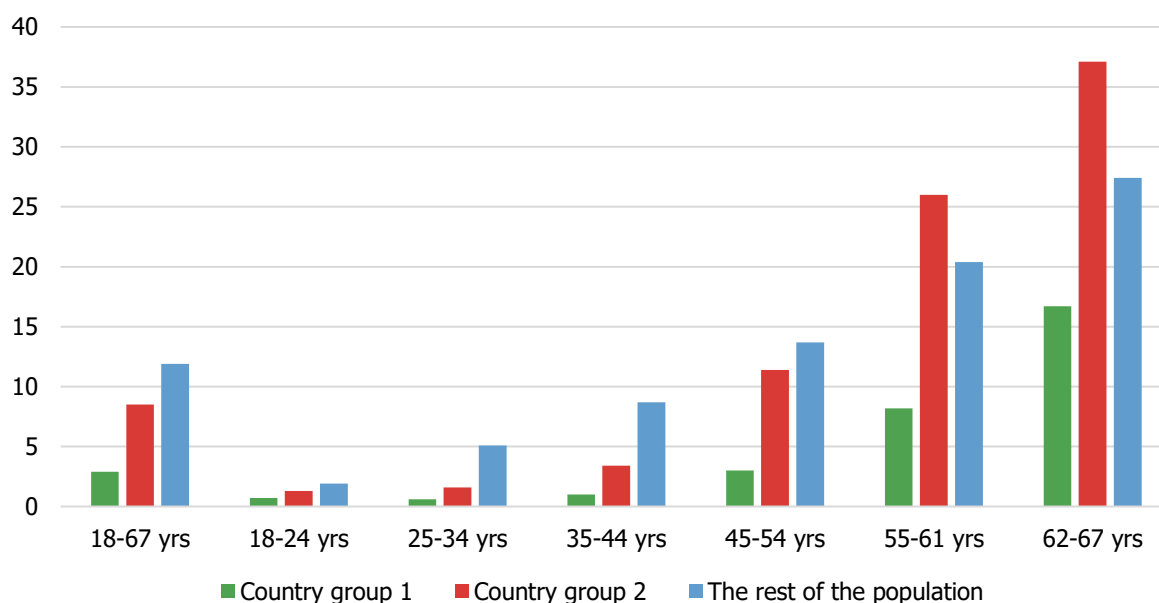
Premature withdrawal from the labour market

An important political objective is for older employees, both with and without immigrant backgrounds, to remain in the workforce for longer (Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion, 2023a). Statistics Norway's population projections show that the number of immigrants in Norway aged 55-66 will increase sharply over the next 20 years (Tønnessen & Syse, 2021). The degree to which this group are connected to the workforce will therefore have a major impact on the sustainability of the Norwegian welfare state.

The employment rate in the population (both among immigrants and in the rest of the population) is highest in the 25-54 age group, and then decreases with age. In 2022, 57 per cent of immigrants aged 55-66 were employed. The corresponding share among the rest of the population was 70 per cent. Immigrants from countries in Asia, Africa and Europe, (except the EU), had the lowest proportion in employment in 2022. Less than half of those aged 55-66 from these country groups were working. The vast majority of refugees in Norway have backgrounds from these three world regions. Research shows that immigrants from these countries fall out of the labour market earlier than the majority population (Bratsberg et al., 2010). This particularly applies to male refugees (Bratsberg et al., 2017).

The proportion who receive health-related benefits increases with age. Among people in their 50s and 60s who are out of work, many are registered as recipients of disability benefits. The figure below shows that immigrants as a whole have a lower share of people on disability benefits than the rest of the population. At the same time, this share increases more rapidly with age for immigrants than for the rest of the population, and this particularly applies to immigrants from Country Group 2. In the 55-61 age group, one in four immigrants with a background from Country Group 2 were on disability benefits in 2022, compared to one in five from the Norwegian-born population.

Figure 45. Proportion of people on disability benefits as a percentage of the population, by immigrant background and age. 2022. (Statistics Norway, 2022i)



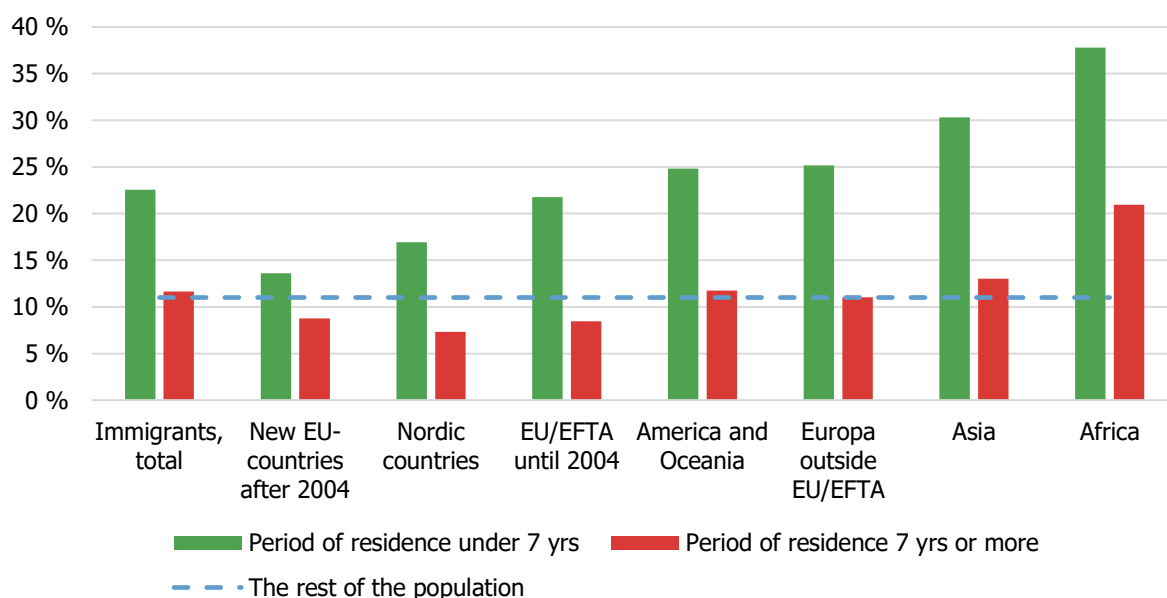
There may be various reasons for why premature withdrawal from the labour market is more common among immigrants, and especially among refugees. These include refugees' backgrounds (education, qualifications, language skills, health), workplace characteristics (working environment, pay, temporary work, discrimination) or other conditions in the labour market. For example, refugees more often have loose employment agreements with varying and unpredictable working hours, and they more often lose their jobs in connection with downsizing processes. Another example could be poor health and wear and tear on the body due to physically demanding work tasks. In the case of refugee women, expectations related to maternity leave and caregiving tasks at home may also result in them withdrawing from the labour market (Proba, 2020).

Later in this chapter we will further discuss some of the reasons referred to above.

Temporary employment

The everyday working lives of immigrants are typified more by temporary work than the rest of the population. At the end of 2022, 14.5 per cent of immigrants were employed in temporary positions, compared to 11 per cent for the rest of the population (Taha, 2023). Temporary employment is more common among women than men, both with and without immigrant backgrounds. In 2022, 18 per cent of immigrant women and 14 per cent of women in the rest of the population worked in temporary positions. There is also a strong correlation between the probability of being temporarily employed and immigrants' period of residence and country of origin. Among immigrants who have resided in Norway for 7 or more years, the proportion of temporary employees is at the same level as the population at large (Figure 46).

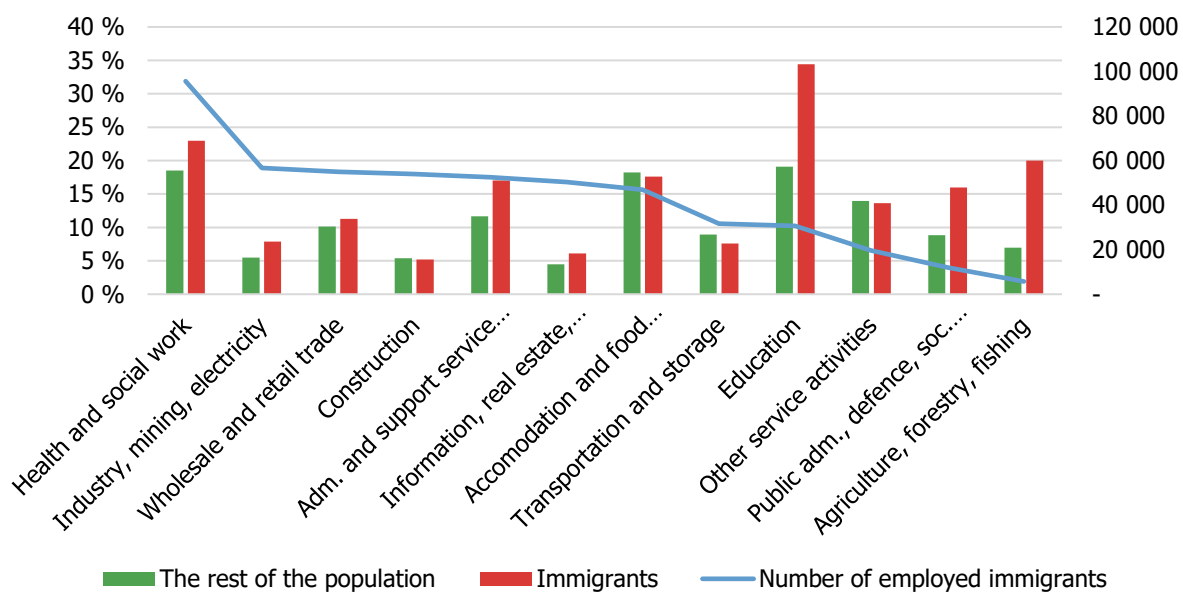
Figure 46. Proportion employed in temporary positions, by country of origin and period of residence. 2022. (Statistics Norway, 2022v)



Immigrants from countries in Africa stand out as having clearly the highest proportion in temporary jobs. Every fourth employee from this world region had a temporary position in 2022. Period of residence in Norway appears to reduce the difference in the level of temporary work in this group when compared to the population without an immigrant background, however not entirely. As shown in Figure 44, in 2022, African immigrants with longer periods of residence worked twice as often in temporary positions as the rest of the population.

The use of temporary positions is widespread to varying degrees in different industries in the Norwegian labour market. In industries within teaching, health and social services, accommodation and hospitality, a relatively higher number of people are employed in temporary jobs, while the proportion of temporary positions is lower in industry, information and communication, and building and construction. Figure 47 shows that, in several of these industries, immigrants work more often in temporary positions compared to the rest of the population. The highest proportion in temporary positions is found among immigrants employed in teaching. One in three of this group was temporarily employed in 2022.

Figure 47. Proportion employed in temporary positions, by industry group and immigrant category. 2022 (Statistics Norway, 2022u)



Research shows that temporary employment can have different effects on someone's continued connection to the labour market. On the one hand, being employed in a temporary position can serve as a springboard from unemployment into the labour market. However, on the other hand, this can trap the employee in insecure job positions with poor prospects of finding permanent employment. This can contribute to lower job security, poorer wage development and greater segmentation of the labour market (Svalund & Berglund, 2018). Vulnerable groups in particular, such as young people with little education, immigrants and people with reduced capacity for work, are most impacted by the negative consequences of temporary employment (M. Strøm & von Simson, 2020).

Sick leave

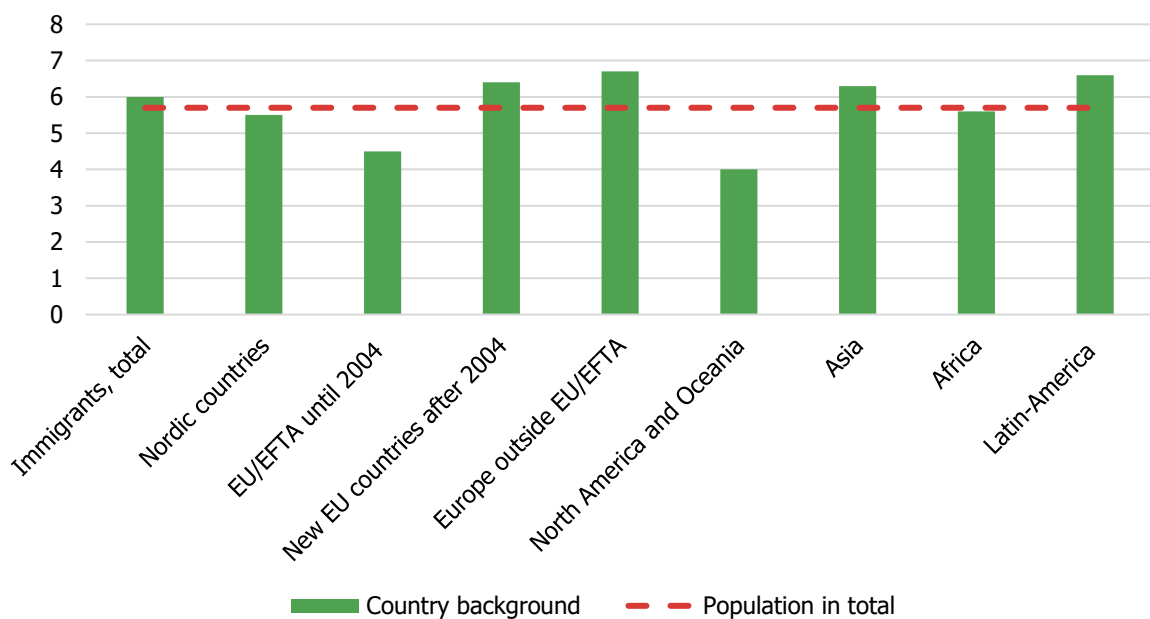
Norway has a higher level of sick leave and more widespread long-term sick leave when compared with several other European countries (Lien, 2019; Ugreninov, 2023).

About sick leave

Sick leave is defined as absence from work due to own illness that has been documented with self-certification or medical certificate in accordance with Norwegian laws and agreements (Statistics Norway, 2022n). Laws and statistics distinguish between self-reported and doctor-reported sick leave. Data pertaining to self-reported sick leave is collected through a sample survey, and no distinction is made between people with and without immigrant backgrounds. However, the statistics for doctor-reported sick leave are available according to immigrant category and country of origin.

On average, doctor-reported sick leave among immigrants is at a marginally higher level compared to the population in general. In Q4 2022, 6 per cent of immigrants had absence from work documented with a medical certificate, compared to 5.7 per cent in the entire population (Statistics Norway, 2022s). However, there is some variation in sick leave between different immigrant groups. Immigrant women have higher rates of sick leave than immigrant men, and sick leave increases with age at a faster pace among immigrants than in the rest of the population (Bruer-Skarsbø, 2020). There are also significant differences in sick leave percentages for immigrants from different country groups. The highest rates of doctor-certified sick leave are found among immigrants from Eastern European countries outside the EU (6.7 per cent), while immigrants from North America have the lowest rates of sick leave (4 per cent).

Figure 48. Doctor-reported sick leave among immigrants and the entire population, Q4 2022. (Statistics Norway, 2022r)



The research literature points to several reasons for why there may be differences in sick leave between immigrants and the rest of the population. On the one hand, some immigrant groups are in better health than the rest of the population when they arrive in Norway. This phenomenon is referred to as the “healthy immigrant” effect, and can be explained by the fact that it is often the healthiest and most resourceful people who choose to move to another country (Dzamarija, 2022; Ichou & Wallace, 2019). Lower sick leave among immigrants may also be linked to them more often going to work while sick because they experience more pressure and are afraid of losing their job if they report in sick (Ugreninov, 2023).

On the other hand, immigrants, especially those from Country Group 2, are overrepresented in jobs with more physically burdensome work tasks and a working environment that is harmful to their health (Hansen et al., 2014; With, 2019). This applies, for example, to many of the occupations within cleaning, retail and transportation. Demanding working conditions

can negatively impact the health of immigrants and contribute to higher sick leave and withdrawal from the labour market (I. Brekke & Schone, 2014). There is also a question of whether those who immigrate to Norway as adults have, to some extent, lower life expectancy than other people of the same age in Norway. This may be due to circumstances related to their upbringing and lifestyle, and when viewed in this context, life expectancy is partly in line with the country which they immigrated from. This can also be associated with stress related to their living conditions and life situation after immigrating, and burdensome working conditions (Kjøllestad et al., 2023; With, 2019).

Sick leave, and especially long-term sick leave, is associated with a significant risk of ending up outside the workforce. This risk is higher for immigrants than the rest of the population. Among immigrants, 53 per cent return to work within five years after long-term sick leave, compared to 64 per cent in the rest of the population (A. S. Andersen, 2018). The probability of falling out of the labour market after a longer period of illness is higher among immigrant men than immigrant women. This probability also varies according to occupation and industry, and is, for example highest among people on long-term sick leave who work within accommodation and hospitality.

Leave

In contrast to many other countries, high employment among both women and men contributes to overall high employment in Norway. High employment and gender equality shall be ensured through policies such as good welfare and parental leave schemes and full access to kindergarten places. However, the manner in which family policy schemes actually influence priorities and choices when establishing a family and working is a different question. As we have seen, there are major differences between immigrant groups and the population in general when concerning labour market participation, and this is particularly low for refugee women. This is influenced by many factors, such as level of education and work experience, socioeconomic situation of parents, family-related choices and priorities.

A Statistics Norway report from 2015 showed that women with immigrant backgrounds are now in the majority among those who take higher education, but that they also wait longer to return to work after childbirth. Women without immigrant backgrounds were the largest group who returned to work two years after giving birth, followed by women born in Norway to immigrant parents. Immigrant women made up the smallest proportion who were back at work within two years, however a significantly larger proportion were back at work after five years (Statistics Norway, 2015).

The statistics show that women born in Norway to immigrant parents have children slightly later than their mothers and other immigrant women. We also see that there are differences in the degree to which both adults in a couple are working when looking at immigration category and country of origin (Kirkeberg et al., 2019). If we look at people born in Norway to immigrant parents, the proportion with two parents in the workforce is lowest among people born in Norway with backgrounds from Turkey and Pakistan, and highest among Norwegian-born people with backgrounds from Vietnam and India. This applies to both

couples with and without children. Among people aged 25-39 born in Norway with Pakistani backgrounds who live in households with children, 59 per cent have two or more people in the workforce, while this applies to 53 per cent among people born in Norway with Turkish immigrant parents. In comparison, the corresponding proportion among their peers without immigrant backgrounds was 83 per cent, and 86 per cent among people born in Norway with backgrounds from Vietnam and India (Kirkeberg et al., 2019).

There are also differences when it comes to receiving the parental benefit and use of the father's share of parental leave (father's quota). Fathers with immigrant backgrounds use the father's quota less than others, and access the parental benefit to a lesser extent, however this proportion has increased. On average, immigrant fathers claimed 28 days of the parental benefit in 2017, while fathers in the population at large claimed 45 days (Statistics Norway, 2019b). In 2016, 77 per cent of immigrant fathers used the father's quota, while this figure was 89 per cent of fathers in the population at large (Statistics Norway, 2018). There were significant differences between different groups of immigrants. Fathers from EU countries in Eastern Europe, Africa and Asia used the fewest days and claimed the least parental benefit, while fathers from North America, Oceania and Western Europe used the most days and claimed the most parental benefit. The differences vary according to country of origin, period of residence in Norway, income, education, age and number of children.

There are significant differences in attitudes and practices when it comes to combining family and work between different groups of immigrants, and between immigrants and people born in Norway to immigrant parents. The Norwegian welfare system places strong emphasis on parental responsibilities, leave entitlements, etc. being provided to both parents, and that all parents shall have good conditions for participating in the labour market, across genders and other factors. Traditional values and gender roles can be barriers to women's labour market participation (Orupabo and Drange, 2015).

7. Summary

7.1. How to measure ethnic diversity and inclusion in the labour market?

The demand for labour in Norway will increase in the future, and a key political objective is that more people will participate in the labour market. We also know that immigrants are underrepresented in the labour market, and that they encounter a number of barriers when entering the workforce. At present, there is comprehensive research literature and detailed data on people with immigrant backgrounds in various phases of the labour market. There is also increasingly more and up-to-date knowledge about ethnic diversity, inclusion, equality and discrimination in the labour market. While we see an ever-increasing focus on these topics in Norwegian and international research, there is a need to systematize the knowledge that is currently available. Ethnic diversity and inclusion in the labour market are complex phenomena that have many dimensions, and therefore cannot be directly measured by simply using a few parameters. This report therefore proposes a set of indicators that will provide a basis for measuring the status and development trends of ethnic diversity and inclusion in the Norwegian labour market.

With the help of the set of indicators we have compiled information about the situation in the labour market for different groups, both with and without immigrant backgrounds. This has provided a basis upon which to identify which groups are the most vulnerable and the most widespread barriers to participation. The set of indicators has also been used, and can be used, to show variation in different parts of the labour market, for example between sectors or industries, as well as developments in different aspects of ethnic diversity and inclusion over time.

Another important objective of the report was to identify areas in which more knowledge is required and provide recommendations for future work with the indicators. This may include the need to collect new data, more detailed statistics based on existing data sources or more research into the mechanisms behind the development of the indicators. These aspects, and not least the main features associated with the status and development trends of the indicators for ethnic diversity and inclusion in the labour market, are summarised in detail below.

7.2. What do the indicators show?

More diversity, but also a more divided labour market

Norwegian society is becoming increasingly more diverse. The proportion of people with an immigrant background in Norway has tripled over the past 20 years. This development has also brought with it an increasing number and proportion of employees with immigrant backgrounds working in Norwegian businesses. In 2022, immigrants accounted for 19 per cent of all employees in Norway, compared to 6 per cent in 2001. At the same time, the proportion of immigrants who were employed in 2022 (69 per cent) was lower than in the rest of the population (80 per cent), which indicates that immigrants are underrepresented in the labour market. There are significant differences in employment rates between different immigrant groups, and the difference in employment rates between women and men is greater than in the population at large. The higher the level of education, the higher the employment rate.

In addition to examining the proportion of immigrants in the labour market as a whole, the report has highlighted how they are represented in different parts of the Norwegian labour market. The distribution is uneven along several dimensions, for example between different sectors, occupations, industries and regions.

In relative terms, there are fewer employees with immigrant backgrounds among employees in the public sector than in the private sector. Three out of four immigrants worked in the private sector in 2022, compared to two out of three in the rest of the population. If we look more closely at the different entities in the government sector, we find significant variation in the proportion of immigrants. While state research and educational institutions have a high and increasing proportion of immigrants among their employees (26 per cent in 2022), the proportion of immigrants working in Norwegian government ministries is significantly lower (7 per cent in 2022). In the public sector, there is also a stronger link between the size of the business and ethnic diversity, and the proportion of immigrants is clearly lower in smaller businesses with less than 100 employees.

Immigrants are overrepresented in occupations for which there are not normally strong requirements for formal qualifications. These are, for example, occupations within sales, nursing and care services, or tradespeople and construction workers. In 2022, 68 per cent of immigrants and 45 per cent of the rest of the population worked in these types of jobs, and these figures have remained almost unchanged since 2015.

There is also stronger differentiation and bifurcation in the labour market when concerning the industries that immigrants and the rest of the population work in. Immigrants are responsible for a large part of the growth in several industries in which we can also see that there are fewer people without immigrant backgrounds. This applies, for example, to accommodation, hospitality, transportation, building and construction and cleaning.

The report also shows that immigrants are disproportionately represented in the workplaces in different counties, including when taking account how the immigrant population is spread among different regions in the country.

The disparities in representation described above, and which we addressed in more detail in Chapter 5, are closely linked to the results of many of the indicators of inclusion in the labour market (Chapter 6). Working conditions, pay levels and working environment can vary significantly between different parts of the labour market. As we have seen, occupations and industries with a high proportion of immigrants are also characterized to a greater extent by business cycles, temporary work, part-time work and physically or mentally demanding work than other occupations and industries.

Immigrants encounter multiple barriers to inclusion at work

Research identifies many possible reasons for why people with immigrant backgrounds are underrepresented in the labour market in general, and in some parts of the labour market in particular.

The ***educational background*** of immigrants is one such important factor. The level of education, field of education and whether the education was taken in Norway all have an impact on the probability of being in employment. There is also a close correlation between educational background and the types of occupations and sectors in which immigrants obtain employment. For example, there is a relatively higher number of immigrants with a Norwegian university education who work in the public sector, while the private sector more commonly employs immigrants who completed their higher education abroad. In other words, immigrants can encounter both barriers related to a lack of formal qualifications, and obstacles related to a mismatch between the skills they bring with them and what is in demand in the Norwegian labour market.

Limited ***Norwegian language skills*** represents another key barrier to inclusion in the workforce. Figures from 2016 show that about half of immigrants consider their Norwegian language skills to be good, however there is currently no updated and comprehensive overview of the immigrant population's Norwegian language skills.

Immigrants are more susceptible to ***discrimination*** in hiring than the majority population. In 2021, one in four immigrants stated that they experienced unlawful differential treatment when looking for work. This figure was 7 per cent for the rest of the population. Research suggests that minority characteristics such as skin colour, religiosity, or name are among the main causes of discrimination when entering the labour market.

Other potential barriers to employment and inclusion may be related to health, family situation and caregiving tasks at home. Barriers may also arise in the form of employer needs, business cycles or other local labour market conditions.

The same factors that are barriers when entering the labour market can also have a negative effect on the inclusion of immigrants in the workplace following employment. For example, limited Norwegian language skills or discrimination can result in a more uncertain connection to the workforce, poorer opportunities for wage and career development, premature withdrawal from the labour market and long-term exclusion.

The current knowledge base for many of the barriers referred to above is fragmented. This is partly due to the fact that it is challenging to measure the scope of the various barriers. The measurements which are currently available are often based on subjective assessments, for example with regard to Norwegian language skills, health or perceived discrimination. More knowledge is therefore required about how the conditions described above vary between different groups with immigrant backgrounds, as well as how this has developed over time. We also do not know enough about the consequences that the various barriers to labour market integration have at a more overarching level. For example, more knowledge is required about the links between discrimination, unemployment and overqualification.

A more comprehensive overview of employer perspectives and efforts to promote inclusion and combat discrimination is also required, as well as the extent to which these efforts are proving effective. This includes the measures that are being implemented in the workplaces, how these measures vary between different types of businesses, and how the situation has changed over time. We need to clarify the skills requirements that employers in different parts of the labour market may have and how employers determine what skills and qualifications applicants will require.

Inclusion and equal opportunities?

An inclusive labour market is about employees experiencing a connection to the workplace, a sense of belonging, respect and support. It is also about all employees receiving equal opportunities for career development and reward for their work.

The report presents differences between immigrants and the rest of the population in most of the indicators of inclusion and equality in the workplace. Immigrants are overrepresented among those who work in low percentage positions, involuntary part-time and in temporary positions, are more often overqualified for the jobs they are employed in, have lower pay than other employees and poorer wage development over time. They also feel more physically and mentally exhausted after work, and are about twice as likely to experience discrimination and hate speech at work than the majority population.

The disparities described above apply more to some immigrant groups than others, and can be partly explained by a number of observable characteristics. For example, the disparities are reduced when comparing employees within the same occupation or with the same educational background, gender, age and period of residence. However, these disparities do not completely disappear. We therefore require more knowledge about other possible causes behind the inequalities we observe in pay and working conditions.

Fewer immigrants “at the top”

Immigrants are heavily underrepresented in management positions. Immigrants make up 19 per cent of all employees in the Norwegian labour market, while 10 per cent of those in management positions are immigrants. In large businesses with more than 100 employees, 8.6 per cent of the managers had immigrant backgrounds in 2022. In the public sector, we find that 5 per cent of politicians and other senior managers within the public administration are immigrants.

The proportion of management positions varies between immigrants with different backgrounds. The differences in reason for immigration, level of education, age or period of residence may partly explain why some immigrant groups are more strongly represented in management jobs than others. This underrepresentation may also be due to several factors in the labour market and barriers that immigrants encounter in the labour market. For example, there may be more limited opportunities for career development in some occupations than in others, or discrimination of ethnic minorities may occur in connection with promotions to management positions. Barriers and structural differences can also build up over time and through different stages of career development. At present we do not have enough information about the opportunities and barriers immigrants encounter when concerning career development. We also see that there is a need for more knowledge about various forms of ethnic discrimination in the labour market following employment, including in connection with promotion to management positions. It would also be of interest to take a closer look at political career paths and positions for immigrants when compared to the rest of the population.

Significant differences between different groups of immigrants

The immigrant population is a very diverse group when one looks at factors such as country of origin or reason for immigrating. Some immigrants come to Norway to work because they have skills that are in demand by Norwegian employers, while others come as refugees or to be reunited with their families. There is also variation in terms of level of education, age and period of residence between different parts of the immigrant population.

This diversity is also evident when comparing representation and inclusion in the labour market between different immigrant groups. Some immigrant groups do better and encounter fewer challenges than others when concerning inclusion in the labour market. When broken down by country of origin, Nordic immigrants, immigrants from North America and from EU countries before 2004 have about the same or better outcomes on most indicators as the majority population. Immigrants from these countries do not differ from the rest of the population in terms of representation in different sectors and occupational groups. We see minor differences between these immigrant groups and the majority population, even when we look at wage levels, degree of part-time work, temporary work and overqualification.

Other immigrant groups differentiate themselves more from the majority population and have much poorer outcomes on many of the indicators, and this is especially the case for

immigrants from Asia and Africa. Until 2022, virtually all refugees in Norway had backgrounds from these two world regions. The other immigrant group with results on several of the indicators are immigrants from countries in Eastern Europe that became EU members after 2004. People from the three aforementioned world regions work more often than other immigrants in occupations with fewer requirements for formal qualifications. They also have lower average wage levels and fewer opportunities for career development. In addition, immigrants from Asia and Africa are particularly overrepresented among part-time employees with low percentage positions and among temporary employees. This group also experiences having the most physically and mentally demanding working conditions, and has the highest risk of premature withdrawal from the labour market.

As shown above, more detailed knowledge and statistics are required about how the situation in the labour market varies between different immigrant groups to enable these differences to be better elucidated along more dimensions than simply through two country groups. For example, it would be both useful and of interest to have more statistics that separate figures for immigrants from new EU Member States in Eastern Europe from other countries in Country Group 1. When concerning immigrants from Country Group 2, there is a need to highlight differences between refugees and other immigrants (for example, labour immigrants) with backgrounds from these countries.

7.3. Knowledge requirements and future work with the indicators

In this report, we have compiled and structured selected statistics and research on ethnic diversity and inclusion of immigrants in the labour market. The framework includes various aspects of immigrants' representation and inclusion in the workforce, including barriers that may arise when entering the labour market, representation in different types of jobs, inclusion and equality in the workplace, as well as risk factors for withdrawal from the labour market and exclusion.

As we have seen, there are several areas in which there is currently limited knowledge, data and/or publicly available statistics that are updated and comparable over time. The development of a framework, which has emerged in indicators in the field, has thereby also enabled us to systematically identify knowledge requirements related to ethnic diversity and inclusion of immigrants in the labour market. The following knowledge requirements have been identified:

Not in employment

- More knowledge about those who are not in employment, including causes, progression, needs and effect of various measures designed to prevent and rectify.

Entering the labour market:

- More knowledge about the level of education among immigrants and their Norwegian-born children, and the extent to which they acquire the necessary skills and qualifications.
- Norwegian language skills in different parts of the immigrant population, and development in Norwegian language skills over time after having taken a Norwegian language test or with increased period of residence.
- Extent of formal Norwegian language requirements when hiring employees, and how this is now practiced in different occupations when compared to previous practices.
- More knowledge about the approval of foreign education that provides better insight into the barriers that are faced by different immigrant groups in this process, as well as international compilations of certification schemes.
- Health challenges and family situation/caregiving tasks at home that represent barriers to employment and inclusion in different immigrant groups.
- More knowledge about politics as a career path, and immigrant experiences with this.

At the workplace:

- More knowledge about the composition of ethnic diversity at different workplaces and how this composition has changed over time. This can be measured using different diversity indexes, for example, the Blau index.
- Developments over time in employer attitudes and measures for promoting inclusion and counteracting discrimination in different types of businesses and in different parts of the labour market.
- The extent, forms and causes of discrimination in the workplace following employment.
- More knowledge about how opportunities for competence and career development vary between different occupations and for different immigrant groups.
- Perceived barriers in connection with promotion to management positions, and which groups with immigrant backgrounds experience the biggest barriers.
- More detailed knowledge of work accidents among immigrants and the rest of the population in different parts of the labour market.
- Degree of trade unionism among different immigrant groups and how this has developed over time.

Withdrawal from the workforce:

- More detailed knowledge about the reasons behind people in different immigrant groups withdrawing from the workforce, and correlations between withdrawal from the workforce and health, working environment, pay, and other conditions at the workplace.

Now that a framework for indicators of ethnic diversity and inclusion of immigrants has been developed, we recommend a regular evaluation of the framework, as well as further development and updating of the indicators, to monitor the status and developments in the field.

As mentioned in the introduction, the indicators in the report are primarily based on two types of data sources: register data and regular sample surveys. The data for the indicators is updated periodically, however the frequency of the updates varies depending on the source of the data. Indicators based on register data are easier to update than sample surveys, because sample surveys are often time-consuming and expensive to carry out. Some of the indicators are publicly available in the form of annual, quarterly or monthly statistics published by Statistics Norway, NAV or other relevant actors.

Future knowledge development and more detailed figures pertaining to immigrants in the labour market will provide a basis for further developing the set of indicators. Regular updates of the indicators in the future, for example, every three years, will therefore contribute to providing a better overview of the status and development of ethnic diversity and inclusion of immigrants in the labour market. This will also assist in achieving the objective of having the set of the indicators, i.e. that it will always be socially relevant, linked to overarching political goals, flexible, and provide the most up-to-date overview possible of ethnic diversity and inclusion of people with immigrant backgrounds in the labour market.

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