

# THE INTRODUCTION SCHEME



IMDI

Integrerings- og mangfoldsdirektoratet

The purpose of the introduction programme is to ensure that those who need basic qualifications will receive the initiatives and guidance they need in order to get into education, training or a job.





## Settlement in a municipality – your rights and obligations concerning the introduction programme

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**The municipality is responsible for the introduction programme**, through which you will learn the Norwegian language and find out about Norwegian society. The programme will also help you to get into further education or training, or to get a job. The programme is a full-time arrangement, and similar rules apply to those of normal working life. You will be paid an introduction benefit, which is taxable. A deduction will be made from your benefit if you are absent without an approved reason. You are free to work outside programme hours – no deduction will be made from your benefit. Many who have completed the programme have found a job or a place in further education or training. The programme lasts for up to two years, but in special cases can be extended to three years.

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! The main principle of the Norwegian Introduction Act is that the introduction programme is intended for people with a refugee background between the ages of 18 and 55. In addition, those on the programme must be settled in a municipality by agreement with IMDi and the municipality. Certain other groups may also be covered by the programme. If you are uncertain about your rights, your municipality can provide you with more information.  
**NB:** You will lose the right to participate in the introduction programme and to receive other government assistance for refugees if you move to a different municipality before you have completed the introduction programme.



Mapping out  
your skills

**Do you know what you want to do in the future?** Or would you like to know more about the opportunities open to you in Norway? When you come to Norway, you will not necessarily be able to do the same sort of work that you did in your home country. The introduction programme helps you to clarify your qualifications and map out your career plans, so that you can set yourself appropriate goals for work, education and training. You can do this together with your tutor / programme adviser.



It is important that you keep any documentation about your education, training and work, both from your home country and Norway. You will need these documents and your CV when you apply for jobs.



**Do you want to use the skills you learnt in your home country, or do you want to get training in something new?** Whichever you choose, you need a plan drawn up just for you. The introduction programme's individual plan describes your needs for education and training and what initiatives or activities you need to undertake in order to achieve your goals. A programme adviser will be assigned to help you to create your own plan. One of the responsibilities of the programme adviser will be to co-ordinate the initiatives and services you need from the various organisations: employers, schools, public services, etc.



You need to set your own goals for education and training and for your career, and you will have to use your own experience and skills to achieve these goals. The municipality will work together with you to create an individual plan to help you on your way. How you succeed with your individual plan is primarily dependent on the effort you put in.

## Lessons in Norwegian and about Norwegian society



**The most important things you need to learn in order to live well in Norway** are the Norwegian language and to understand how Norwegian society functions. The municipality will offer a course in Norwegian, along with a number of lessons about Norwegian society in a language you understand. You must complete the course in Norwegian, as well as the lessons about Norwegian society, or take a test that shows that you have satisfactory knowledge of Norwegian. The municipality will inform you about how much education and training you have the right to receive and how much you are obliged to take in accordance with the law.



Many workplaces require that their employees have skills in Norwegian. The level of ability in the language that they require can vary. It also depends on the type of job. You can take a test to demonstrate your Norwegian skills. National language tests are held on a number of occasions every year. The municipality can provide more information about these tests.



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**The key to learning good Norwegian** is often to practise in a working environment. The municipalities are responsible for finding you somewhere to practise speaking Norwegian as part of the introduction programme. This gives you the opportunity to get to know local people and find out what it is like to work in your new municipality. Not all jobs are suitable places to practise speaking lots of Norwegian. Talk with your Norwegian teacher / programme adviser to find the place that suits you best as somewhere to practise your Norwegian. The place to practise your Norwegian does not need to be within the field of work you want to work in in the future.



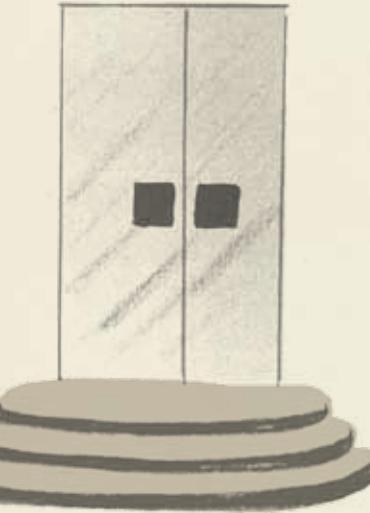
Language practice is an important part of learning. Practising in a workplace will help you to improve your Norwegian more quickly. The municipality will find you a place to practise. Different municipalities may have different arrangements. You should find out what is on offer in your municipality.

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Work experience

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**Do you know what work experience is?** It is an employment-based training programme designed to increase your chances of finding a job or continuing in education. You are most likely to be offered work experience towards the end of the introduction programme. Work experience can be organised either through the municipality or through NAV (the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Service). In order for work experience to be offered through NAV, you must be registered with NAV as a job-seeker. NAV can also provide you with guidance and information about various labour market measures. Work experience builds on the skills you have and should be linked to your individual plan. Work experience provides you with an opportunity to learn a job. It is not a “trial period” for a permanent job.

! Work experience is performed at a normal workplace, in either the private or the public sector. If you have special needs, work experience can also be performed within a sheltered environment. Take good care of all the documentation you receive. You will need it when applying for jobs.



**What can you do to make a contribution to the community where you live?** Many people have benefited from participating in various social networks, such as sports clubs and other groups. This has provided them with important contacts for the future. Additionally, many municipalities are home to other immigrants who have already completed the introduction programme and who can give you good advice. The Red Cross's Refugee Guide and other resources can help you meet these immigrants, as well as others who will be happy to tell you about different aspects of the local community. Check [www.frivillighetsportalen.no](http://www.frivillighetsportalen.no) to find something suitable for you, or talk with your programme adviser.

Many people in Norway are members of a number of voluntary organisations and groups. Find something that interests you, and join in activities in your local area.



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**You must play an active part in looking for a job.** It can take some time for a new immigrant to find a job in Norway. Many of those who have completed the introduction programme have found a job afterwards. Your municipality, in partnership with NAV and IMDi, can help you to reach the goals you have set yourself, but no one can guarantee you a job. You yourself are responsible for finding a job. You may have to accept a part-time job or temporary work for a number of years before you get a permanent job.



You may well meet many challenges before you get the job you want. All job experience is important, and helps to improve your skills and future opportunities.

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