

Information to asylum seekers in Norway

Applying for asylum means applying for protection.
In this brochure you can read what happens when you
apply for protection in Norway.



The information has been prepared by the Norwegian Organisation for Asylum Seekers (NOAS). NOAS is an independent organisation working for the rights of asylum seekers in Norway. NOAS provides information and guidance to asylum seekers on the asylum process in Norway.

NOAS employees have a duty of confidentiality. This means that what you tell us cannot be passed on to anyone else, nor to the authorities in Norway, without your consent.

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What does it mean to apply for protection?

Asylum means protection. You have the right to protection and residence permit in Norway if there is reason to believe that you will be in danger if you return to your home country. Who is entitled to protection, follows from international and Norwegian law.

If the authorities in your home country can protect you, or there are safe areas for you in your home country, you will usually not be entitled to protection in Norway.

The Directorate of Immigration (UDI) is part of the Norwegian authorities. UDI assesses and decides whether you have the right to protection and to live in Norway as a refugee. This is called the asylum process.

If you are not entitled to protection, UDI will consider whether you should get a residence permit on strong humanitarian grounds. Persons with a serious illness that cannot be treated in their home country, victims of human trafficking or other vulnerable persons may in some cases obtain a residence permit on strong humanitarian grounds. A resident permit on strong humanitarian grounds usually requires a passport from the home country.

ASYLUM IS A SPECIAL FORM OF RESIDENCE PERMIT GRANTED TO PERSONS WHO:

- have a well-founded fear of persecution due to ethnicity, descent, skin color, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or because of their political opinion, or
- are in real danger of being subjected to death penalty, torture or other inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment if they return to their country of origin.

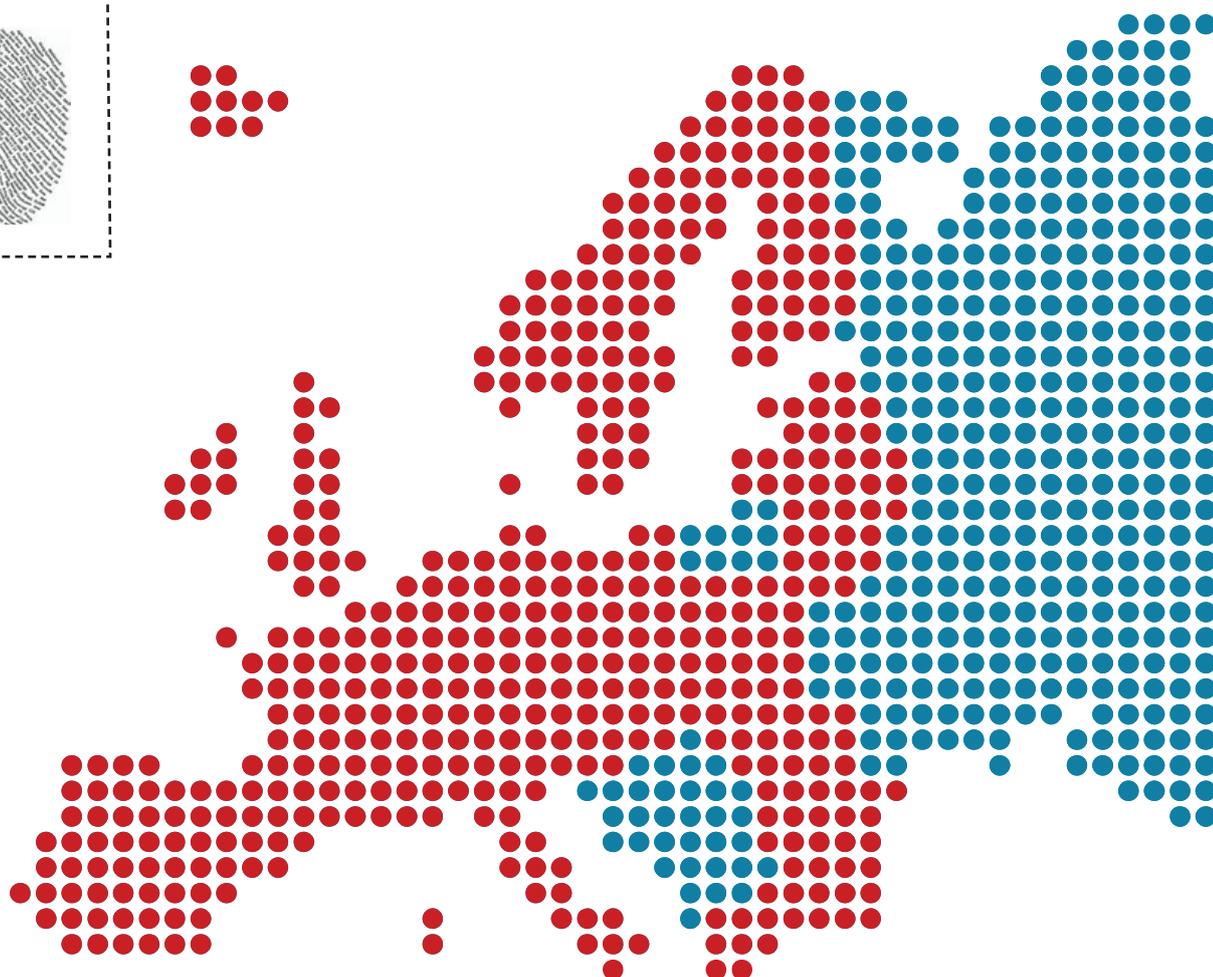
What is the Dublin Regulation?

Not everyone gets their asylum application processed in Norway. Norway cooperates with other European countries in processing asylum applications. This is in accordance with the Dublin Regulation.

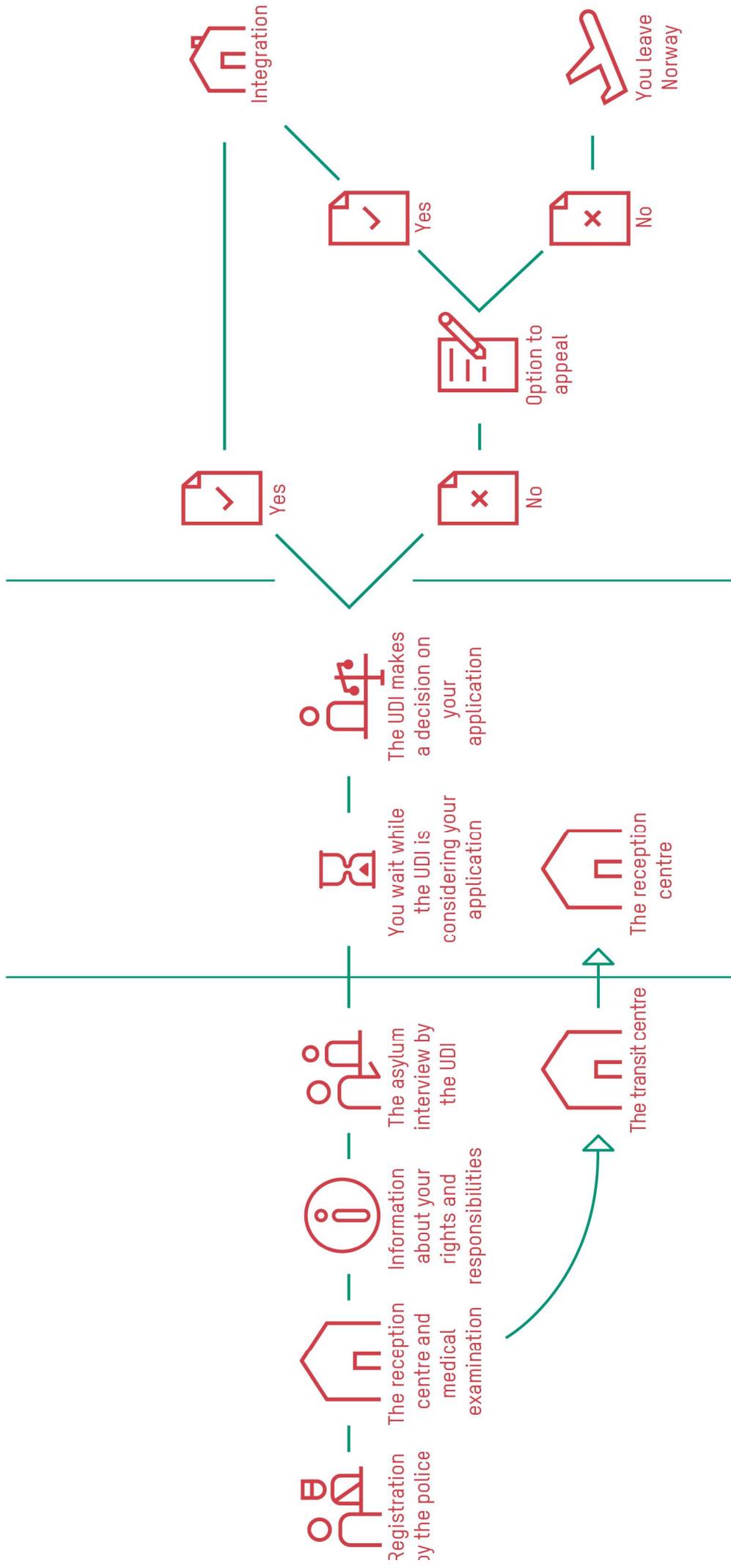
Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Switzerland and all EU countries are cooperating under the Dublin regulation. Your application may be processed in another Dublin country, if you in the other country:

- have close family member(s): spouse and/or children under 18 years
- or have a visa or residence permit
- or have entered without permission or been staying for five months or more
- or have applied for asylum

You can get more information on the Dublin regulation from NOAS.

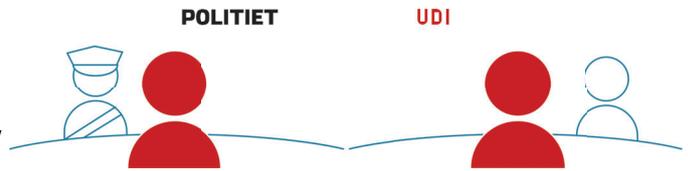


The asylum process



Illustrasjon: UDI

The asylum interview



The most important information in your asylum case is the information you provide yourself. You are responsible for providing the Norwegian authorities with the information necessary to assess your need for protection.

In the asylum process, you first meet with the police. The police register important information about you, and forward the information to UDI. In some cases, the police will conduct a thorough interview with you, on behalf of UDI. This is an asylum interview. You will be clearly notified if the police interview will be the only interview in your case. In most cases, UDI conducts the asylum interview. NOAS can help you prepare for the asylum interview.

The asylum interview is your most important opportunity to explain about yourself and why you apply for protection in Norway. The information that you give during the asylum interview may be the most important information for UDI when assessing your asylum application. It is therefore important that you prepare well for the asylum interview.

UDI will make an audio recording of the asylum interview. UDI also writes a report from the interview, of which you can get a copy.

You are obligated to tell the truth. You must not hide or withhold information about yourself or why you believe you might be in danger in your home country. If you deliberately provide incorrect information, this may give grounds for rejection and expulsion.

If, after the interview, you receive new information that may be important to your asylum case or you remember something important that you forgot to tell during the interview, you must notify UDI.

If possible, you are obliged to give identity documents to the police during registration or later at the nearest police station. You should request a copy of the documents and a receipt. If you do not have a passport or other identity documents, you can try to have them sent to you in Norway. Unless you risk persecution from the authorities in your home country, the Norwegian authorities may request that you try to obtain identity documents through your home country's embassy.

You can also send important information and copies of documents to UDI. Write a brief explanation, preferably in Norwegian or English. UDI translate what is necessary for the assessment of your case. Mark letters and documents with your name and your DUF number.



Important advice for the asylum interview

- Do not be afraid to speak openly about yourself! Anyone working with your case and the interpreters have a duty of confidentiality.
- Explain as detailed as possible what has happened to you and why you had to leave your home country. Details can be important.
- Explain if there are specific reasons why you believe that you in particular would be in danger if you had to go home.
- Tell the truth, the way you have experienced and remember events. If you intentionally provide incorrect information, it may give grounds for rejection and expulsion.
- Do not hide or hold back important information about yourself and why you are seeking protection.
- You may notify the interviewer if there are issues that you find particularly difficult to talk about. Explain as well as you can, even though it might be difficult.
- Take your time and try to reply as best you can to any question
- Sometimes it can be difficult to remember. This is completely normal. If you get asked something you do not know or do not remember, it is okay to say so.
- If you have documents concerning your need for protection or your health, bring them to the interview.
- If you prefer a female or male interviewer and interpreter, you may request this in advance
- If you do not understand the interpreter, or the interpreter appears not to understand you, do not be afraid to say so.



What will the UDI consider in your asylum case?

Identity

The police and UDI must have correct information about who you are and where you come from. You have a duty to do your best to clarify your identity. If there are doubts about your identity, or you intentionally give incorrect information, your rights in Norway may be weakened. It can also give grounds for rejection and expulsion.

Hand in your passport or other identity documents if you can. The police and UDI will ask questions about your home, your family, your education and work. The police can also investigate your luggage, your phone and any social media you use. They can test your spoken language to verify where you come from.

Family

Information about your family may be important for establishing your identity or whether your case should be considered according to the Dublin regulation. It will also be important if you get a residence permit and later on want to apply for family members to visit you or come and live with you in Norway.

Your own situation

UDI assesses each case individually. During the asylum interview you have to explain if there is anything special about you that puts you particularly at risk. Don't be afraid to talk openly about yourself. Those who work with your case have a duty of confidentiality and cannot give your information to anyone not working on your case.

Your reason(s) for applying for protection

UDI already know the situation in your home country. However, you are the one who knows best what has happened to you and why you are applying for protection in Norway. You should explain - as accurately as you can - the events that made you leave your home country and why you think it might be dangerous for you to go back. Details may be important. Tell the truth, the way you have experienced and remember events.

Future risk

Your need for protection will be considered for the future. UDI needs as much information as possible from you, in order to assess what may happen to you if you return home. You must explain as concretely as possible what you fear might happen to you in your home country.

If, in the future, you can settle in a safe area in your home country, or if the authorities there can protect you, you will usually not be entitled to protection in Norway

Children's situation and perspective

If you have children under the age of 18, information about your child is important. The child may have a need for protection of its own. It is important that you explain the child's situation. UDI should always consider the best interest of the child.

Children have the right to be heard in the asylum process. Children who apply for protection in Norway together with their parents, can meet with UDI if they want to. The child decides whether his/her mother, father or a guardian should be present when talking to UDI. It is important that the child feels safe during the conversation and understands why UDI wants to talk to him/her. UDI wants to know how the child feels, what the child has experienced and thinks about his/her situation and future.

Information on health or other forms of vulnerability

If you have health problems or you feel vulnerable for other reasons, it is important to say so. You should inform UDI of any serious health problems and, if possible, obtain a health certificate from a doctor or another health care professional. UDI assesses all information that is relevant to your need for protection, including health, humanitarian and social issues.

If you have experiences or issues that are difficult for you to talk about, just say so. Explain as best you can, even if you find it difficult. It may be important for your case.

Norwegian authorities consider whether you have special needs because of health or vulnerability in the asylum process. Adjustments can be made for the asylum interview or accommodation.

Answer to your asylum application

Once UDI has processed your asylum application, they send a written decision to you or to your lawyer. The decision letter from UDI always contains important information. UDI, the police or the lawyer can explain the content of the decision letter.

You can read about the answers you may get on your asylum application:

Residence permit as a refugee

If UDI considers that you will be in danger in your home country, you will be granted protection and residence permit as a refugee in Norway. You will receive a letter about the rights and obligations that follow from the residence permit. You will be offered a place to stay and help to integrate into Norwegian society. The permit may be renewed or made permanent upon application.

Residence permit on strong humanitarian grounds

If you are not entitled to protection, you may still be granted a residence permit on strong humanitarian grounds, or if you have a special affiliation to Norway. Such residence permits are granted only in exceptional cases, and usually require a passport from the home country. Persons who are very seriously ill, victims of human trafficking or someone with strong ties to Norway, may in some cases be granted residence permit on strong humanitarian grounds. The permit may be renewed or made permanent upon application.



CONFIDENTIALITY

Anyone working with your asylum case has a duty of confidentiality. This means that they cannot share information about you or your asylum application with anyone not working on your case.

Limited residence permit

In some cases UDI may grant a limited residence permit. This could mean that the permit is limited to a short time only and entails fewer rights than other permits. You may be required to provide a valid passport in order to renew the permit or receive a permit without limitation.

UDI decides that another Dublin country should process your asylum application

If another European country is responsible for your asylum case, UDI will normally deny processing your application in Norway. You will receive a decision from UDI that you must go to the country responsible for your asylum case. The police will organize the transfer to the responsible country.

UDI rejects your asylum application

If UDI finds that you will not be in any particular danger, or you may be protected by your home countries' authorities or that you can settle in a safe area in your home country, you are not entitled to protection. Your application for asylum will be rejected.

The appeal process

If UDI rejects your application for asylum, or decides to send you to another Dublin country the Dublin regulation, a lawyer will be appointed for you.

The lawyer will contact you, explain the UDI decision and help you appeal the decision, if you wish to do so. If UDI do not change their decision, the case is sent to the Immigration Appeals Board (UNE). UNE reviews UDI's decision to see if it is correct.

UDI denies processing your asylum application

If you have a right to stay in another, safe country, UDI may deny processing your application for protection in Norway. You have the right to appeal, but will not be appointed a lawyer.

Decision by the Immigration Appeals Board (UNE)

UNE processes appeals against UDI decisions. UNE may change a decision from UDI and grant you a residence permit. UNE may also reject the appeal. A rejection from UNE usually means that you are obliged to leave Norway within a certain time. You can apply for assistance and financial support from the IOM for your return. If you do not leave, the police can send you to your home country.

IOM – International Organization for Migration

IOM is an international organisation under the United Nations (UN). IOM provides information and assistance to persons returning to their home country, or travelling to another country where they have a residence permit.

In order to travel with IOM you must have a valid passport or another travel document issued by the authorities in your home country. If you do not have a valid passport or travel document, IOM can help you apply for it from your nearest embassy or consulate.

IOM can pay for tickets and provide financial and practical support in your home country. This can ease the situation for you in the beginning, if you are returning home. You can get more information on returning home from IOM, from UDI or from the staff at the reception centre.



Your rights and obligations as an asylum seeker

You have the right to receive information and guidance from NOAS

NOAS provides information and guidance in your own language or a language you understand well. You will meet NOAS shortly after applying for protection in Norway. You will be informed about your rights and obligations as an asylum seeker, and help to prepare for the asylum interview. You can ask questions concerning your own case and situation, and help in preparing for the asylum process ahead. You may ask to talk specifically to a man or a woman at NOAS, if you prefer.

You have the right to an interpreter

You have the right to an interpreter who speaks your language or a language you know well. The interpreter's only responsibility is to interpret between you and the ones you meet in the asylum process in Norway. The interpreter has a duty of confidentiality. If you have trouble understanding the interpreter or you cannot explain yourself well through the interpreter, it is important that you say so. If you prefer a male or female interpreter, you may request this at NOAS or others you meet in the asylum process.

You are entitled to healthcare

You are entitled to healthcare while you are in the asylum process in Norway. Children under the age of 16 get free health care. Persons over the age of 16 must usually pay a fee. If you need a specialist, you may apply for UDI to cover the expenses.

All asylum seekers will be examined for tuberculosis at a clinic or a hospital. You can talk to the staff at the clinic if you have any health problems or questions on health related issues. Health professionals have a duty of confidentiality and can only give your information to others if you request them to do so.

Children who have not received vaccines, will be offered to get them at the hospital or clinic.

Children have the right to attend school

Children aged 6 to 16 years who are to stay longer than 3 months in Norway have a right and an obligation to attend school. Children aged 16 to 18 can apply for schooling while in the asylum process.

You have the right to stay in a reception center

Staying in a reception center is voluntary and free of charge. UDI decides in which reception center you may stay. If you have special reception needs, you can tell NOAS, health professionals or employees at the reception center.

If you choose not to stay in a reception center, you must give your address and other contact information to UDI. If you live elsewhere, such as with your family or friends in Norway, you will normally not receive any financial support.

You may have the right to work while in the asylum process

You can apply for a temporary work permit while your asylum application is being processed. It usually requires having handed in a valid passport. You will not be granted a work permit if your case is processed under the Dublin regulation.

You have the right to a lawyer and to appeal a rejection

If your asylum application is rejected, or UDI conclude that you should be transferred to another European country under the Dublin regulation, you have the right to appeal. A lawyer will be appointed for you, and your lawyer will contact you to explain UDI's decision and why your application has been rejected. You do not have to pay the lawyer.

If you wish to appeal, your lawyer will write an appeal letter and help you send any additional information and documents in your case. If you specifically prefer a male or female lawyer, you can tell NOAS or others you encounter in the asylum process.

Family reunion

If you get a residence permit in Norway, your spouse and children under the age of 18 may be entitled to come to Norway to live with you. If you get a residence permit as a refugee, your family members should file an application within six months.

You are obliged to contribute to clarify your identity

You have an obligation to inform Norwegian authorities who you are and where you come from. If you have, or you can obtain documents that confirm your identity, you must deliver them to the police as soon as possible.

You are obliged to provide correct information

Your explanation is important for UDI assessment of your asylum application. If you intentionally give incorrect information, it can give grounds for rejection and expulsion. Expulsion means that you must leave Norway and that you can be denied entry to Norway and other European countries for a certain period of time.

Norwegian authorities may cancel or withdraw any residence permit if it is later discovered that you have provided incorrect information.

You are obliged to provide your new address if you move

You must notify the reception center staff, and the police at your new location if you move out from a reception centre. If you do not provide a new address, your asylum case may be dropped before being processed and your stay in Norway may be regarded as illegal.

You are obliged to follow Norwegian law

If you violate Norwegian law, you can be expelled from Norway, and refused re-entry into Norway and other European countries. If you commit criminal acts, your asylum application will be handled quickly and you can be sent from Norway if you are not entitled to protection.

You are obliged to leave Norway if you have a final rejection

If you receive a final rejection of your asylum application, you must leave within the time limit set by the police. After the time limit, you are no longer permitted to stay in Norway and you risk being arrested by the police.

You have a possibility to withdraw your asylum application

You may at any time withdraw your asylum application. You can apply for assistance and financial support from IOM for returning home, if you wish to do so.

Useful addresses

AUTHORITIES:

Police Immigration Unit (PU)

Postal address: PO Box 2095 Vika,
0125 Oslo

Visiting address: Økernveien 11-13,
0653 Oslo

Phone: 22 34 24 00

www.politiet.no

The Directorate of Immigration (UDI)

Postal address: PO Box 2098 Vika,
0125 Oslo

Phone: 23 35 16 00

www.udi.no

Immigration Appeals Board (UNE)

Postal address: The Immigration
Appeals Board, PO Box 2108 Vika,
0125 Oslo

Visiting address: Stenersgt. 1B / C,
0034 Oslo

Phone: 21 08 50 00

www.une.no

The Expert Team for the Prevention of Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation

can help if you are subjected to forced
marriage or other honor-related violence

Tel: 478 09 050

E-mail: kompetanseteamet@bufdir.no

ORGANISATIONS

Norwegian organisation for asylum seekers (NOAS)

provides information and guidance and free legal assistance to asylum seekers in Norway. Two branches:

NOAS information and guidance for newly arrived asylum seekers:

Visiting address: Ankomstsenter
Østfold, Mosseveien 58, 1640 Råde
E-mail: noasinfo@noas.org

NOAS free legal aid and guidance if an asylum application has been rejected, family immigration:

Visit / postal address: Torggt. 22,
0183 Oslo
Phone: 22 36 56 60, fax: 22 36 56 61
E-mail: noas@noas.org

The Norwegian Red Cross Tracing and Messaging Service assists in restoring contact between people who have lost each other as a result of war, conflict, disaster or migration.
Visiting address: Hausmannsgt. 7,
0186 Oslo
Phone: +47 22 05 40 00
E-mail: tracing@redcross.no
www.rodekors.no/tilbudene/oppsporingstjenesten/

SEIF

free practical and legal assistance for family reunification, violence in close relations, school, work.
Oslo, Kristiansand, Stavanger, Bergen, Ålesund og Trondheim.
See www.seif.no for more information.

Jussbuss

free legal aid, including family reunion or expulsion cases. See www.jussbuss.no for more information.

Skeiv verden – «Queer world»

Network and practical assistance for LGBTI asylum seekers and minorities
Torggata 1, 0181 Oslo
Phone: 23 21 45 98/950 93 293
E-mail: post@skeivverden.no

ROSA

Helps persons victim of human trafficking
Karl Johans gate 16B, 0154 Oslo
Phone: 22 33 11 60

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

information and assistance for returns
Postal address: PO Box 8927
Youngstorget, 0028 Oslo
Visiting address: Skippergata 33, 0154 Oslo
E-mail: iomoslo@iom.int
Phone: 23 10 53 20
Fax: 23 10 53 23
www.iom.no

Norwegian Organization for Asylum Seekers (NOAS)

Torggata 22, 0183 Oslo
Phone: 22 36 56 60, fax: 22 36 56 61
E-mail: noas@noas.org
E-mail NOAS Information program: noasinfo@noas.org
www.noas.org