

# AIMISOLA

## **INTEGRAL ATTENTION TO THE IMMIGRANT WOMEN** **Formative itineraries for the Social and Labour Insertion**

Original title “AIMISOLA”: ATENCIÓN INTEGRAL PARA LAS MUJERES INMIGRANTES:  
Itinerarios formativos para la Inserción Social y Laboral. (Hereby named AIMISOLA)



Picture from the report: JOBSJANSEN by Rambøll

## About AIMISOLA

### INTEGRAL ATTENTION TO THE IMMIGRANT WOMEN Formative Itineraries for the Social and Labour Insertion

**Project partners:** Aimisola is a collaboration between Instituto de la Mujer, (Women Institute) ACUDEVA, (Association for the Defence of African Values in Madrid) el Instituto de Investigaciones Feministas de la Universidad Complutense (Institute of Feminist Research of Complutense University of Madrid) and Unidad de Igualdad de la Complutense (Equality Unity of Complutense University of Madrid), and the University of Bergen

**Target group:** Immigrant women in long-term unemployment living in Spain.

**Project outcomes:** The project is centred around the organising and creative documentation of 5 workshops delivered by the Spanish partner where the participants learn work and/or entrepreneurial skills (to better be included in Spanish society and workforce).

The Norwegian partner will deliver a best practice report including 5 -10 case studies of projects conducted or activities carried out in Norway that have been successful or educational in terms of integrating immigrant women into Norwegian work life. This report is the one you are now reading.

### Short Description of the Report

The aim of this report is to describe the current situation of immigrant women in Norway, and also to show how the process of integration of immigrant women in Norwegian work life works. The group of immigrant women is big and complex, and contains everything from immigrants who come to Norway to receive family immigration permit, work permit, study permit or asylum, as well as women born in Norway to immigrant parents.

The report will show the most successful measures aimed at women, but the main body of measures that handle integration of immigrant women in the working life in Norway is not limited to one gender. Several of the examples presented here are therefore relevant for both men and women.

The first part of the report shows statistics and facts about immigrants in Norway, which countries that are most heavily represented, the number of immigrants in Norway compared to other European countries, as well as the share of immigrant women who are unemployed. The second part of the report will briefly present an integrated proposal that attends to women's needs, in addition to a simple overview of some of the Norwegian systems aimed at integrating immigrant women in the Norwegian labour market. Part three of the report will show a sample of measures that have proven to be effective in this respect.

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# Contents

## **2:** Short Description of the Report

## **4:** Facts

Immigrant Population in Norway  
Country Background Comparison  
Comparison to Europe  
Immigrant Women and Unemployment  
Norwegian Welfare System  
Obstacles to Collaboration with Potential Employers  
Overall Focus  
The Field of Central Players

## **7:** Best Practice Examples

The Introduction Programme  
The Job Opportunity  
*Case:* Women in Lørenskog  
*Case:* New Chance in Bergen  
Stella Read Cross Centre  
Global Future  
The Norwegian Centre for Multicultural Value Creation (NSFV)

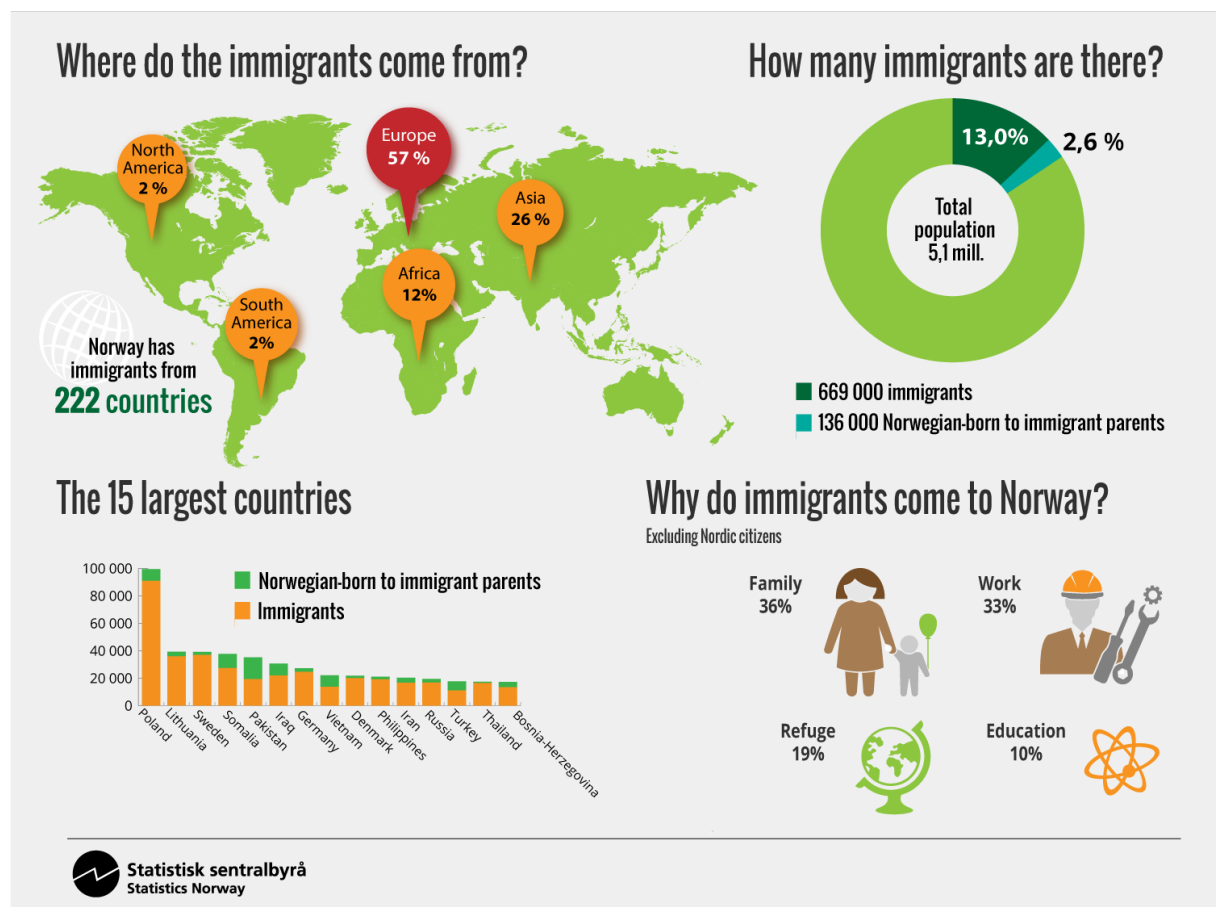
## **15:** References

# Facts

## Immigrant Population in Norway

**Persons with immigrant background comprise both immigrants and people born in Norway to immigrant parents.**

- As of 1. January 2015, there were 669 000 immigrants and 136 000 Norwegian-born to immigrant parents, altogether approximately 805 000 people.
- These two groups amount to 13 and 2,6 percent of Norway's population respectively.
- 350 000 or 57 percent of all immigrants have European background, while among the people born in Norway to immigrant parents, 68 percent have background from countries in Asia and Africa.
- Among immigrants from countries outside Europe, 180 000 have background from Asia, 74 000 from Africa and 20 000 from South, Central and North America.
- Among the Norwegians born to immigrant parents, 63 000 have background in Asia, 23 000 in Africa and 13 000 in countries in Eastern Europe that are outside the EU.



## Population figures and growth through the immigration period

The total population of Norway was 5 165 800 on 1 January 2015.

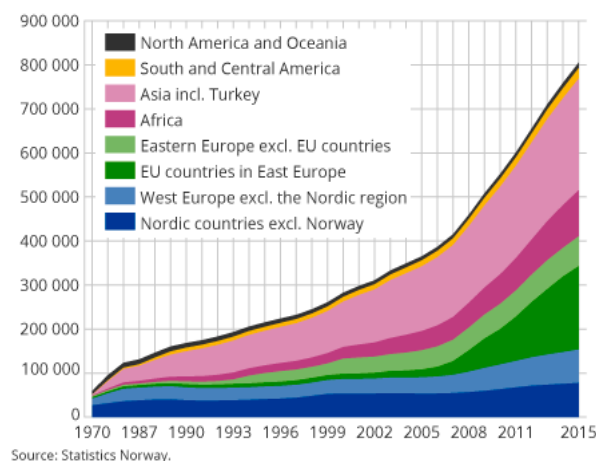
- The total population in Norway will be 6,3 million in 2040.
- It is likely that the number of immigrants will increase from 633 100 in 2014 to slightly under 1,3 million in 2040.
- The number of persons born in Norway to immigrant parents will probably increase from 126 100 to around 390 000 in 2040.

Altogether these two groups will make up around 1,6 million, or 26 per cent of the total population in 2040. The numbers are from Statistics Norway's population projections medium alternative (MMMM)<sup>i</sup>, which Statistics Norway consider as their main alternative and also as the most likely. There is, however, a high degree of uncertainty in the projected figures on how the population of immigrants will develop in the future, as they can vary considerably through time.

### Comparison by Country of origin

Figure 1 shows geographical distribution and number of immigrants and Norwegian-born to immigrant parents, by country of origin from 1 January 2015.

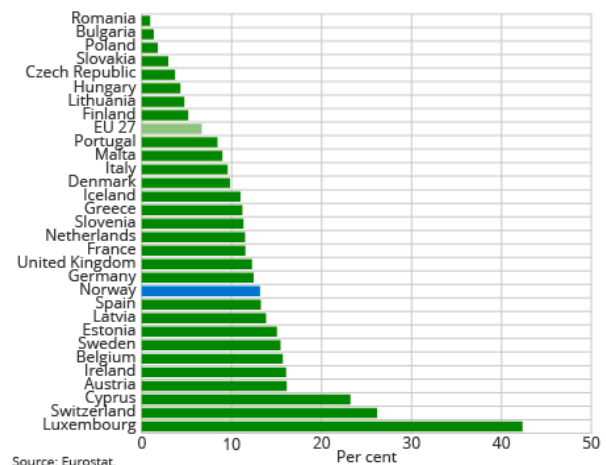
Figure 1. Immigrants and Norwegian-born to immigrant 2013 parents, by country of origin from 1 January 2015



### Comparison Europe

Figure 2 shows the share of foreign-born resident in Europe in 2013.

Figure 2. Share of foreign-born persons resident in Europe



## Female immigrants in Norway and unemployment rates

By Q2 of 2015 there were 30.375 women in Norway without any employment. 12.295 of these were immigrant women and 436 were second-generation immigrants (Norwegian-born to immigrant parents women).

## Norwegian Welfare System

Norway has an extremely well-developed welfare system. This report will not explore this in depth, but, to illustrate: everyone has the right to free education, and everyone has the right to free health care (subject to small user charge). At child birth families receive cash-for-care benefits. The cash-for-care benefit is given to parents who have a child between the ages of one and two that either does not attend, or only partially attends, a day-care centre that receives public subsidies. The cash-for-care benefit aids, the family economy, but can also be an obstacle to the process of integration since it leads to fewer incentives for women to go back to work soon after birth.

## Overall Focus

There is interplay of a number of factors in the efforts to integrate immigrant women in working life in Norway. The measures need to be adapted to every individual's own situation, needs, language competence and level of education. This work requires an integrated approach. The women might need help with everything from a day-care place or health-care offer to handling of cases in different public systems, as well as offers of education.

## The Field of Important Players

The field of important players in the immigration process is broad, and a coordinated approach across different sectors is necessary to deal with integration in working life. Many of the measures become successful due to good cross-sector collaboration. The public sector funds different measures and through public systems like employment offices and others, participants are recruited. Through close collaboration with the private sector and well-established industry and trade, one can get work training, workplaces and continuous observation. The education sector can offer courses, language training and necessary education. The non-profit sector is extremely important through single projects, social activity and a high degree of volunteer work. Below you will find a short presentation of The Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV) and The Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi).

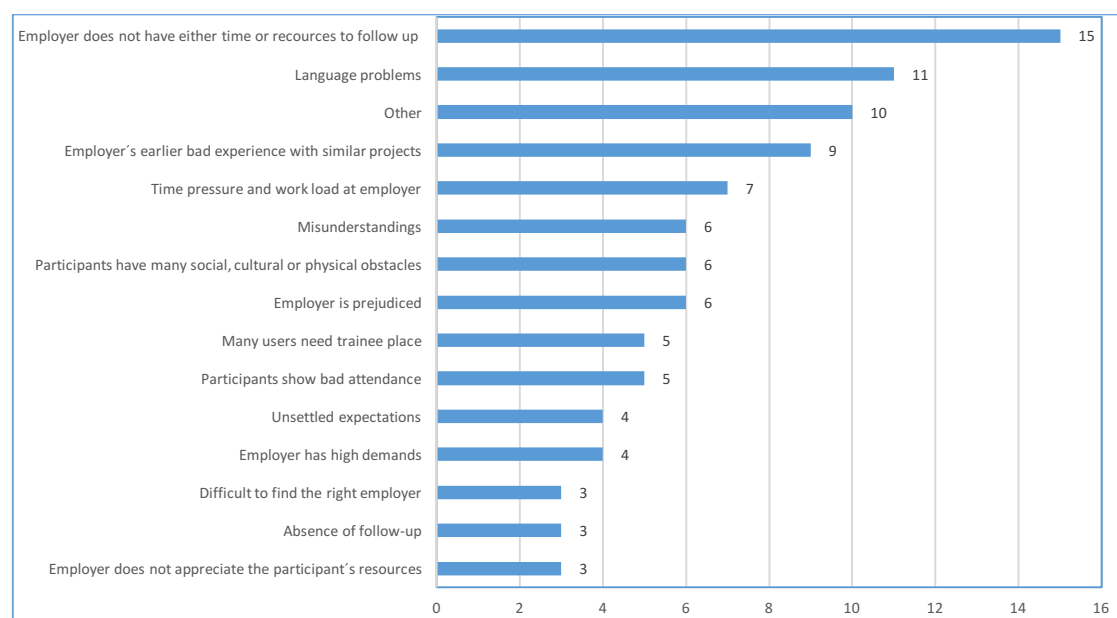
NAV is The Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration. There are local NAV offices in all Norwegian municipalities. The NAVs offices will normally be an arena of integration where NAVs employees and the municipalities' social care employees work together to find good solutions for their users. NAV manages one third of the government budget through arrangements like unemployment benefits, work assessment allowances, sickness benefits, retirement pensions, child benefits and cash-for-care benefits, and all citizens are users.

The Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi) is a driving force for the integration policy, subject to the Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion<sup>ii</sup>. IMDi is an administrative organ and a competence centre that aims to strengthen the municipalities', the sector government agencies' and other partners' integration and diversity competence by providing advice and implementing government policies. IMDi's tasks include cooperation with municipalities for settlement and Norwegian language tuition, introductory programmes to refugees and their families, which provide qualifications for the labour market or for education, as well as monitoring that the Introduction Act<sup>iii</sup> is followed.

## Obstacles to collaboration with employers

A survey from the project Jobbsjansen (Job Opportunity), conducted by Rambøll Management Consulting, shows what factors are normally considered to be obstacles to good cooperation with employers. Figure 3. illustrates the most common ones:

Figure 3: Obstacles to good collaboration with employers



## Best Practice Examples

The following pages will present some chosen measures available in Norway to facilitate the process of integrating immigrant women in the labour market. We have chosen to start with the Introduction Programme, which is obligatory in all municipalities in Norway, with an example from the non-profit sector. From IMDi's programme Jobbsjansen we will also show the cases *Women in Lørenskog* and *New Chance* in Bergen.

## The Introduction Programme

### Objective

The purpose of the Introduction programme is to improve refugees' opportunities to participate in employment and society. The programme gives participants basic Norwegian language skills and knowledge about Norwegian society and culture, and also helps them with further initiatives and the guidance they need in order to get a job.

### Background

The introduction programme was introduced in 2004 for refugees and their families. Refugees and their families who have been granted residence permit have a right and duty to complete the programme. Just over 20 000 refugees have participated in the programme since its start (as of 4 February, 2014).

**Target group**

The programme is intended for people with a refugee background, between the ages of 18 and 55, and their families, who have been granted asylum, residence permit on humanitarian grounds, resettlement, or have collective protection. It is also intended for refugees who are divorced, are victims of forced marriage, and have permanent residence permit. This settlement is valid only for the above-described groups, and only for people who reside in Norway and are settled in a municipality by agreement with IMDI and the municipality. The programme applies to 29 percent of all immigrants in Norway.

**Does not apply to:**

The programme does not apply to immigrant workers, the largest group of all non-Nordic immigrants (45 percent); persons with family immigration permit (32 percent of non-Nordic immigrants) with a Norwegian citizen or immigrants with permanent residence permit (data per 1. January 2013 collected from Statistics Norway); refugees that are granted permit, who have not settled in any municipality – at the time of writing approx. 5400 refugees. If one settles without assistance of the municipalities, one loses the right to the programme.

**Programme**

The process of building vocational qualifications will be as close to a normal working day and working life rules as possible, and there is financial funding related to participation in the programme. Refugees have a right and duty to 550 hours of Norwegian language tuition and 50 hours of lessons about Norwegian society. The programme is a full-time arrangement (30-37,5 hours) and lasts for up to two years. The municipalities are responsible for preparing the participant's individual career plan. The participants will be paid an introduction benefit, which is twice the social security base rate (lower for people under 25 years).

**Examples of activities from different phases of the introduction programme**

The programme stretches over four phases consisting of different training modules. Topics that are covered are as shown below:

- Norwegian language tuition
- The municipality offers lessons about Norwegian society in the user's native language, as well as an introduction to the local community
- Course in ICT (Information and communications technology)
- Conversations with their programme advisor and other people from the team
- Start and follow-up of approval procedures and translation of relevant documents
- Lessons about Norwegian education system and working life
- Language practice – The municipality will find the user somewhere to practise speaking Norwegian as part of the introduction programme. This gives the user the opportunity to get to know local people and find out what it is like to work in their new municipality.
- Optional courses
- Self-study language training
- Participation in NGOs: conversation practice
- Refugee guide
- Assessment of qualifications and previous education, followed by training and mapping a career plan
- Assistance with job application
- Offering work experience and Norwegian practice (partnership initiative between the municipality and NAV)
- Work experience and vocational training combined with work practice
- Normal education
- Normal qualification initiatives
- User specific and normal labour market measures organised by NAV
- Work

**Partners**

The introduction programme is based on partnership between the municipalities and NAV. Some municipalities have chosen to give the responsibility for the administration of the introduction programme to their local NAV office. IMDi provides a guide showing how the different municipalities administrate the introduction programme.



# Jobbsjansen ('Job Opportunity')

## Objective

The objective of this programme is to increase the employment of immigrants outside the labour force, with particular focus on stay-at-home women. Through individually adjusted tutoring programmes, Jobbsjansen will enhance the immigrants' qualifications to try to increase employment among those outside of the labour force, improve Norwegian language skills and give better knowledge about Norwegian society and culture. The principal concern is to get participants into work and education, but many of the projects also emphasise what may be described as other individual goals, such as increased self-esteem, coping, social belonging and being able to act as role models for their children.

## Background

The programme *Jobbsjansen* is a continuation of the pilot project *Ny Sjanse* ('New Chance'), which ran between 2005 and 2013. In 2013, 53 projects ran in 43 municipalities and city districts.

## Target group

The target group is all immigrants outside the labour market, between the ages of 18 and 55, who need basic qualifications and for whom the existing benefits do not apply. Most of the projects focus on stay-at-home immigrant women, who are not receiving social benefits or are financially taken care of. In addition, some projects have youth as their focus.

## Programme

The main elements of the programme are Norwegian language tuition, work experience, training in how to succeed on the labour market, computer skills and individual career guidance. Work-oriented training is an ambiguous concept, but one possible definition might be "building skills and qualifications through emphasis on work", where work is considered both as a goal and a means of achieving this goal. Many of the Jobbsjansen projects utilise combinations of qualification building. Participants may be offered Norwegian language classes, courses, other training opportunities or work experience. Many aim for the 'place then train' model, where early placement in the workplace, practical training and close monitoring are essential. This is based on the notion that learning and development are best achieved at work and in the environment where the tasks are performed. Individual assessment, supervision and motivation are also identified as key elements in the projects' approach to building vocational qualifications. There are four fundamental key factors in this process:

- Thorough assessment of participant
- Tailored programmes, involving a combination of training and practice
- Regular follow-up with participant
- Detailed follow-up with employers

## Collaborating partners

Jobbsjansen ('Job Opportunity') is a subsidy scheme administered by the Directorate for Integration and Diversity (IMDi) for the Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion (BLD). The individual municipality and city district that administer Jobbsjansen collaborate with a wide range of employers and with the local NAV offices.

## Evaluation

Jobbsjansen has great socio-economic value, in the sense that the participants can provide for themselves and contribute to the community. A prerequisite for successful work-oriented training is proper collaboration between employers. The projects believe that to achieve successful cooperation between the various service providers, the following elements are key: accessibility, flexibility, service-mindedness and problem solving. The projects must take into consideration the employer's daily activities and capacity, and follow up in a way that works for employers. Open dialogue and communication about the participants' qualifications and background, as well as the challenges that might arise along the way, are other criteria for success. Major obstacles that have been highlighted include the employer's lack of time and resources, in addition to language problems.

## Case: Women in Lørenskog

Jobbsjansen in Lørenskog has chosen to name its project “Women in Lørenskog” because it has focused solely on stay-at-home women since the beginning of 2011, as they aim to become specialists in this field.

- ***What do you emphasise in the process of building skills and qualifications for women?***

We start with a short skill mapping, and within two weeks we should have found a suitable work place for practical training for the participants. We send them to a work place early, without any prequalifications. This is possible because we have a good work place network in the municipality, which encompasses practical training in both public and private companies, some of which can hire participants with limited Norwegian language skills. Many of the participants have insufficient educational background and it is easier for them to learn the language in the working environment. Practical work training helps to build a social network and create understanding of the existing social norms, as well as insight into the labour market’s written and unwritten rules.

- ***How do you follow up the participants in their practical training?***

Once a week we send a supervisor to the working place to do a follow-up on how the tasks are being performed, and to give Norwegian language tuition and career advice. Every participant has a personal advisor who assists with task performance training and supports the supervisor in his work. All participants are offered a “Yes, I can” course, which helps them get to know and understand their own resources. Jobbsjansen has, in cooperation with the Introduction programme, developed a toolbox for follow-up at the working place. It uses a template, which describes the structure, frames and routines of the follow-up process, so that all participants are assessed by the same criteria. All Jobbsjansen’s supervisors have been trained to do motivational interviews. The length and scale of the the follow-up process varies widely from one participant to the other.

- ***You have a gradual training in working task performance. How does that work?***

We have chosen a gradual training model. When they start practical training, the participants move gradually from simple to more advanced working tasks. Thus, we avoid misunderstandings, create stability and generate initiatives. Practical training in child care, for instance, would begin by learning routines in the kitchen, then move to tasks involving children and their parents. The idea is to start with something simple and concrete and work your way up to more complicated tasks as the participants accumulate knowledge and master new skills.

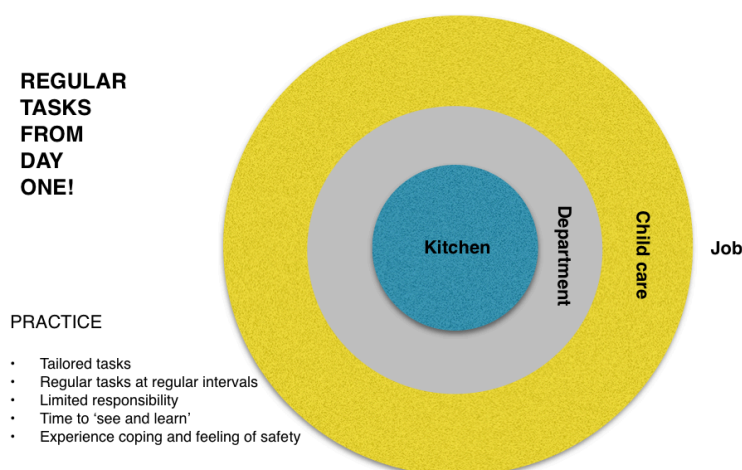


Illustration of the gradual training model used in the project *Women in Lørenskog*

The Lørenskog case is taken from Rambøll’s report *Jobbsjansen – Experience with good qualification training*

## Case: Ny Sjanse in Bergen

### Objective

Ny sjanse is a qualification centre for immigrants, located in downtown Bergen. The programme focuses on immigrants in need of basic qualification and a coordinated follow-up so that they can receive better chances to get a job.

### Background

The qualification centre was founded 10 years ago as a state-subsidised project, but was first implemented in the municipalities in 2008. Ny Sjanse is connected to the state-subsidised project Jobbsjansen. The project is municipal and organised under NAV. The qualification centre is administratively linked to NAV-Bergenhus. The project covers the whole city, so they receive referrals from all NAV offices in the Bergen municipality. Ny Sjanse has 14 employees, including one manager and one consultant with teaching and economic responsibilities. The other 12 are supervisors with responsibility for individual follow-up and teaching. Nine of the supervisors prepare the qualification programme in accordance with The Social Services Act<sup>iv</sup>, while three of the employees work with the state-subsidised qualification project Jobbsjansen.

### Target group

Their target group is immigrants with little or no working experience, insufficient school education, poor Norwegian language skills, physical or mental challenges, etc. Roughly 80 % of the participants are women, and most of the women are married with children. Ny Sjanse has participants who mainly come from refugee-producing countries like Iraq, Somalia, Eritrea, Palestine, but on the whole they come from over 30 different countries. In the selection procedure Ny Sjanse collaborates with NAV. There have been long waiting lists since 2006. As of today (September 2015) Ny Sjanse has 40 referrals on the waiting list. Appr. 350 participants have completed the programme so far.

### Programme

The participants have a hard time finding a job and need support in the process. This support comes in the form of qualification and career advice. The participants receive Norwegian language tuition, work practice, training in how to succeed on the labour market, computer literacy courses and individual advice. The project welcomes participants, even if they have poor Norwegian language skills, insufficient formal competence or lack of motivation. Ny Sjanse provides close monitoring and believes that work qualification can be achieved at the working place, even though the challenges for the individual participants can be overwhelming. In addition to thorough follow-up, the Ny Sjanse's staff is always available for both employers and participants.

### Collaborating partners

Ny Sjanse has a wide network of collaborating partners: Nygård school which offers Norwegian language courses, all departments at NAV, employment training providers, NGOs like The Red Cross, Kirkens Bymisjon<sup>v</sup>, the health sector, course organisers, and last, but not least, all employers within the public and private sectors.

### Evaluation

Ny Sjanse evaluates itself by its annual results, which is mainly reflected in the percentage of participants who have found a job. There are, nevertheless, other effects that come as a result of participation in the qualification programme, such as, for instance, improved Norwegian language skills, an expanded network, enhanced health, more knowledge and being better role models for children. These effects are not measured systematically, but a master student interviewed 10-12 participants in Bergen to document other effects of the programme, and could confirm that the positive effect goes far beyond the opportunity to get a job.

The programme has very few dropouts, and many participants give positive feedback. The general impression is that the programme has a good reputation in the immigrant community and this is one of the reasons why many want to apply. They appreciate the possibility to have one contact person, who can introduce them to companies and give them high quality career advice and help. Around 130 people got a job through the programme, but not all of the jobs were permanent. It can be challenging to keep an overview of the participants' future in cases where the job was not permanent.

# Stella Red Cross Centre

## Objective

Stella's purpose is to be a diversified centre focusing on women as an important resource. The centre has different offers that strengthen women's possibilities for self-realisation and participation in society. The offers are developed in accordance with the desires and needs of the participants, and will contribute to better mental and physical health, increased participation in the labour market, an upgrade of skills and deeper understanding of basic democratic rules in society and the labour market, as well as in the private and professional networks. The organisation is based on collaborative voluntary work with partners from the public sector. The centre facilitates greater application of women's skills in a working environment, both to increase women's sense of coping in their lives and also increase their experience of inherent value.

## Background

The centre for women opened in March 2012 in Oslo. The preparation work for the resource centre started in 2008, and after a while the Crown Princess Mette-Marit joined the project. It was at the request of immigrant women that The Red Cross in Oslo decided to start the women centre Stella. One of the most obvious challenges we face in the capital today is that the minority women are not included in the greater society and labour market. In addition to that, research shows that the minority group is especially vulnerable in terms of mental and physical health problems, material shortage and language barriers in their everyday lives. 49 % of the nation's immigrant women of non-western background live in Oslo and Akershus, and consequently the challenges are most pressing in the capital. Since March 2012 until December 2014 there have been 1155 registered participants and 150 active volunteers who work there. The average age of the participants is 35-50 years. The nationalities are mainly Somalian, Iranian, Iraqi and Pakistani.

## Target group

Stella's target group is mainly women with minority background, but also other women who experience challenges related to mental and physical health, lack of social network, loneliness and social isolation, bad economy, poor Norwegian language skills and frustration about not being able to enter the labour market.

## Programme

The counselling service focuses on the participants' resources and the existing possibilities. Stella's advisors work closely with the participants to help them figure out how to reach their objectives. This service is the backbone of the centre. The voluntary advisers are the people who run the centre at daytime and follow up the participants. Additionally, Stella centre has a diversified offer, including the following activities:

### Job counselling

**Norwegian language skills practice focusing on oral skills and communication**

**Health, diet and exercise & Personal development**

**English language courses on different levels**

**Entrepreneurship and self management**

**Democracy and society Internet cafés and computer literacy courses**

**Stella Café**

**Stella Mentors**

**The Apprentice Programme<sup>vi</sup>**

## Collaboration Partners

Stella collaborates with a good deal of partners, from public service providers to establishments and private companies.

## Evaluation

Stella Red Cross centre for women have grown faster than expected. This growth has been possible because there has been easy access to a voluntary labour force and people who voluntarily have shared their competence since the very opening of the centre. The participants say that Stella centre is a great place for integration and involvement in the Norwegian society. It is a place where all women, regardless of age, culture, education or background, are equal and have the same opportunities as everyone else. Women feel they are seen, heard and well received at Stella. They emphasise the good dialogues between people at the centre, and the meaning of new friendships and networks that can give them support in the future.

# Global Future

## Objective

Global Future is NHO's<sup>vii</sup> talent programme to mobilise highly qualified immigrant women and men for key positions and board membership in Norwegian industry and commerce. Through this programme NHO wants to secure its member companies access to highly qualified persons with a multi-cultural background. Besides, the programme contributes to strengthening the diversity in the Norwegian industry and commerce.

## Background

Global Future started as a pilot project at the offices of NHO in Adger in 2006. The programme was up and running in full in 2010 in Hordaland. Today the programme covers the whole country, and is organised by the NHO regions. The programme's background is NHO's aim to provide companies access to the most competent people in the labour market. NHO is of the opinion that immigrants' work capacity and competence is an enormous resource. In the Norwegian industry and trade, 14,5 percent of the employees have immigrant background.

## Target group

The main target group is first generation immigrants. The programme is designed for highly qualified women and men with sufficient language skills in Norwegian, high education and expert knowledge, who are motivated for key positions and board posts.

## Programme

The programme duration is 1 1/2 years, consisting of 19 all-day seminars. In addition, participants will be expected to attend basis groups and consultations with their personal mentor. The programme's main elements are \* Leadership development including the mentor scheme \* Boardroom competence \* Rhetoric

**The Leadership development including the Mentor scheme is supposed to help participants to a larger extent apply their resources and qualifications in relevant jobs:** The programme facilitates network building between participants and potential employers and the participants get more knowledge of the culture and themselves. They get insight and skills they need to be successful in the Norwegian industry/commerce, and labour market. They also strengthen their relational skills as managers and build up their self esteem and belief in their own resources and possibilities.

**Boardroom competence will help the participants build the necessary skills to take on a board position:**

The participants get knowledge about central problems and theories that are important for being a board member in practice, including knowledge about starting and running a company, financial management and accounting, management of the company, developing and working with strategy, as well as knowledge about responsibility and obligations that come with becoming a board member.

**Rhetoric will help the participants develop strong arguments in discussions, prepare good presentations and speeches:** The participants receive training in rhetorical techniques, which they learn through theory, examples, working in groups and practical exercises. The emphasis is on practical work and individual feedback.

## Collaboration partners

Global Future is a result of a collaboration between NHO, Innovation Norway, The Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion (BLD), The Ministry of Trade and Industry, The Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi), county municipalities, organisations and several companies.

## Evaluation

**SINTEF** has evaluated the Global Future programme for NHO, and concluded that it was very successful. In the years 2010 – 2013 there were 650 candidates who took part in the programme. Two out of three participants have had a career movement after they finished the programme. 650 people from 100 countries have participated. Many say that their motivation, self-knowledge and self-esteem have increased, and they are extremely happy they have gotten wider access to networks, saying they have gained a significant advantage by being part of the programme.

# Norwegian Centre for Multicultural Value Creation (NSFV)

## Purpose

The Norwegian Centre for Multicultural Value Creation (NSFV) is a business development and knowledge centre aiming to help immigrants with high qualifications to become entrepreneurs. The NSFV's vision is: A value creating multicultural Norway. Their mission statement is to: Mobilise, develop skills, and assist immigrants with starting new businesses locally, at the national level, and internationally. It is also a goal to build a reputation of immigrants as positive contributors to the society. The centre's main focus is on demonstrating the "diversity assets" – that is to focus on the values that the immigrants represent, rather than the problems of multicultural Norway.

## Background

The centre was established to exploit the potential inherent in the diversity represented in the region by mobilising, empowering and guiding immigrants to innovation and new businesses. It is owned by Buskerud County.

## Target group

The target group of the NSFV are highly-educated first generation immigrants that somehow fall out of the workforce or end up in jobs that are not in accordance with their competence and formal qualifications.

## Program

**NSFV's services include:**

### Scoping and supporting potential entrepreneurs:

- Taking a comprehensive look at your situation to see if you are ready to start your own business.
- Building your business development skills through our start-up programs or individual courses.
- Having your idea evaluated.
- Coaching and advice to help you start your business, if you wish so.
- Helping you in developing your business and evaluating the opportunities and potential risks.
- Helping you find financing schemes that suit your business.
- Inviting you to be a part of our network where you can make contacts, find business partners, or receive professional advice.

**Business Education:** NSFV also runs business education, with a variety of courses in how to start a business.

**Programmes:** iStart is a specially designed program focussing on positive development for immigrants. Through the comprehensive establishment programme the participant learns about business development and how to get started. The participants are assigned with experienced mentors, a network of likeminded entrepreneurs with similar ambitions and talents as themselves. Through a mutual and safe learning environment, they can find inspiration and share knowledge and experiences.

**Events:** NSFV also runs themed events to about a variety of topics relevant to both immigrants seeking job opportunities and to the potential employer.

## Collaborative partners

The centre has built a large network of regional stakeholder organisations from both the public and private sectors, working together on making immigrants succeed in business life. NSFV highlights the values that immigrants represent for the Norwegian society and economy. NSFV's partner network includes 35 organisations representing the public and private sector, academia and the financial sector, which contributes to professional, educational, and economic activities at NSFV.

## Evaluation

NSFV received recognition as Norwegian candidate for the "European Enterprise Awards" and was granted a diploma from the European Commission in Madrid, Spain in 2010.

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## Endnotes:

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<sup>i</sup> The medium alternative MMMM is Statistics Norway's main alternative for the future development of the size and composition of the population of Norway. <http://www.ssb.no/en/befolkning/statistikker/folkfram/aar/2014-06-17>

<sup>ii</sup> The Ministry of Children and Equality and Social Inclusion is a Norwegian ministry, established in 2006 as a successor of the Royal Ministry of Children and Family Affairs. It is responsible for the rights of consumers, the interests of children and youth, the social and economic security of families, and the advancement of gender equality. (Wikipedia)

<sup>iii</sup> The purpose of this Act is to increase the possibility of newly arrived immigrants participating in working and social life and to increase their financial independence.

(<https://www.regjeringen.no/en/topics/equality-and-social-inclusion/integrering/introduksjonslov-og-arbeid/introduksjonsloven/id2343470/>)

<sup>iv</sup> The Social Services Act covers the duty of the municipalities to provide services for the population, like accommodation for people with special needs and general support for persons and families in need.

([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Norwegian\\_Board\\_of\\_Health\\_Supervision](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Norwegian_Board_of_Health_Supervision))

<sup>v</sup> The Church City Mission is a diaconal foundation established in Kristiania (Oslo) in 1855, and it is one of the largest humanitarian faith-based organisations in Norway.

(<http://www.bymisjon.no/Support/English-Site/Our-vision>)

<sup>vi</sup> The Apprentice programme is a cooperation between Norwegian industry and trade and Oslo Red. The goal of the programme is to provide the participating women with up to 9 months of work experience.

<http://stellakvinnesenter.no/vare-tilbud/praktikantprogrammet/>

<sup>vii</sup> NHO, The Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise is an employers' organisation in Norway with more than 20,000 members. It was founded in 1989 as a merger of the Federation of Norwegian Industries, the Norwegian Employers' Confederation and the Federation of Norwegian Craftsmen (Wikipedia)