

Chandrawat  
& Partners

# IMMIGRATION GUIDE TO NORWAY

A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE



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# Introduction

Norway, renowned for its stunning landscapes, high standard of living, and strong social welfare system, has become an increasingly popular destination for individuals seeking to immigrate. Whether you are attracted by the country's prosperous job market, excellent education system, or the opportunity to experience its unique culture, Norway offers a range of immigration options to suit different needs and circumstances. This guide aims to provide you with essential information and guidance on the immigration process to Norway.

Norway follows a well-regulated immigration system designed to ensure that the country benefits from immigration while safeguarding the rights and interests of both newcomers and its existing population. The primary governing body responsible for immigration matters is the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration ("UDI").

# The immigration system in Norway

The immigration system in Norway is designed to carefully evaluate and manage the entry of foreign nationals into the country. The system aims to attract individuals who can contribute to the Norwegian society and economy while ensuring the protection of national interests.

The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI) is the central authority responsible for managing and regulating immigration in Norway. UDI establishes and enforces policies, processes applications, and makes decisions regarding visas, residence permits, and citizenship. UDI also provides information and guidance to applicants and monitors compliance with immigration regulations.

UDI is an agency under the Norwegian Ministry of Justice and Public Security. Established in 1988, UDI is responsible for managing immigration and asylum-related matters in Norway. The agency plays a crucial role in ensuring that immigration processes are carried out efficiently, fairly, and in accordance with Norwegian laws and regulations.



**Visa and Residence Permits:** To enter Norway, individuals from most countries require a visa, which is a temporary permission to stay for a specific purpose and duration. The visa types include tourist visas, student visas, work visas, family reunification visas, and more. The Norwegian embassy or consulate in the applicant's home country is responsible for processing visa applications.

For longer stays, individuals must obtain a residence permit, which grants permission to live and work in Norway for a specific period. Residence permits are categorized based on the purpose of stay, such as work, study, family reunification, or humanitarian reasons. UDI evaluates residence permit applications and makes decisions based on eligibility criteria and specific requirements for each category.

**Application Process:** The application process for immigration to Norway involves submitting a comprehensive application package to the relevant Norwegian authorities. This typically includes completing application forms, providing required documentation (such as passports, photographs, employment contracts, bank statements, etc.), and paying the necessary application fees.

Applications are processed by UDI, and the processing time can vary depending on the type of permit being applied for. UDI carefully evaluates each application based on the eligibility criteria, documentation provided, and adherence to immigration regulations. Additional information or documents may be requested during the review process, and applicants must respond promptly to ensure timely processing.



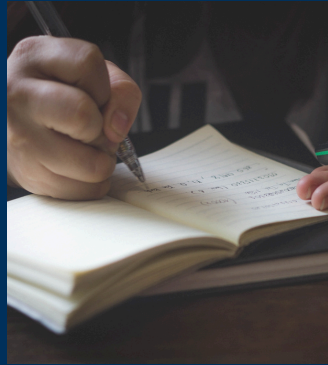
**Decision and Appeals:** Once UDI reaches a decision on an application, the applicant is notified via a written letter. If the application is approved, the applicant receives a letter of approval, along with instructions on the next steps, such as visa issuance (if applicable) or residence permit collection. If the application is rejected, the applicant is provided with the reasons for the decision. In some cases, applicants have the right to appeal the decision within a specified timeframe. Appeals are handled by the Norwegian Immigration Appeals Board (UNE), an independent administrative body that reviews immigration-related appeals.

**Integration and Citizenship:** After obtaining a residence permit and living in Norway for a specified period, individuals may become eligible to apply for permanent residence. Permanent residence permits grant individuals the right to reside and work in Norway indefinitely. The requirements for obtaining permanent residence permits include factors such as length of stay, language skills, and adherence to Norwegian society and values.

Once individuals have held a permanent residence permit for a certain period and meet additional criteria, they may be eligible to apply for Norwegian citizenship. Norwegian citizenship provides various rights and benefits, including the ability to vote and unrestricted access to the job market. Dual citizenship is allowed in Norway, meaning individuals can retain their previous citizenship while becoming Norwegian citizens.



# Purpose of Immigration



Immigration to Norway serves various purposes, each contributing to the country's social, economic, and cultural development. Here are the key purposes of immigration to Norway:

**Employment-Based Immigration:** Norway actively encourages the immigration of skilled workers to address labour market needs and boost economic growth. Skilled professionals, such as engineers, IT specialists, healthcare workers, and researchers, are sought after to fill job vacancies. The immigration system facilitates the entry of these individuals through work permits and visa programs designed to attract talent from abroad.

**Study-Based Immigration:** Norway is known for its high-quality education system, and many international students choose to pursue their studies in Norwegian universities and colleges. The country welcomes students from around the world, offering a range of educational programs and scholarships. Study permits allow foreign students to live and study in Norway for the duration of their academic programs.

**Family Reunification:** Norway recognizes the importance of family unity and allows Norwegian citizens and permanent residents to sponsor the immigration of their close family members. The family reunification process enables spouses, children, parents, and other dependents to join their loved ones in Norway. This policy supports social cohesion and integration by promoting strong family bonds.



### **Refugee and Asylum Seeker**

**Immigration:** Norway has a long-standing commitment to providing protection and support to refugees and asylum seekers fleeing persecution, conflict, and human rights abuses. The country adheres to international conventions and protocols, offering a safe haven for those in need. UDI processes asylum applications and ensures that refugees receive appropriate assistance and integration support upon being granted protection.



**Other Humanitarian Reasons for Immigration:** In addition to refugee protection, Norway considers other humanitarian reasons for immigration. This includes special immigration schemes for individuals who require medical treatment, victims of human trafficking, and those in need of international protection due to extraordinary circumstances. These measures reflect Norway's commitment to humanitarian values and providing assistance to vulnerable individuals.





# Non-Direct Routes of Immigration to Norway

**Special Immigration Programs and Initiatives:** Norway has established special immigration programs and initiatives to attract specific groups of immigrants. For example, the skilled worker program, known as the "Jobseeker's Permit," aims to attract highly skilled professionals to fill labour market gaps in sectors where there is a shortage of qualified personnel. This program allows individuals to seek employment in Norway and eventually obtain a residence permit.

**Student Exchange Programs and Scholarships:** Norway encourages international students to study in the country through student exchange programs and scholarships. Norwegian educational institutions offer a wide range of academic programs at all levels, including bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees. Students can apply for scholarships and grants through various programs such as the Norwegian Quota Scheme, Erasmus+, and specific scholarships provided by educational institutions and the Norwegian government. Upon completion of their studies, students may have the opportunity to extend their stay in Norway for work or further education.

These non-direct routes of immigration to Norway provide alternative pathways for individuals to immigrate to the country outside of the traditional immigration channels. They offer opportunities for family members, skilled professionals, entrepreneurs, investors, refugees, and international students to contribute to Norway's society and economy. UDI plays a crucial role in facilitating and managing these immigration programs, ensuring that the processes are fair, transparent, and in compliance with immigration laws and regulations.



## Types of visas

**Tourist Visas:** Tourist visas, also known as visitor visas or short-term visas, allow individuals to visit Norway for a temporary period for tourism, leisure, or visiting friends and family. These visas are typically granted for a maximum duration of 90 days within a 180-day period. Tourist visas are generally not extendable, and individuals must leave the country before the visa expires.

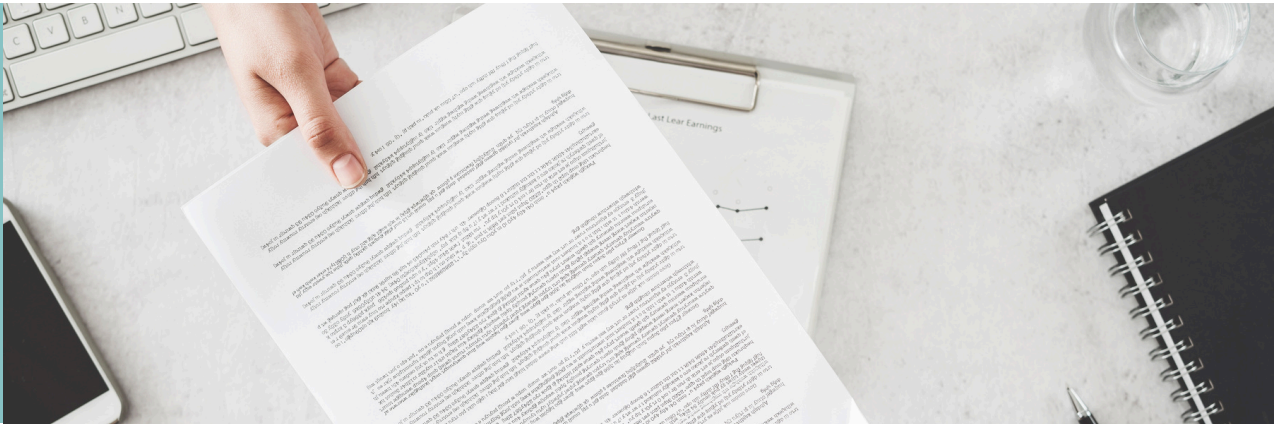
**Work Visas and Permits:** Work visas and permits are required for individuals who intend to work in Norway. The process and requirements for obtaining a work visa or permit depend on the nature of employment. Skilled workers may apply for a residence permit based on a specific job offer from a Norwegian employer. Employers must typically demonstrate that no qualified Norwegian or EEA/EU citizen is available for the position before hiring a non-resident. Self-employed individuals and seasonal workers may also be eligible for specific work permits.

**Student Visas and Residence Permits:** Student visas and residence permits are required for individuals who wish to study in Norway. To obtain a student visa, applicants must first receive an acceptance letter from a recognized educational institution in Norway. Once accepted, they can apply for a student visa or residence permit. Student visas are typically granted for the duration of the study program and may be extended if necessary.

**Family Reunification Visas and Permits:** Family reunification visas and permits allow family members of Norwegian citizens or residents to join them in Norway. Spouses, cohabiting partners, and children under the age of 18 are generally eligible for family reunification. The sponsoring family member in Norway must meet certain income and housing requirements, and the applicant must demonstrate a genuine family relationship.

**Humanitarian and Asylum-Seeker Visas:** Humanitarian and asylum-seeker visas are granted to individuals who seek protection in Norway due to fear of persecution or serious harm in their home country. Asylum-seekers must apply for protection upon arrival in Norway and undergo a thorough assessment of their asylum claim. If their application is approved, they may be granted a residence permit or refugee status, allowing them to stay and live in Norway.





# Licenses and Documentation for Immigration

When planning to immigrate to Norway, it is essential to understand the licenses and documentation required for a smooth and legal immigration process. The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI) is responsible for overseeing visa applications and determining the specific requirements for each category.

**Passport and Travel Documents:** A valid passport is a fundamental requirement for traveling to Norway. The passport must be valid for at least three months beyond the intended stay in Norway. It is advisable to check the expiration date of your passport well in advance and renew it if necessary. In certain cases, such as refugees or stateless individuals, alternative travel documents may be accepted instead of a passport.

**Visa Application Requirements and Forms:** Depending on your nationality and the purpose of your visit, you may need to apply for a visa before entering Norway. The visa application requirements and forms can be obtained from the Norwegian embassy or consulate in your home country. The application form typically includes personal information, travel details, and the purpose of the visit. It is crucial to accurately complete the form and provide all required information.

**Supporting Documents for Different Visa Categories:** The specific supporting documents required for each visa category may vary. Generally, the following documents are commonly requested:

**a. Proof of Accommodation:** This can include hotel reservations, rental agreements, or a letter of invitation from a host in Norway.

**b. Proof of Sufficient Funds:** Evidence of financial means to cover the expenses during your stay in Norway, such as bank statements, employment contracts, or sponsorship letters.

**c. Travel Itinerary:** Detailed travel plans, including flight tickets, dates of arrival and departure, and any planned activities or events.

**d. Purpose of Visit Documentation:** Depending on the purpose of your visit, additional documents may be required. For example, a letter of acceptance from a Norwegian educational institution for a student visa, or a job offer letter for a work visa.

**Health and Medical Certificates:** In some cases, individuals may be required to provide health and medical certificates when applying for a visa. This is especially relevant for individuals planning to work or study in Norway. Health and medical certificates may include proof of vaccination, medical examinations, or screening for certain diseases. The specific requirements will depend on the type of visa and the country of origin.

**Police Clearances and Background Checks:** As part of the immigration process, applicants may be required to provide police clearances or undergo background checks. This is to ensure that individuals with criminal records or security concerns are not granted entry or residency in Norway. Police clearances are typically obtained from the relevant authorities in the applicant's home country or countries of previous residence. The requirements for police clearances may vary depending on the visa category and the applicant's background.

# Recent Changes in Norwegian Immigration Rules

The Norwegian Government has announced a recent change in the country's immigration system regarding residence permits for displaced individuals from Ukraine. In a press release issued on January 24, 2023, it was stated that the government will be extending the temporary collective protection scheme for people who have been displaced from Ukraine. Those who have already been granted a residence permit under this scheme will have their permits automatically extended for one year.

By extending residence permits for displaced individuals from Ukraine, the Norwegian Government aims to provide stability and security to those affected by the ongoing crisis in Ukraine. This change in the immigration system reflects the government's commitment to offering support and protection to individuals in need during challenging circumstances.





## How we can help?

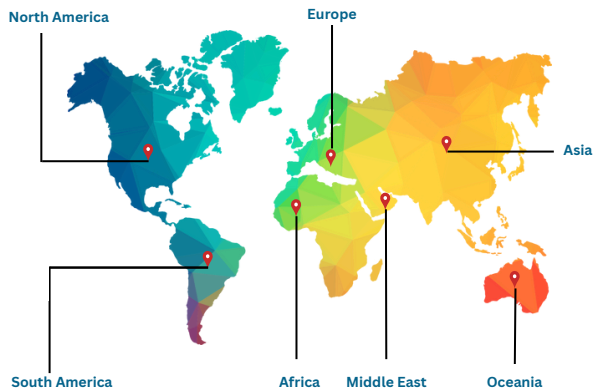
If an applicant is looking to immigrate to the Norway, Chandrawat & Partners can be a valuable resource to help them navigate the complex immigration process. Here are a few ways how the firm can assist them:

**Visa and Work Permit:** The firm can assist the applicant understand the various visa options available to them, as well as the requirements for obtaining a work permit if they are planning to work in the Brunei. The firm can guide the applicant through the application process and ensure that all necessary documents are properly completed and submitted.

**Translation and Notarization:** The firm can assist with the translation and notarization of any required documents for the applicant's immigration application. This also includes documents such as the applicant's passport, birth certificate, and marriage certificate.

**Appeals and Denials:** If the applicant's immigration application is denied or they receive a negative decision, the firm can assist them in appealing the decision. The firm can provide legal advice on the grounds for appeal, assist with preparing the necessary documents, and represent the applicant in any hearings or proceedings.

## SERVING CLIENTS WORLDWIDE



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