Country Report Norway

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A. Key data sources and responsible institutions

A.1. The Central Population Register

The main source for Norwegian migration statistics, both on stocks and flows, is information from the Central Population Register, the CPR. All population statistics produced by Statistics Norway is based upon the CPR. The CPR is administratively situated in the Office of the National Registrar subordinated the Norwegian Tax Administration (NTA). Statistics Norway is responsible for production of population statistics based on events reported to CPR, and for all kinds of linkages between the CPR and other registers, for statistical and analytical purposes. This holds true also when micro data are used for analytical or planning purposes by other authorised institutions.

One of the main reasons for establishing the register was to create a register for taxation and otherwise serve administrative needs in the civil administration. In addition the CPR is the basis for all Electoral rolls. The use of the data for population statistics is an added bonus as the register was established primarily for administrative, not statistical purposes. A register used for a large number of purposes will have better prospects for being well up-dated, but will risk not having all statistically relevant variables included.

The CPR includes all residents in Norway with a valid permit and an intention to stay six months or more. Furthermore all registered population movements are registered. Each person in the register is assigned a unique Personal Identification Number, a PIN-code. The PIN-code is essential in linking the persons registered in the CPR to information in other administrative registers for the purpose of statistical descriptions and analysis.

A.2. The Aliens Register

In addition to the CPR some migration statistics in Norway is also produced with data from the Aliens Register. The main purpose of the Alien Register is to support the immigration authorities in their case-processing. The Aliens Register was established in 2004 and replaced the Fremkon register (the old Aliens register) and the Refugee Register. Central information from these two registers were adapted to new standards and included in the new register. As a result, the Aliens Register now contains data going back to 1991. The register is owned by the Directorate of Immigration and is the case-processing register for the entire Immigration Administration, including the Police. The Directorate of Immigration generates some statistics on migration based on permits from this register. The main statistical unit in the register is permits, not persons. Data from the Aliens Register can be linked to the CPR using the PIN-code.

A.3. Surveys

Sample surveys are to a lesser degree used for statistics and analyses on migration and integration in Norway. This is mainly because of the extensive use of the registers. But there is valuable information on immigrants living conditions found in
three special surveys conducted by Statistics Norway in 1983, 1996 and 2005/2006. These surveys have the CPR as sampling frame, giving very rich information on non-response and of representativity. There are in addition a limited number of surveys to cover aspects not included in registers, like attitudes and opinions. All these surveys conducted in Statistics Norway will use record linkage to collect information already included in registers, like income, education and labour market variables.

A.4. Population Census data

The Population Censuses in Norway are to a very large extent based on record linkage, and is a product of our registers. The 2001 –round was used to establish a dwelling register, and was the last one with a questionnaire to all households.

B. Historical evolution of the national data collection system/ data collection practices and policies on data collection

B.1. Brief history of Population Registration in Norway

The first law on population registration was introduced in Norway shortly after independence from Sweden in 1905. Following the Population Registers Act of 1946 each municipality had to establish a population registry where all residents of the municipality compulsory were to be registered. This information was centralized in 1964 with the establishment of the CPR, based on the Population Census of 1960 and these local registries. All persons resident in Norway at the time of the census was included. At the same time the 11 digit PIN-code was introduced. While the census in 1970 was used to correct the Population Register, the population censuses in 1980 and 1990 were not used for that purpose, as the quality of the register was considered to be sufficient.

The Office of the National Registrar has from 1946 been the administrative body responsible for the CPR. Between 1964 and 1990 the office (and the CPR) was located within Statistics Norway, and run jointly with the tax authorities. The registration of individual information is increasingly important for a series of legal individual rights. Consequently, to run a register was considered to be so different from the key responsibilities of a national statistical office that it could not be combined with national responsibility for statistics. In 1991 the office was transferred to the National Tax Administration. From 1985 the register was centralized in one database, at the same time all transactions and registrations were gradually fully computerized. By 1994 all vital events were registered online from the local population registers.

The current legal foundation for the CPR is the Population Registration Act of 1970 (with several amendments up to 2007). It states when and where a person shall be registered, when a change of address has to be reported and how a civil registration decision is reflected in the register. Consequently, statistical purposes have only a minor influence on the content and definitions of the register. That is occasionally a
problem for statistical purposes, but variables established only for statistical purposes might turn out to be very difficult to keep on a high level of quality.

Other Nordic countries have a similar history of population registration and vital statistics as Norway.

**B.2. Statistics Norway use of data from the CPR**

Statistics Norway receives electronic copies of the CPR every day. These data are used to update a separate population database in Statistics Norway kept for statistical purposes. This base, labelled Besys, is basically a copy of the CPR, and forms the basis of all current register-based population statistics, statistics on stocks as well as on flows. Statistics Norway reports back to the NTA on errors or shortcomings detected during the compilation of statistics. The same definitions are used in both registers and routines for updating correspond closely. The result is a good correspondence between the two registers, even after many years with physically independent updating routines.

**B.3. Data in the CPR and the role of the PIN-code**

All vital events (births, deaths, marriages, national and international migration etc.) and demographic characteristics like age, marital status, citizenship, number of children, place of birth, national background (including parental country of birth), and year of first immigration are registered in the CPR. In total there are around 75 variables. In addition to this, Statistics Norway generates a number of variables for statistical use so in total there are around 400 variables in Besys. A further description of the most central variables in the field of immigration is provided in chapter 4.

The CPR gets its data from a combination of self-reporting and data from other administrative registers. For instance, reports of births are given by the hospital or the maternity clinic. Deaths are reported by the probate court or the local policy in the deceased’s municipality of residence. Migration is in general based on mandatory reports sent to the local population registries. The PIN-code is only issued by the NTA.

Each person in the Population Register is given the PIN-code, a unique 11 digit personal code, based on date of birth, six digits, and a five digit personal number. The role of the 11 digit PIN-code is pivotal for everyday life in Norway and for production of statistics in general. As mentioned above, if you intend to stay in Norway for six months or more you are given a PIN-code. The PIN-code is needed in order to register that you are living in Norway, to open a bank account, to establish a telephone line, to obtain a tax card for work and to become a member in the National Health Insurance and for a long range of other purposes. In short, it is an integral part of being a resident in Norway. The PIN-code is essential for Statistics Norway in linking the persons registered in the CPR to other administrative registers for statistical analysis.
From information in the CPR it is possible to reconstruct individual demographic biographies for the period over which the register has existed. When persons die or emigrate, a PIN-code is never re-assigned, and all relevant information is kept in the historical archives. Thus, a person can’t leave the CPR, once registered the personal file is kept forever. The only thing that changes when a person dies or emigrates is the registration status. By January 1st 2008, Norway had a population of 4.7 million. In the history of the CPR more than 450 000 persons had emigrated and nearly 2 million persons had died. In total the CPR has around 7 million persons registered.

A person who stays in Norway for less than six months will not be given an ordinary PIN-code, but what is called a D-number. This is an ID number which is given to all foreigners staying in Norway for less than six months, and for others with economic activity in Norway without qualifying to be registered as living here. The D-number population is also a part of the CPR, but is not counted in as regular residents. Statistics Norway produces a limited range of statistics based on the D-number, for instance statistics on short term labour in Norway.

B.4. Migrants in the CPR

The main rule is that a person is registered as a resident of Norway if she intends to stay for at least six months and has a residence permit allowing her to do so.

As an immigrant coming to Norway it is the intended length of your stay (at least six months), or for most migrants the length and validity of the permit, that determines whether a person is registered or not. This information in the CPR is often based on information from the Aliens Register. Similarly, registration as an emigrant requires that the person emigrating must intend to reside abroad for at least six months.

Nordic citizens do not need a permit when immigrating to Norway and in-migration of Nordic citizens goes directly to the CPR. There is also a system within the Nordic countries for notification on migration between the local population registers. There is nearly a 1:1 ratio in the counting of migrants between the Nordic countries, a system probably unrivalled in Europe (Economist 2002).

Migrants from non-Nordic countries must apply for a residence permit, also migrants from the European Union, in most cases processed by the Police, whereas migrants from outside the EU are processed by the Directorate of Immigration. Immigrants without the necessary permits are (of course) not to be included in the register. The immigration authorities are also responsible for providing individual data on these accepted migrants to the CPR. In addition to this there is also a daily exchange of information the other way and CPR officers have easy access to information from the databases in the Immigration Authorities. In the last years we have seen a development of what has been coined ‘Active Population Registration’. Immigrants whose permits are expired are written out of the system. This entitles active cooperation with the police and the Immigration Authorities.

From 1987 to 1994 asylum seekers as a rule were counted as immigrants - and therefore also as residents of Norway - even though their application for a residence permit had not been completely processed. Before and after this period only asylum
seekers with a granted permit to stay have been registered. Asylum seekers who have been given a permit are registered when they are settled in the local municipality, not upon the time of arrival to Norway.

All children born alive to parents resident in Norway are included in the register as are the live births to immigrants who have been granted a permit to stay.

B.5. Data from the Aliens Register transferred directly to Statistics Norway

Once a year, Statistics Norway receives data from the Directorate of Immigration about all persons who have been granted residence permits. The information covers (among others) the grounds for settlement (reason for immigration). Based on this information, Statistics Norway creates the variable ‘reason for immigration’ for all non-Nordic immigrants to Norway.

In some cases it is not unproblematic to identify the initial reason for migration. One person can for instance have multiple permits opening up for a permanent stay in Norway. The main principle is that the last permit prior to the first registration of immigration to Norway is used.

From 2004 it is registered in the Aliens Register to whom a person who migrates on a family permit is (re)united with. Statistics can be given for family formation/establishment and family reunification, and by “anchor person”.

For the period 1990 onwards, ‘reason for migration’ has been assigned to 99 per cent of all first time non-Nordic immigrants. For the years prior to 1990 all immigrants coming as asylum seekers, convention refugees and their families have been registered for a period as long back as the 1970s. Thus for the years before 1990 it is only possible to identify whether an immigrant came as a refugee or not.

C. Coordination and linking

On the basis of the Statistics Act of 1989, Statistics Norway is granted access to all official registers in Norway. However, registers on health and a few others are not available for statistical purposes, due to the sensitivity of their information. Not only does Statistics Norway have the right to use nationwide administrative data for statistical purposes. But also according to the Statistics Act, Statistics Norway shall be informed of the establishing and changing of such registers in advance and have the right to express preferences concerning all aspects of such registers. In accordance with this law, Statistics Norway has prepared and signed agreements with all relevant ministries and institutions to secure the flows of administrative records needed for generating statistics.

With the consent of the Data Inspectorate, the information in the CPR can be linked for statistical and analytical purposes to all these other administrative registers. It will never be allowed to give information about identifiable individuals. The CPR is at the
core and by using the PIN-code Statistics Norway can link population data with the different registers.
A number of registers in the private and public sector use the PIN-code. To mention a few from the public sector: Education, Employment, Income, Social security and Crime registers. Statistics Norway can only link these data with information from the CPR for statistical purposes, not for any sort of control, and statistics that can be used to reveal information that might identify particular individuals can not be published. If for instance the Police or taxation authorities need to combine information on labour market activity and use of social welfare benefits, then they will have to address the owners of these registers to have access to this information. Statistics Norway can not give away such information.

Most official statistics on individuals and households from Statistics Norway are based on these registers. So when figures on for instance employment rates are produced. They are based on data from the Register of Employees and the Unemployment Register, both at the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration and information from tax files from the National Tax Administration. Information on immigrant background can be derived from the CPR and linked to these data. The official statistics on employment and the statistics on immigrants’ employment are based on the same system. Hence the statistics on immigrants’ labour participation correspond to, and can be compared to, the figures for the population as a whole.

Statistics on employment and education are published annually and the immigrant perspective is covered more or less in every publication. The system of linking these data is ideal for longitudinal studies of individual integration paths for different immigrant groups. Statistics Norway can (as opposed to many other countries) not only say how many migrants immigrate to Norway. But using this system of integrating and linking data we can give accurate and detailed statistics on how immigrants perform on different social arenas, enabling us to analyze their living conditions in Norway.

D. Concepts and definitions

All our concepts and definitions follow from the content and definitions in the CPR. As concerns the country of usual residence, its definition follows the recommendations of the future Census Round. Core variables have still to be analysed more in depth.

D.1. Immigration category

Based on the register information, there are a number of possible ways of identifying immigrants. We could, as many do, use citizenship, but this poses a number of limitations and pitfalls, especially for comparative analysis. The main problem relates to the fact that individuals do change their citizenship through naturalisation and that naturalisation varies greatly between countries. Country of birth is arguably a better indicator since it is invariant. Still it is important to be able to clearly identify different generations since many of the offspring of immigrants have the same living conditions as their parents, and some of them retain demographic behaviour patterns
similar to theirs. It is for this reason that Statistics Norway has developed a standard classification based on parental country of birth for demographic analysis as well as for the study of other aspects of immigration like living conditions, discrimination and citizenship. This variable is now widely used in research, administration and media in Norway.

**Immigrant population** includes persons who have two foreign-born parents, or more precisely: Persons who neither have parents nor grandparents born in Norway. The immigrant population thus covers first-generation immigrants and persons born in Norway of two foreign-born parents.

**Persons with a background from immigration** cover a larger group than the immigrant population, the most important one being persons who have one foreign-born parent and one Norwegian-born parent. Statistics on this category is produced annually, but seldom used for analytical purposes.

**Country of birth** is mainly the mother's place of residence at the time of the birth of the child.

### D.2. Year of immigration

The official date of immigration in the Central Population Register is the date of registration.

### D.3. Reason for immigration

All first time immigrants with a non-Nordic citizenship who immigrated after 1989 have been assigned one of the main values Refugee, Family, Labour, Education and Other. Most of them are registered with a more specified reason for immigration. In most cases, these values reflect the values of the variable 'reason for decision' in the Aliens Register.

In connection with reason for immigration the term 'refugee' means 'immigrated for refugee reasons', and is not limited to e.g. Convention refugees only. The value ‘family immigration’ can be distinguished between reunification, accompanying person and formation/extension. The classification is mainly based on assessments of dates of immigration and marriage (when relevant) of both the immigrant and the reference person, and on registrations of that variable in the data from the Aliens register. Family reasons are often broken down by migration status of the reference person.
E. Availability of data

E.1. Core demographic data on immigrants and migration control

E.1.a Population stocks and general demographic characteristics

Statistics on population stocks and demographic characteristics of the population is based on data from the CPR. As described in section 2, all vital events (births, deaths, marriages, national and international migration etc.) and demographic characteristics like age, marital status, citizenship, number of children, place of birth, national background (including parental country of birth), and year of first immigration are registered in the CPR. All events are registered with a corresponding date so statistics on the stock of immigrants can be produced for any given time. On an annual basis Statistics Norway produce statistics on the stock of immigrants residing in Norway, all based on data from the CPR.

E.1.b Migration flows

Also as described in section 2, migration flows are covered by the CPR and migration flows can be described using the whole range of CPR-variables (sex, age, country of birth etc). Migrants coming to Norway are registered in the CPR if they have the intention to stay for six months or longer. The individual migrant has an obligation to register with the local registry within one week after coming to Norway. For most immigrants however, in practice this information is gathered by the CPR with information from the Aliens Register. Registration as an immigrant requires that the person immigrating must intend to stay in Norway for at least six months, and has a valid permit to stay for at least that period. Similarly, registration as an emigrant requires that the person emigrating must intend to reside abroad for at least six months.

Registrations of emigrations are not as reliable as registrations of immigrations as some emigrants fail to report to the authorities upon departure from Norway. The number of such is difficult to gauge precisely. For intra-Nordic migrations this does not pose a problem as individual migration data are exchanged between the Nordic countries.

Duration of stay can be calculated from the reported immigration and emigration date. The length of the permit is not one of the variables in the CPR and most of the permits given are renewable. Hence, to base the length of stay on the length of the permits would probably not give an accurate description. Consequently, duration of stay can only be found when the emigration has occurred. If there is no registration of an emigration it is assumed that the person still resides in Norway.

Short term migrants (migrants with a shorter intended stay than six months) are also registered in the CPR, but are not counted as being a member of the population of Norway. They are possible to identify through the D-number system. See also information on short term employment statistics in the section below.
E.1.c Purpose of stay

Information about reason for migration is derived from the Aliens register owned by the Directorate of Immigration, and does only include non-Nordic citizens. Nordic citizens have the right to take up residence and work in another Nordic country without any kind of permission, but they have to report their move to the authorities. For the period 1990 onwards, 'reason for migration' has been assigned to 99 per cent of all first time non-Nordic immigrants grouped together into four main categories: Labour, education, family and refugees. The term 'refugee' means 'immigrated for refugee-like reasons', and is not limited to convention refugees. The data from the Aliens register also opens up for more detailed subdivisions. One example: Family-related migration can be distinguished between reunification, accompanying person and formation/extension, and for family formation, whether the person already living in Norway had an immigration background or not. The classification is mainly based on assessments of dates of immigration and marriage (when relevant) of both the immigrant and the reference person, and on registrations of that variable in the Aliens register.

For the years prior to 1990 all immigrants coming as asylum seekers, convention refugees and their families have been registered for a period as long back as the 1970s. Thus, for the years before 1990 it is only possible to identify whether an immigrant came as a refugee or not.

In theory all registrations from the Aliens register can be linked to immigrants residing in Norway, however only the most useful for administrative purposes are included as core variables in the CPR. Statistics Norway receives all the data from the Aliens register once a year and can link these data to the CPR and produce statistics. Only residents with a legal permit for stay are included in the CPR.

E.1.d Citizenship

Only one citizenship status is registered in the CPR with a corresponding day for acquisition of citizenship. The main rule on acquisition upon application is that any person has a right to Norwegian nationality if the applicant at the time the administrative decision is made has provided documentary that clearly establishes his or her identity and has spent a total of seven years in Norway during the last ten years. In addition there are some newly introduced requirements on Norwegian language training, the applicant can have no criminal record in the waiting period and must be released from the previous nationality(ies). Norway does not support dual citizenship, but individual surveys have shown significant proportions with dual citizenship for immigrants from certain countries. The new naturalisation law will in principle not accept dual citizenship. In addition, there are some special rules for persons who are married to Norwegian national where the applicant only has to have been resident in the realm for the last three years. The same rules apply for registered partners and cohabitants. Nordic nationals may be entitled to Norwegian citizenship after having resided in Norway for only two years.
E.1.e Asylum seekers

Asylum seekers are not registered in the CPR before they are given a residence permit that enables them to stay for six months or more. There is one important exception. During the period 1987 to 1994 asylum seekers were counted as immigrants, and therefore also as residents of Norway, even though their applications for a residence permit had not been completely processed. Before and after this period only asylum seekers with a granted permit to stay have been registered. Asylum seekers who have been given a permit are registered when they are settled in the local municipality, not upon the time of arrival to Norway. The Directorate of Immigration publishes on a monthly basis the number of persons seeking asylum in Norway by country of origin.

E.1.f Irregular migration

Irregular immigrants are obviously not registered in the CPR. Statistics Norway has lately done an attempt to find a method to estimate the number of irregular/undocumented migrants (Zhang 2008). The study found that the irregular residents population of non-EU origin is estimated to be 18,196 by 1.1.2006. This constituted 0.39% of the official population of Norway in 2005. The estimated lower and upper bounds of a 95% confidence interval are 10,460 and 31,917, respectively. Of the estimated total irregular residents, 12,325 were previous asylum seekers, and the rest, 5,871, were persons that had never applied for asylum.

E.2. Measuring integration, discrimination and diversity

In general the rich variety and availability of administrative data opens up for detailed monitoring on how immigrants integrate in the Norwegian society. By using this system of integrating and linking data from the CPR with administrative sources we can give accurate and detailed statistics on how immigrants perform on different social arenas compared with the population as a whole. The system is also ideal for longitudinal studies, measuring integration development over time. This is especially true for areas where there is a long history of using administrative records for statistical purposes, such as registers on employment.

Some topics are however not covered by the administrative registers. One example is education taken by immigrants before entering the country. Furthermore some administrative sources, such as most health registers are not available due to legal restrictions. Also, the administrative data does not measure the softer aspects of immigrants’ living conditions or any kinds of norms and attitudes, and has to be supplemented by surveys.

E.2.a Employment

The most important source on how immigrants do in the labour market is derived from register data. The register statistics on the employment and unemployment among immigrants are based on several sources: Data from the Register of
Employees and the Unemployment Register, both at the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration and information from tax files from the National Tax Administration. Annually Statistics Norway produces statistics on “Employment among immigrants, Unemployment among immigrants and Employee statistics for immigrants”. The official statistics on employment and unemployment for the whole population is based on the same system. The statistics on immigrants’ labour participation correspond to, and can be compared to, the figures for the population as a whole.

Persons who move to Norway for a shorter period than six months as individual employees, self-employed, or are employed by a foreign employer selling their services in Norway, are not included in the regular population/labour market statistics. From 2006 statistics on this group have been published. The statistics on employment and unemployment among short term immigrants are intended to provide better data on inflows not captured in the regular labour market statistics. This statistics do probably not yet have a full coverage of the target group.

Immigrants are also identifiable in data from the Labour Force Survey (LFS). There are however too few immigrants in the sample to produce detailed statistics on subgroups etc. (see Villund 2008). As a member of EEA, Norway follows the European LFS-regulations, and carries out the module on migrants in 2008.

Data from the survey ‘Living conditions among immigrants’ conducted in 1983, 1996 and 2005/2006 is an important supplement to the register based data on topics not covered by the administrative data (Blom and Henriksen 2008).

**E.2.b Income**

The main data source on immigrants’ income is based on ‘The Income Distribution Survey’. From 1986 to 2004 it was based on a representative sample survey. From 2005 and onwards it is based on a total count. Income data are received by linking different administrative registers and statistical data sources for the whole population as in the end of the fiscal year. Income and biographical data are collected from several sources; the most important is data from tax returns (wages and salaries, entrepreneurial income, pensions etc.). Data from the Tax Return is the basis for all of Statistics Norway’s statistics on income for persons. The tax return statistics include data on all types of taxable income. Income statistics for immigrants are produced annually, two years after the current income year. In addition specific statistics on social allowance are produced annually.

**E.2.c Housing**

Housing has so far not been covered by registers in Norway. Based on the Population and Housing Census 2001, there has been made attempts to establish a register of unique dwelling addresses, linking all resident persons to a dwelling. So far, it seems that the person/dwelling link is established on a satisfactory quality level for all groups, but the information about each dwelling is still of a rather rudimentary quality. For the time being, housing conditions for immigrants is best described
through the 2001 Census, but the dwelling register is expected to be of good quality before the next Census in 2011.

**E.2.d Health**

Compared to other integration variables, the information sources on immigrants’ health are poor. Norway does not have an individual based health or patient-register that is available for linking to the CPR-system. Neither has there been conducted a national survey on immigrants health, only local ones. However, the survey ‘Living conditions among immigrants’ covers some areas regarding immigrants’ health situation, and gives the best information on the national level..

**E.2.e Education**

Statistics on education is also derived from administrative registers and statistics on immigrants’ education undertaken in Norway is good. Statistics on how immigrants and their children perform in the educational system compared to the population as a whole is produced on a regular basis. For lower and primary education the data sources are not particularly rich, as at the lowest grades there are no personal identifiable registers. For upper secondary schools and universities the data sources are richer and statistics on throughput and marks are published for immigrants and for the population as a whole.

However, Norway does not have a systematic way of collecting and storing data on immigrants’ education taken abroad, before arriving to Norway. Some surveys have been conducted but with high non-response rates. As a consequence the information on educational background is not as good for the immigrant population as for the population as a whole. The register on the population’s highest level of education lacks information for about a third of the immigrant population. This is especially dominant among recent arrivals. A new survey is planned together with the Census in 2011.

**E.2.f. Family**

Since 1975, family statistics have been produced on the basis of information from the CPR. From 1993 cohabiting couples with at least one common child were incorporated. Since 1995 registered partnerships of same sex couples were included. The introduction of a unique address for all dwellings made it possible to produce statistics also for cohabiting couples without common children. Furthermore, the introduction of a unique address for all dwellings made it possible to produce an annual household statistics based on registers and formal address, statistics according to the household-dwelling concept.

Persons are grouped into families in the CPR through the allocation of family numbers. The family number is maintained by reports on marriages, divorces, deaths, migrations etc. Families in the CPR comprise married couples with or without children, lone parents with children and persons living alone. Only children who are
registered on the same address as their parent(s) are counted as family members. Due to the aforementioned problems with the Dwelling register, the quality of family statistics is probably better than of household statistics, especially for immigrants.

E.2.g Political participation

Several aspects of political participation among immigrants are covered by Statistics Norway, ranging from electoral turnout to the representation of immigrants in the local municipality boards. All statistics are based on electoral rolls and municipal registries of eligible and elected representatives. This information is linked to the CPR-system to identify persons with immigrant background. For both national and local elections the number of immigrants eligible to vote and the subsequent electoral turnout among immigrants is published. From 2007 the election statistics also include information about candidates with immigrant background and whether a representative in the municipality board has immigrant background or not. In 2007 there was also a survey on how the immigrants voted in the local election.

E.2.h Crime

Most police and judicial administrative records use the pin-code so in theory most of these records can be linked to CPR-system. Some studies on immigrants and crime have been conducted by Statistics Norway, but none on a regular basis.

E.2.i Discrimination

Statistics Norway has since 2000 been involved in the development of methodology to measure the nature and extent of discrimination. From 2004-2006 Statistics Norway participated in a project named Common Measures for Discrimination in co-operation with NSOs from Denmark, the Netherlands, Czech Republic and Portugal. The project funded by the European Union also involved complaints bodies and ombudsmen from the countries mentioned above, and resulted in two reports with descriptions of data availability and recommendations (Olli and Olsen ed. 2005 and 2006).

The European Commission is designing activities to develop a data knowledge base in the field of anti-discrimination. Its work was supported by a specially formed Working Group on Data Collection, composed of representatives from selected Member State authorities, national and Community statistical authorities, groups exposed to discrimination and the Commission's relevant units, including the Anti-Discrimination unit. Statistics Norway participated in this Working Group of data collection from 2004-2006.

From 2008 Statistics Norway is involved in Eurostat's Task Force on Equality Statistics. The mandate of this Task Force is to present recommendations and proposals on indicators to measure discrimination in and between European states for the Directors of Social Statistics.
Recently, Statistics Norway published a report from a survey on Living Conditions among Immigrants 2005/2006 (Blom and Henriksen 2008). The report includes analyses of perceived discrimination among immigrants in Norway, and it shows that near half of the immigrants in the survey have had negative experiences due to their ethnic or immigrant origin.

Annually Statistics Norway conducts a survey on attitudes towards immigrants in Norway. This survey includes some questions comparable to the European Social Survey, and it shows that Norway ranks as one of the more tolerable countries towards immigrants in Europe.

F. Accessibility of data

F.1. Individual data

Micro-data are available either from Statistics Norway or from the Norwegian Social Science Data Archive (NSD). NSD receives survey data from Statistics Norway data that are available for research, and they are serving the research community free of charge. Micro data may be communicated to research and for planning purposes. Non-sensitive anonymised micro data may on certain specified conditions be distributed with a notification to the Data Inspectorate. Delivery of sensitive data assumes as a main rule that the researchers in addition have concession from the Data Inspectorate, and that the data have been made unidentifiable. Register data is mostly available through Statistics Norway for research purposes. It will normally be easier to have Statistics Norway, against covering their expenses, to do tabulations and estimations, than to have access to micro data files. It is easier to have access to micro data for users in Norway than abroad, due to the Privacy Act.

F.2. Aggregate data

Statistics and analyses are available on ssb.no/en. The statistics may be used free of charge by everybody as long as Statistics Norway is quoted as the source. Aggregate data can be obtained from the Statistics Bank ssb.no/english/statbank where most of the core tables on the immigrant population and living conditions among immigrants are published. Other than that tables are published for each topic under the title ‘Daily statistics’. More detailed tables or distributions than those publicly available might be produced upon request to Statistics Norway.

G. Quality and scope of data collection.

The fact that the register was established primarily for administrative and not statistical purposes is important, because it determines the quality of the statistics. A register made only for statistical purposes would probably not manage to keep its data quality over time, due to lack of personal interests in keeping it updated. On the other hand, the definition and selection of variables in such an administrative register
might not be the best for statistical and analytical purposes. Statistics Norway does not own the register, and changes might be introduced against our priorities. Statistics Norway will be consulted before any substantial changes in administrative registers, and normally there are common interests between the statisticians and other users. The general and frequent use of the CPR is essential to the quality of the statistics. You can't have a salary, drive a car, have access to health services, open a bank account, or buy a house etc. without the PIN-code given to you upon registration. It is an integral part of being a Norwegian resident. Thus, as the information from the register system is so widely used, we may reasonably assume that all serious quality problems have been uncovered, although not necessarily solved. The most serious problems (not related to migrants) are linked to place of residence of young persons, mainly students, where the registration rules are not in accordance with the principles for population statistics. The great majority of immigrants are included, if not always on their exact date of arrival, because it is very difficult to live in Norway for any length of time without being registered. Information on their address might be of lower quality. Those given a PIN-code will normally be legally resident immigrants.

The number of persons living in Norway illegally is difficult to gauge precisely but one study estimates the number to be around 0.4 percent of the population (Zhang 2008). One problem is linked to the emigration of immigrants. Many of these are unaware of their obligation to notify the register upon departure, and even if they knew, they might not see any reason for doing so. For some foreign workers it might be in their employers’ or their own interest not to de-register, and such cases can obviously affect the reliability of the statistics on both stocks and flows. Estimates made around 1990 indicated that between 10,000 and 15,000 foreigners had left the country without being de-registered. The majority of these were oil-workers from origin countries such as, for instance, the UK and the USA, with fewer third world migrants than might have been expected. Since then, the system for de-registration has been improved. Whenever personal rights and other interests depend on register status, e.g. voting rights or ownership rights, these pose risks to register quality. In the last years we have seen a development of what we have coined ‘Active Population Registration’. Immigrants that have permits that have expired are written out of the system. The same goes for other persons if there is not registered any “activity” in any register on their part during some years, and where the local register workers and the municipality cannot find any evidence of continued stay in Norway. This also entitles active cooperation with the police and the Immigration Authorities.

In Sweden there has been some discussion on the reliability of mortality data of migrants as they fail to report emigration thus distorting among other mortality rates. These are probably problems that Norway faces as well, but the numbers involved are probably low, as the immigrants are still young.

Experiences from the survey of Living conditions among immigrants showed that the address information on some groups of migrants is not as good as for the rest of the population. This could pose a problem for the statistics produced from the system, especially for regional breakdowns.
H. Conclusions - Recommendations

Before trying to have access to micro data, researchers should see whether it is possible to exploit already published data for their purposes. If that is not possible, contacts should be made as early in the process as possible with Statistics Norway or Norwegian Social Science Data Archive to be informed on the possibilities and procedures for getting access to micro-data. The contacts with Statistics Norway should also include an attempt to see if the needs of the analyses can be met by computations made by them.

The access to micro data is regulated by a set of laws and regulations, and access is not easily obtained. However, these laws are based on privacy considerations, and to have any change in these laws seems not to be likely.

As described in section 5b the lack of information on the education that immigrants bring with them from abroad spoils the quality of the data on immigrants’ education as a whole. Some small steps have been taken in order to find or establish suitable administrative registers, but it still seems that we have to rely on a special survey in 2011 in order to establish the starting point for a new registration system.

When recruiting the staff for the survey ‘Living conditions among immigrants’ there was a special emphasis on hiring interviewers with immigrant background. This staff could interview the respondents in their own language; a great asset especially for those newly arrived. The regular staff of interviewers does now better mirror the population in the area they will do their surveys, and will cover most relevant languages. Surveys among immigrants will have great benefits in terms of reduced selective non-response and increased quality of answers in offering a questionnaire in their mother tongue. To conduct such surveys in the national and may be one international language will often give insurmountable quality problems.
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