



ISU's comments on the suggested new Immigration Act

ISU is glad to announce the new Immigration Regulations suggested by the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion, which is on hearing until 30th of April 2009. Unlike before, the suggested new regulations imply that it is not obligatory for foreign students to return to their home countries after completing the studies in Norway. ISU is enraptured with this proposal, as we have argued for a long time that the international students within Norway should be encouraged to gain practical experience and skills related to the acquired education during the completion of the degree as well as afterwards.

According to the proposed regulations, the students and researches who have recently graduated from Norwegian institutions can be given a permit to stay in the country for another 6 months in order to look for a studies-relevant work place (in the status of “faglært” or “spesialist”). The applicant should be able to document his/her successful completion of a degree in Norway and the acquired competences. The permit can also be given in other cases, such as for Norwegian speaking professionals willing to apply for jobs in Norway.

The applicants should stay on a self-financed means of funding during these 6 months. The permit does not include the possibility of family reunification either. However, if the applicant manages to get employed, he/she is granted the working permit, which gives access to family reunification.

In case of not finding a relevant working place within the specified period, the applicant has to leave Norway. Professionals, however, can also be granted permission to stay in Norway for the maximum of two years in order to upgrade the level of their education in order to meet Norwegian standards of work quality.

Another advantage of the proposed changes is that the professionals who would like to work in Norway may be given a permission to study Norwegian language for up to one year prior to starting the career. ISU gladly welcomes this change and believes that increased competence in Norwegian language results in a more qualified contribution by foreign students to the economic performance of Norway. It also creates profound mutual understanding and integration between international and Norwegian professionals, making the process of understanding each others' culture, values and working styles easier and more effective.