

APPENDIX A: STUDENT HOUSING IN OSLO

The following news article from Universitas describes the segregation of international and domestic students in Kringsjå student village. The article accounts for the viewpoints of residents, accommodation management, student welfare representatives and politicians and can be approached in a variety of methodological ways.



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Søk i Universitas

NYHETER DEBATT KULTUR REPORTASJE MAGASIN FOTO ANMELDELSER OMVERDEN VI SPØR IN ENGLISH

MAGASIN: – Skiballett var interessant så lenge det varte, men nå har vi twintip.

KOMMENTAR: Medisinstudiet er ikke for alle. Hvis det er samvittighet man vil jobbe med, kan man vurdere teologi.

OMVERDEN: Universitetssektoren i Russland preges av frykten for terrorisme, men kan være en del av løsningen.

Ingen tilfeldigheter: – Nordmenn liker å bo i ensomhet. De fester ikke, og liker god plass. Derfor passer de ikke inn her, sier Nafiza Ferdoushi fra Bangladesh. Hun mistenker at det ikke er tilfeldig at hun og Tanima Ferdous har blitt plassert i «ghetto-blokk».

forbrukslånguide

Trenger du et forbrukslån? Sjekk ut oversikten og finn lårene med best rente og betingelser.

SØK LÅN NÅ

#godfølelsen

Se hva som får disse til å smile!

9 out of 10 residents are foreign

Universitas, 22.01.2014, Ragnhild Sofie Selstø og Thea Storøy Elnan (text) • Ena Kreso (photo) • David Jordhus-Lier (translation)

In a student dorm in Kringsjå, nine out of ten are international students.

- It's crap, says Tanzanian Yman Emer, answering a question on what he thinks about Kringsjå student village. - I live here because it is cheap. And because many other Africans live here, he says.

International students account for 65 per cent of the student body in Kringsjå. In total, there are 3000 students living here. Most of the foreign students live in the older apartment blocks in lower Kringsjå, official stats show. An most of these live in block 24 and 26, where a mere 10 per cent are Norwegian students. In the newer buildings, the opposite is true, nine out of ten are Norwegian residents.

- Problematic

Sveinung Rotevatn, member of parliament (Venstre) and previous youth party leader (Unge Venstre), finds the high share of foreign students in Kringsjå problematic.

- Mixing foreign and domestic students is important, both because of language and networking, he says and adds: the student welfare organisation (SiO) needs to make an effort to achieve a better mix of international and Norwegian residents.

Moved to “Norwegian block”

Sven Sondre Frøshaug stands in the living room in one of the newest blocks in upper Kringsjå with roommate Sindre Godager.

- I avoided the kitchen as far as possible, he says.

- It was dirty and small. And talking English all the time made me stressed.

In his new dorm, Frøshaug has his own bathroom and shares common area with three mates. In the living room, they have a sofa group and a telly.

- I was always visiting friends. Or I sat on my own in my room, says Frøshaug.

- The age difference was big in the previous dorm, and they placed families with small children in the same flats as other students.

Frøshaug believes international students live in lower Kringsjå due to the low rates.

- Norwegians want to be alone

Nafiza Ferdowshi and Tanima Ferdous, both from Bangladesh, are very satisfied with life in the “ghetto block”. As other foreign students, they suspect that their placement was not a coincidence. They believe that the ghettoization has to do with Norwegian culture.

- Norwegians enjoy solitude. They do not party, and they value space. Hence they do not fit in, says Ferdowshi, as she straddles the kitchen floor in slippers. She finds Norwegians difficult to talk to, let alone getting to know them.

- I am going to Bangladesh after my studies. I think Norway is great, but I do not know that many Norwegians, she says.

Random placement

Trond Bakke, director of SiO Accommodation, claims that allocation is random. Hence, they cannot intervene and secure a more even spread of backgrounds, as Rotevatn calls for. The situation is as it is also because international students have priority in choosing accommodation, he says.

- In addition, international students might be more conscious of living costs, and are attracted by the cheapest alternatives, says Bakke.

- Losing valuable skills

Data from Stats Norway show that four out of five international master students will eventually return. Parliamentary member Sveinung Rotevatn places great importance in keeping international students after they have completed their degree.

- The lack of networks might be related to the high return rate, he says.

The leader of the Erasmus Student Network, Maria Mastrangelopoulou, argues that the low number that opts for settling down in Norway relates to difficulties in landing a job – again related to their weak networks. They simply do not know enough Norwegians.

- A career day tailored for our international students would be a good idea. It could help them getting in touch with prospective employers, she says.

Rotevatn points out that international students return both voluntarily and involuntarily.

- But we do miss out on valuable skills, he says.

Close to nature and sociable

In their yellow kitchen, Tanima and Nafiza are baking naan breads. Even with old equipment and little working space, the Bangladeshi girls are happy that they ended up in lower Kringsjå.

- We are close to nature and it is easy to visit each other when we are in need of company. And we need that pretty much all the time, Ferdowshi smiles.

Facts from SiO website

1 2012: 19 327 international students in Norway (8 per cent of the student total).

- *Almost 60 per cent from Europe*
- *1631 of students from Sweden, the top sender country.*
 - *the number of Swedes trebled from 2008 to 2012.*
- *56 per cent of international students are women.*
- *Per 2014: 40 per cent foreign students in SiO Accommodation.*
- *In Kringsjå, 56 per cent. Top five countries*
 - *Germany*
 - *China*
 - *France*
 - *Ethiopia*
 - *Sweden*