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Paradoxical Attraction? : Why an Increasing Number of International Students Choose Norway /

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**Abstract**

Between 2000 and 2015, Norway has experienced a large increase in the number of international students compared with many other countries. At first glance, this may seem paradoxical considering that Norway is a country with few well-known universities, a high cost of living, and a geographical location on the northern fringe of Europe. This article sheds light on why more students find their way to Norway. Global trends of increased student mobility as well as EU policies influence the flow of students to Norway. Nevertheless, national higher education policies and in this development. Courses in English and more active partnerships with higher education institutions abroad have been established to attract international students. Furthermore, tuition fees are not charged in state-owned universities and colleges, and this has become a comparative advantage in an era when institutions in other countries are introducing or increasing tuition fees for national as well as international students.

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Asking the international students themselves about their motivation for studying in Norway, we find that the rationale is pragmatic rather than related to perceived quality. Their choices still appear rational; they get free higher education in a safe country, and increase their career opportunities.

(HRK / Abstract übernommen)