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**Abstract**

On the background of global, national and regional challenges of higher education, this article presents the merger process of two university colleges in Norway which took place between 2008 and 2011. Emphasis is put on challenges like the need to increase the number of students and at the same time develop the quality of bachelor-, master- and Ph.D.-programs. A wish to strengthen the research capacity and the ambition to become a university was also part of the discussion related to the merger. Arguments for and against the merger are presented and some tensions between external and internal interests are highlighted. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)