Through Their Eyes:
Exploring Study Abroad Motivation
and Campus Diversity
in the Era of Tuition Fee Policy

*A Qualitative Case-study focusing on the Experiences of non-EU/EEA students
in Norway at the Norwegian School of Economics (NHH)*

Supervisor: Siri D. Isaksson

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NORWEGIAN SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

Abstract

The introduction of tuition fees for non-EU/EEA students in Norway in 2023 marks a pivotal shift in the landscape of Norwegian higher education, with significant implications at the Norwegian School of Economics (NHH). This thesis explores how the new policy influences the study abroad motivations of non-EU/EEA students and its impact on the diversity climate at NHH. Employing a qualitative, explorative case-study approach, this research conducts semi-constructed interviews with 13 non-EU/EEA full-time master students at NHH, comparing perspectives of both fee-paying and non-paying, first and second year cohorts.

The study is anchored in the Push & Pull motivation theory and the Campus Climate Framework. Findings indicate that both first and second year students' push motivations for studying abroad remained largely unchanged and similar. However, the tuition policy has reoriented first year students' motivations towards viewing education as an investment attracting more motivated students with enhanced focus on education programs. This is in contrast to the second year students emphasising free education as their main motivator. Notably, the tuition policy has significantly impacted structural diversity, evidenced by a 90% reduction in non-EU/EEA student enrollment at NHH. Both first and second year students are aware of the negative impacts of tuition on non-EU/EEA student composition, however they report a positive perception of campus diversity within formal academic settings and institutional structures at NHH. Conversely, challenges in informal interaction with Norwegian students due to cultural and language barriers are prominent for all students, underscoring a crucial aspect of the study abroad experience.
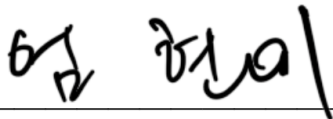
This thesis contributes to the discourse on international education policy impacts, highlighting the complex interplay between financial policies and educational aspirations in a global context. The research findings offer insights into students' decision-making processes and experiences, providing a nuanced understanding that goes beyond numerical analyses. These insights are pivotal for educational policymakers and institutions like NHH, as they strategise to balance financial sustainability with the goals of internationalisation and diversity in an increasingly competitive global education landscape.

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1.   Introduction

Human migration, a phenomenon propelled by survival, opportunity, and learning, has been rapidly accelerated by advancements in various fields (Bista et al., 2018). This is particularly evident in the realm of *International Student Mobility* (ISM), which has seen a dramatic increase from 2 million students in 1998 to 6.1 million in 2018 (OECD, 2022; Fidler et al., 2022; Wiers-Jenssen, 2022). ISM is increasingly perceived as a value-add for institutions, capitalising on the influx of international students (UNESCO, 2007). The increase in ISM is intricately tied to globalisation, the internationalisation of labour markets, accessible technological advancements, and the significant roles international students play in their host countries (Diku, 2019; Wiers-Jenssen, 2018; Paige et al., 2009; Parey & Waldinger, 2010; Lörz et al., 2015). In this context, 2023 stands as a critical year in the landscape of Norwegian education, marked by the introduction of tuition fees for non-EU/EEA students. This policy mandates a significant financial obligation, with fees ranging from 128,000 up to 480,000 NOK per academic year (Mikkelsen, 2023a; Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2023; Civinini, 2023). Such a sum presents a notable financial consideration, likely to impact the decision-making of non-EU/EEA students. This policy could hence bring forward significant transformation, accompanied by unique challenges and potential opportunities within the educational system.

Reflecting global trends, Norway has experienced an increase in its international student population until 2022, except for a brief disruption during the Covid pandemic (DBH, 2022; SSB, 2022; Liu & Solheim, 2023). Wiers-Jenssen (2018) attributes this growth to the absence of tuition fees and the availability of English-taught courses. However, the introduction of tuition fees for non-EU/EEA students in 2023 signals an end to Norway's longstanding principle of 'free education for all' and a shift in the factors drawing students to the country. The Norwegian government justifies the policy by aiming to increase revenue sources, attract more motivated students, and ensure the accessibility of Norwegian students to higher education (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2022). However, there has been a number of diverse debates, particularly concerning issues of fairness and the impact on campus diversity. Comparative studies with Nordic neighbours where similar policies are in place, reveal insightful evidence. For example, initial reductions in non-EU/EEA students raised the concerns of reducing campus diversity and international collaboration in Sweden, Finland, and Denmark (Lörz et al., 2016; Pietilä, 2020; Wiers-Jenssen, 2015). However, after 4-5 years

these countries achieved stabilisation in the number of non-EU/EEA students and their economic contribution which shed light on the potential long-term impacts of such policies (Nilsson & Westin, 2022; Andersson & Wadensjö, 2017; ICEF, 2023). Predicting that Norway will mirror the outcomes of other Nordic countries poses a challenge. The recovery in non-EU/EEA student numbers observed in the other Nordic countries after their introduction of tuition fees is largely attributed to their extensive scholarship schemes for non-EU/EEA students. In contrast, Norway has not yet established such a scholarship system for non-EU/EEA students (Nilsson & Westin, 2022; ICEF, 2023). In addition, the number of non-EU/EEA full-time students at NHH dramatically dropped from 40 in 2022 to 5 in 2023, representing a steep 90% decline which is a more sharp decrease that surpasses the national reduction of 80% (Nilsson & Westin, 2022; DBH, 2023a). It is crucial to investigate the implications of Norway's policy shift, with a specific focus on the unique motivations driving non-EU/EEA students to Norway, while taking into account the nation's specific context. Additionally, exploring the potential influence of altered study abroad motivations on campus diversity is vital. It is closely linked to educational quality in nurturing critical thinking and the overall student experience which plays a significant role in understanding the evolving dynamics (Gurin et al., 2002; Milem et al., 2005; Denson & Bowman, 2017). Such insights are imperative for government and educational leaders to ensure the competitiveness and global standing of Norway's education (Salisbury et al., 2008).

1.1 Purpose and Research Question

This study investigates how the introduction of tuition fees in Norway has transformed the motivations of non-EU/EEA students who are pursuing their studies abroad in Norway. The tuition fee policy has indirectly impacted diversity at Norwegian higher education institutes, therefore, focusing on NHH and investigating this impact from the students' perspective is unique. Being an institution that strongly aligns with the government's decision, a stance contrasting with many other Norwegian institutions, presents a unique case (Larsen & Tønnessen, 2022). Additionally, since the tuition policy is such a newly emerged phenomena the topic is relatively unexplored. Thus, there remains a gap in qualitative research that delves into the tuition policy's impact, especially concerning the personal experiences of non-EU/EEA students. By adopting an exploratory approach, this study aims to capture the subtle shifts and underexplored aspects of this policy's effects, offering both flexibility and

deep understanding of this complex issue. Lastly, this research examines a unique period at NHH, where both tuition-paying and non-paying non-EU/EEA students are present, providing a valuable lens for in-depth analysis of this phenomenon (NHH, 2023). Specifically, our qualitative case study explores the following research question:

How has the introduction of tuition fees altered the study abroad motivation and diversity on campus with respect to non-EU/EEA Master Students at NHH?

This study aims to explore how Norway is perceived as a study destination and examine the factors motivating study abroad. Contrasting the experiences is done through the lens of two distinct groups of non-EU/EEA full-time students at NHH: those who arrived in Norway before and those who came after the implementation of the new tuition policy. This study delves into the factors influencing non-EU/EEA students' decisions to study in Norway, aiming to discover their true priorities and how these contrast or align with the assumptions of institutions and the government. Grounded in previous research on Nordic countries, including Norway as educational destinations and relevant motivation theories, this study aims to offer new insights through a close examination of individual experiences. Additionally this thesis will explore how tuition fees and shifting motivation dynamics affect campus diversity at NHH and their broader impact on students' experiences in Norway. Understanding these specific motivations and diversity experiences at NHH is crucial for the institution's positioning among business schools in Norway and Europe, guiding strategic decisions to attract non-EU/EEA students. Engaging directly with students' perspectives will provide valuable insights, contributing to NHH's strategic planning process.

1.2 Structure

This thesis is divided into different chapters that aim to answer the previously mentioned research questions. The second chapter explores and offers a fundamental understanding of previously conducted research through a literature review on relevant topics. The third chapter explores the methodology in more detail and presents the case study structure and overview. The fourth chapter delves into the findings and results collected from the case study. The fifth chapter showcases the discussion, limitations and future research suggestions, as well as the practical implications of the study. Lastly, the conclusion of the study and the answer obtained to the research question mentioned above will be presented.

2. Literature Review

In this literature review, previous research will be reviewed in order to understand and explore the fundamental concepts and theoretical frameworks. In particular, the topics of tuition fees in higher education, motivation to study abroad, and diversity on campus will be examined to explore potential relationships. Since this research is a case-based study focusing on the situation in Norway and NHH, the topics will be investigated in relation to the circumstances in these contexts. The understanding of the topics will be used as a framework to explore the unknown gap and future directions of higher education in Norway after the introduction of tuition fees to non-EU/EEA students.

2.1 Tuition Fees in Norway

In this section, the *Norwegian government's rationale and justification* for the new tuition policy for non-EU/EEA students will be looked into. This will be further reviewed by *comparing Norway with other Nordic countries'* where their education systems and trends tend to be seen as more compatible with Norway's. In addition, *diverse public discourses* on the topic will be investigated including *NHH's official position* on the tuition policy.

2.1.1 Background

International student mobility (ISM) has increasingly become a key goal and a topic of discussion of policy and regulation in higher education (Bista et al. 2018). In many countries ISM serves as a key policy tool with objectives of enhancing economic benefits (Bista et al., 2019), fosters cultural exchange and promotes global understanding (De Wit et al., 2008), academic collaboration (Jon et al., 2014), educational quality improvement (Hudzik, 2011), and campus integration (Wiers‑Jenssen & Støren, 2020). Such a development in Norway has been reflected in policies including Norway joining the *ERASMUS programme* in 1992, the *Bologna Declaration* with 29 EU countries in 1999, the adoption of a new system like *Quality Reform* in higher education (2000s), and multilateral agreements between Norwegian and foreign institutions (Wiers‑Jenssen & Støren, 2020). As emphasised by Liu and Solheim (2023), the Norwegian government has placed *'internationalisation in higher education'* at the core of its political strategy. It has also focused its efforts into increasing ISM with the aim of facilitating globalisation of higher education and quality improvement.

English-speaking host countries, including the United States, United Kingdom, Canada and Australia, view ISM and hosting international students as a market and have been linking ISM primarily as a source of revenue (Elken et al., 2022). On the other hand, Norway's higher education system is based on ensuring equal access for all students regardless of their socio-economic class, including both local and foreign students (Liu & Solheim, 2023; Elken et al., 2022). However, Norway was under increasing pressure to charge tuition fees to non-EU/EEA students, particularly since other Nordic countries have already implemented such policies (Nordic Council of Ministers, 2013). Other Nordic countries' experience in tuition reforms inspired Norway and provided the arguments it was looking for (Sanchez-Serra & Marconi, 2018). Thus, the Norwegian government proposed a new tuition fee policy in 2022.

According to an article by the International Consultants for Education and Fairs (ICEF, 2023), the suggested tuition set by the government (130,000 NOK) and the fees chosen by the institutions are much higher than those placed by the other Nordic countries. Norwegian institutions have implemented tuition fees ranging from 128,000 up to 480,000 NOK a year to non-EU/EEA students (Mikkelsen, 2023a; Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2023; Civinini, 2023). Institutions who defend the set prices argue that the justification for the higher fees include superior quality of education, advanced resources and facilities, as well as the increasing costs of management. In addition, the tuition is rationalised as an investment in education to ensure better career prospects, international exposure, and comprehensive study experiences to enrich the environment (Mikkelsen, 2023c). In contrast, critics question the tuition's impact on accessibility and diversity. They are concerned that the higher tuition might deter talented students from coming to Norway, possibly affecting Norway's intellectual capital and future workplace diversity (Hogan, 2023; Wisborg, 2023; Fquihi, 2022; Infanti & Sripada, 2023). Drawing upon these arguments, it seems imperative to critically consider the right price range, balancing institutional sustainability with education accessibility.

The Minister of Higher Education and Research, Ola Borten Moe who initiated the policy, argued the rationale and justification for the policy with the following three main reasons.

"Our high quality education will attract more motivated students not because it is free, and this will secure Norwegian students' accessibility to study spaces and housing. Furthermore, institutions will be able to increase revenue sources". (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2022)

Liu and Solheim (2023) discuss in their article that this rationale and justification seem to reflect Norway's reinforced market-oriented focus on higher education targeting international students as a revenue source. However, public debates on the new tuition policy show different opinions and perspectives with diverse concerns.

2.1.2 Diverse public debates on tuition fees

Is tuition a means of economic contribution?

As Ola Borten Moe stated, tuition fees seem likely to contribute to better funded education systems, especially in times of tight public budgets (Sanchez-Serra & Marconi, 2018) due to the recent national challenges like climate change, increasing international wars, inflation, and energy crisis (Over the Circle, 2023). Subsequently, the Norwegian government has decided to modify the funding system in higher education by incorporating the new tuition policy (Myklebust, 2023a; Myklebust, 2023c). This is in line with the rationale from reforms in other Nordic countries aiming to increase economic contribution by creating a market for education (Elken et al., 2022). Sweden, for example, experienced an immediate negative impact on the number of enrolled non-EU/EEA students when it introduced the tuition fees to non-EU/EEA students. This backlash was during the first 4 to 5 years, but beyond that point it reached the same levels of incoming students as prior to the reform (Nilsson & Westin, 2022). A similar pattern is observed in Finland as the number of international students declined after tuition fees were introduced in 2017. However, it has since recovered (ICEF, 2023).

The Swedish Institute (2022) study shows that fee-paying students' contribution has gone from 300 million SEK in 2012 to more than 1,900 million SEK in 2021. The Norwegian government appears to be hoping for the same results experienced by the other Nordic countries. Furthermore, a recent survey conducted this year on tuition fees found that 57% of the Norwegian population agrees that international students should pay tuition fees, and only 27% opposed it (Mikkelsen, 2023a). The most common reason for supporting tuition fees is fairness, as Norwegians themselves must pay for obtaining higher education outside of Europe. In other words, many Norwegians feel it is unfair that foreigners get to benefit from

the Norwegian system without offering something in return (Iversen, 2023). The public's positive support for the tuition appears to help justify the policy. However, Elken et al. (2022) argue that it may be naive to assume that international students are a quick solution to increase the income of higher education and ignore their non-economical contribution.

A study by Nilsson and Westin (2022) shows that one out of four fee-paying students are dependent on scholarships for their studies in Sweden. Sweden's ability to recover to its original level after the tuition policy appears to be largely due to the rapid and extensive scholarship system set in place. Finnish institutions also offered scholarships to non-EU/EEA students soon after the tuition policy. This made studying in Finland more affordable, and the number of non-EU/EEA applicants increased sharply which helped it reach its original levels (ICEF, 2023; Study in Finland, 2023). In 2018, 74% of the 1,372 students who were fee-paying in Finland were receiving grants (Elken et al., 2022). In the case of Norway, initial plans for scholarship were not decided on by the time the tuition fee policy was rolled out (Mikkelsen, 2023b). In addition, many institutions and students who oppose argue that the challenges that Norwegian institutions raised were not discussed enough (Liu & Solheim, 2023). Norsk Studentorganisasjon (2023) argues that the real value of international students is diversity, knowledge exchange between international and Norwegian students, and the contribution to the quality of education in a globalised world (Diku, 2019). Opponents argue that non-economic values of international students have been overlooked since the financial contribution was weighted more heavily when formulating the tuition policy.

Do tuition fees attract more motivated students, and increase the quality of education?

Vabø and Wiers‑Jenssen (2017) state that one of the arguments of those who defend the tuition fee system is related to migration patterns. They explain that there are a number of students that use study visas for purposes other than studying abroad. The Norwegian government has also expressed concerns that study abroad could be used as a backdoor for immigration (Brekke, 2006). This is similar to the argument discussed in Sweden in the years prior to the tuition fees where the focus was on how students were not performing on the educational level that the Swedish government expected (Nilsson & Westin, 2022). Swedish Higher Education Institution (2018) argued that international students did not have studies as their primary motive, but rather simply wished to enter the Schengen Area leading to low

educational performance. However, this is in contrast to the report by Diku (2019) which discovered that in Norway, non-EU/EEA students showcase high levels of ambition and a strive towards obtaining good grades coupled with a high desire to stay and work after graduation. In addition, the conditions stated by The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI, 2023) for obtaining a student visa include strict requirements such as a clear purpose of residence, financial resources of 130,000 NOK, and a mandate to renew the visa every year.

Another debate raised in Norway against the tuition fees is about diversity and international collaboration which came from 35 institutions, student organisations, researchers, and politicians from the Norwegian political parties MDG and Rødt, (Larsen & Tønnessen, 2022). Guro Elisabeth Lind (2022), leader of the Norwegian Researchers Association, said:

"It costs up to 1 million (NOK) tuition and this makes it impossible for students from poor countries to study in Norway. It will weaken international collaboration that creates innovative knowledge development".

The Norwegian and European Student Unions also believe that quality of education is not always created by students who are able to pay. They believe that the introduction of tuition fees could negatively impact the diversity of the student body and make it more homogeneous. This could have negative consequences for Norway's competitiveness in higher education. They argue that a tuition policy is an unsustainable and unfair method for supporting education systems (Saadeh, 2023). Tuition can put a burden on students, especially those with limited financial capability (Sanchez-Serra & Marconi, 2018).

Institutions that rely heavily on international students argue that tuition will put them at risk of shutting down (Sandvoll, 2023). Some programmes have already closed down because of the decrease in international students due to the tuition fees (Sveen, 2023). This is especially evident with smaller, highly priced, specialised, and niche-oriented programs (Arnesen & Tønnessen, 2023). Tuition fees seem to play a pivotal role not only in students' accessibility to education but also institutions' sustainability and competitiveness. If this phenomenon continues, it seems difficult to maintain the high quality and competitive education system that the Norwegian government claims. There is no clear promise that Norway will be competitive enough to attract fee-paying students. Professor Hans de Wit (2023) argues that:

"Leaders in Norway emphasise the benefits for economies but ignore the increasing inequality and tend to ignore the elitism of their approach. There is not much wrong about tuition fees for an elite that can afford it. More important is to advocate for scholarships for those students who can't afford to study abroad and to break the wall of inequality and elitism in international student mobility" (Babatunde & Myklebust, 2023).

The timing, delays in decision, lack of clarity and precision, and the hasty process of the introduction of the new policy were also in debate (Liu & Solheim, 2023; Myklebust, 2023b). For example, between the policy proposal in October 2022 and its adoption by parliament in March 2023, non-EU/EEA students who had applied to study in Norway by December 1st, had to make decisions without knowing their future status. Additionally, institutions were pressured to adopt the new system and decide tuition fee ranges themselves despite a lack of knowledge and infrastructure (Liu & Solheim, 2023).

NHH's attitude toward the government's decision on tuition

While 35 universities, colleges, organisations, and private colleges are opposing the proposal for tuition fees, only eight universities and organisations are siding with the proposal (Larsen & Tønnessen, 2022). NHH seems to be on the fence towards governmental decisions on tuition fees. In its official statement, NHH writes:

"NHH agrees with the ministry's ambition that Norway should attract international students because of the quality of education and not because they are free of charge". However, NHH also stated that *"Tuition fees will also contribute to a reduction in the number of qualified non-EU/EEA applicants. We want diversity in the student body, and that will therefore trigger a need to develop a scholarship scheme for this group. It could potentially be a more effective mechanism for attracting candidates with the right skills and motivation, but it will take some time to develop"* (Larsen & Tønnessen, 2022).

Tuition fees for higher education continue to be a highly controversial issue. Within Europe, higher education policies regarding tuition fees charging are very heterogeneous and regularly changing (Alecke et al., 2013). As NHH mentioned, regardless of the pros and cons of the policy, future directions and adaptations will likely require careful attention to changes and impacts on the entire school following the introduction of tuition fees. This will also require strategic development of the processes and action plans accordingly.

2.2 Motivation

In this section, the *Push & Pull motivation theory* will be reviewed in relation to higher education and the different elements that students consider when making their decision to study abroad. Additionally, the factors that drive students to choose their *study destinations* as well as the choice to enter *specific institutions* will be introduced. Lastly, the process behind how the students evaluate their *experiences and satisfaction* in these places will be highlighted, providing a comprehensive overview of the current patterns of ISM.

2.2.1 Definition

The definition of *motivation* is generally broad and connected to the different needs that an individual has (Maslow, 1943). In the context of education, choosing where to study is related to motivation, the process of evaluating the destination, and the relationship between the individual and the institution (Svinicki & Vogler, 2012). Motivation can be seen as an intrinsic quality of the individual themselves or as a result of them extrinsically interacting with a situation which reflects the circumstances that are motivating. Svinicki and Vogler (2012) define motivation related to education as an internal process and a directional concept. It can be driven by desires, needs, goals and external factors, such as rewards, punishments, and social expectations. Furthermore, this thesis is focused on 'study abroad motivation', therefore, defining this concept is necessary.

The definition of study abroad motivation in this thesis is as following:

"The combination of internal and external factors that influence students' decisions to study in a country other than their own." (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002)

The various factors identified by Mazzarol and Soutar (2002) in their research encompass both intrinsic and extrinsic elements, which will be elaborated further in the following parts since they are the bases of the Push & Pull motivation theory.

2.2.2 Push & Pull motivation theory

This theory, lacking a singular origin, is rooted in a conceptual framework derived from both behavioural and economic theories. It draws on various foundational works, including Maslow's (1943) 'A Theory of Human Motivation', Deci and Ryan's extensive research

(1985; 2000; 2020) on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, Skinner's (1938) 'The Behavior of Organisms', and Cialdini's (2001) 'Influence: Science and Practice'. The terms *'Push'* and *'Pull'* were initially coined by economists to describe worker and organisational migration patterns, with push referring to intrinsic factors and pull to extrinsic factors of motivation.

The terms were first used in the psychology field where they referred to the behaviour of individuals in terms of motivation and determining reward systems connected to them. Deci and Ryan (1985) explain in their book how humans are engaged in activities for their own good without letting external factors or rewards influence their behaviour. Deci and Ryan (2000) also state that people are more intrinsically motivated and engaged in activities when they have autonomy in their actions, experience competence in their struggles, and when they have the opportunity for social connections. Furthermore, they explain how in educational environments, workplaces, and when it comes to personal development if the basic psychological needs are met then it is easier for individuals to be intrinsically motivated (Deci & Ryan, 2020). This is also backed by what Maslow (1943) argues in his theory about human motivation, when the basic needs are met then the individual is able to develop over time and reach self-actualisation in an easier manner.

While Deci and Ryan (2020) and Maslow (1943) focused more on intrinsic motivation, Skinner (1938) and Cialdini (2001) focused on extrinsic motivation. Although Skinner (1938) does not use the actual term 'extrinsic motivation', his study on reinforcement and punishment falls under this type of motivation. His focus was mainly on how the individual's environment can influence their behaviour and how external elements can play a role when it comes to motivation. People are extrinsically motivated when they tend to engage in activities because of the external rewards they are receiving. People tend to repeat an action if the reward they receive is positive, and they tend to not repeat an action when a punishment follows that action (Skinner, 1938). In addition, he goes into detail about the different types of stimuli and how some might lead to more positive reinforcement while others lead to greater punishments. Cialdini (2001) builds on this concept and further explains the different types of influence which include: reciprocity, commitment and consistency, social proof, liking, authority, and scarcity. These types of influence are mainly connected to how an individual's satisfaction comes from being accepted by others and is connected to their idea of what is considered acceptable; therefore it is more focused on extrinsic motivation (Cialdini, 2001).

2.2.3 Motivation to study abroad

Being one of the first researchers of this topic, Ravenstein (1889) explains in his article how migration for education, work, and life development reasons has been a part of how people grow and develop themselves. Individuals have different motivators when it comes to choosing where they are moving to, whether it being a new city or a new country. There are a number of laws that Ravenstein (1889) observed in the way people migrate, including: distance decay, gravity model, push and pull factors, stage theory, gender and age patterns. What these laws show is that people migrate for a set of reasons where they are being pushed by the current location they are in or being pulled by the destination they want to go to. These push factors can be either poverty or few opportunities to grow, and the pull factors can be to better oneself in terms of economic opportunities and better living conditions (Ravenstein, 1889). Regardless of what pushes or pulls them, some people are dependent on the ability to migrate which helps them gain access to opportunities they did not have before.

The rise of ISM is caused by students constantly seeking new opportunities outside of their home countries where they are willing to migrate wherever is necessary. Yue and Lu (2022) investigated the different factors that caused international students to pursue higher education abroad. They found that the main reasons for ISM include: academic interest, career goals, the desire for personal growth and new experiences, cultural change, and the perceived benefits of an international education. They also found that when students feel like they are in control of their decisions then they are more likely to be motivated to go through with the aforementioned decisions. Furthermore, family support, peer influence, and the institutions themselves also help foster motivation that will allow them to make better decisions. This goes in line with the reasoning that Ravenstein (1889) presented as factors that motivated people to migrate and what Cialdini (2001) presented in his article about peer acceptance.

More recent research by Tokas et al. (2023), investigated the non-economic motivators behind ISM where they found that the factors that are of great significance are the push factors that offer intrinsic satisfaction. These factors include seeking new experiences and new cultures, wanting to learn a new language and meeting new people, as well as enhancing personal development. The underlying argument is that these factors are becoming even more important when it comes to students making their decision to study abroad. Furthermore, De Winter et al. (2021) found that romantic relationships also play an important role when

students are deciding on whether to study abroad or not. They found that in certain cases, these relationships can be motivators or inhibitors depending on the location of the partners, how far away the distance between them is, and the dynamic of the relationship itself has an important effect on the decision (De Winter et al., 2021).

Choosing a destination

There are a number of factors that students take into account when choosing the destination they are willing to move to in order to acquire their higher education. Some push factors that Mazzarol and Soutar (2002) identified were: limitations in the home country's education, limited access to quality education, political instability, and/or lack of opportunities for career advancement. They also identified that some push factors were more related to personal reasons such as the willingness to gain a broader perspective. Some of the pull factors they identified were: the quality of education in the host country, the reputation of the host institute, availability of scholarships, opportunities for research and career development, political stability, safety, and the attractiveness of the host country as a place to live and grow. The researchers proceed to emphasise that in order to better understand why students choose a certain destination, the strength and the opportunities the destination has to offer are the main reasons that make it more attractive (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002).

Eder et al. (2010) also explored the motivations of students moving abroad for their studies and they found similar factors to those found by Mazzarol and Soutar (2002). While the push factors are: personal growth, career, cost, and academic concerns, the pull factors are: quality of education, cost of living, language, culture and employment opportunities. In addition to these factors, Eder et al. (2010) introduced structural factors, including visa requirements and travelling fees, that have an important impact on the study destination students choose. These structural factors can be seen as inhibitors to the students' decision even though the other push and pull factors are present. Therefore, when it comes to choosing the study destination, students have to consider multiple different factors that might not easily fit together which add constraints to their final decision.

According to UNESCO (2023) and Statista (2023b), the most popular destinations of 2022 for international students to pursue their higher education are United States (around 950,000 students), United Kingdom (around 630,000 students) and Canada (around 550,000 students)

followed by France and Australia (around 360,000 students each). Hence, reaffirming that anglophone countries are the most popular study abroad destinations for international students. That being said, Norway has been viewed as a great study destination for international students that are willing to take the leap and move to the Nordics, prior to the tuition fee policy implementation. Wiers-Jenssen and Støren (2020) highlights the different reasons as to why international students tend to pick Norway as a study destination, which include its high-quality education, programs taught in English, safe and welcoming society, unique cultural experience, and of course free education. The author goes on to explain how the Norwegian government, at the time, viewed this popularity as an opportunity for it to attract even more students and suggested making the visa application easier while also offering scholarships. Wiers-Jenssen (2018; 2020) concludes by explaining how international students add to the diversity of the institutions which in return enriches their study environment. Furthermore, a report by the International Students in Norway Contributors to Quality in Higher Education (Diku, 2019) highlights that the three reasons international students choose Norway as their study destination are: the quality of education, Norwegian nature, and the perception of Norway as a peaceful and safe society.

Choosing an institution

According to the articles mentioned previously, after students choose their study destination, the decision about the host institution has to be made. Mazzarol and Soutar (2002) explain in their article that pull factors play a big role in determining the host university picked by the international student. The students evaluate the institutions based on: the reputation of quality, market profile, range of courses, alliances, exchange opportunities, staff expertise, degree of innovation and technology usage, resources, the alumni network, and how the institution markets itself. They state that since choosing an institution is the most critical part of the student's decision, some external influences like the opinion of family and friends as well as that of counsellors and education agents might also have an impact. Furthermore, Mazzarol and Soutar (2002) explain how in return the institutions should also work on attracting international students and not rely mainly on their reputation. Making sure that the institution is marketing itself right and is willing to expand its acceptance of international students will benefit it in the future and make it more diverse. This in return will ensure that it is

maintaining the quality of diversity and study environment that made it popular and well known in the first place (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002).

The latest data from the Database for Statistics for Higher Education (DBH, 2023b) reveals that the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) holds the top spot as the most sought-after destination for international students. NTNU currently hosts approximately 24% of the entire international student population in Norway, with 4,140 out of 17,230 students enrolled. Following closely is the University of Oslo (UiO), claiming the second position with 21% of the international student body, consisting of 3,655 students out of the total 17,230. In contrast, the Norwegian School of Economics (NHH) stands among the universities with the lowest percentage of international students in 2023. Only 0.7% (120 out of 17,230) of the student population is enrolled at NHH (DBH, 2023b).

Experience and satisfaction

The decision to move to a foreign country to pursue higher education is a complex one, requiring careful consideration of a variety of push and pull factors, as well as external and structural factors. Despite the complexity, once the decision is made, and the student has already taken the leap, the levels of satisfaction and their individual experiences vary widely. Lauermann (2012) argues that the decision to study abroad is an integral part of the entire experience and that it sets the tone and can in turn influence students' levels of satisfaction.

Furthermore, Collins et al. (2021) explore the levels of satisfaction of students moving to the UK and Norway to pursue higher education and what their experiences were. They argue that the traditional view of the study abroad experience as a linear progression from honeymoon phase to culture shock to adjustment is not realistic. Collins et al. (2021) present evidence that the study abroad experience typically begins with challenges, such as: culture shock, academic challenges, homesickness, and language barriers. Once students have adjusted to the new environment, their experiences tend to improve, with fewer struggles and more opportunities for thriving. However, some students may experience challenges throughout their entire study abroad experience, which can be due to the difficulty of making friends or a lack of perceived future opportunities in their host countries (Collins et al., 2021). Therefore, institutions play a vital role in supporting incoming international students, particularly during the first few months of their mobility. Institutions can support incoming international students

by providing pre-departure information and orientation, as well as language, social, and academic support (Collins et al., 2021). By providing this support, institutions can help to ensure that all students have a positive and satisfying study abroad experience.

2.3 Diversity and Engaging Diversity

In this section, we will *define diversity* and *the engagement with diversity*, specifically in the context of higher education. We will also review its implications using the categorization of diversity experiences proposed by Milem et al. (2005). Additionally, we will introduce the *Campus Climate Framework* (CCF) developed by Hurtado et al. (2008), which will aid our research in comprehending the factors that affect the overall study environment and study atmosphere on campus.

2.3.1 Definition

The concept of diversity is widely used in both social and business research, and it is traditionally viewed as a fundamental pillar of academic institutions (Maruyama et al., 2000). There has been an emphasis on the role of higher education in cultivating students' diverse knowledge, global skills, and competencies (Milem, 2003). To this end, educators have developed tools and practices to enhance awareness of diversity in gender, race, and socioeconomic status (Milem et al., 2005). Consistent with the global trend, Norwegian higher education has also emphasised the values of diversity by adopting policies and strategies that promote educational diversity to support equity and inclusion (Frønes et al., 2020). However, some argue that the Norwegian government did not adequately consider diversity when designing the policy. The tuition fee policy was implemented despite the majority of institutions indicating a strong negative correlation between tuition and diversity in higher education (Allen & Wolniak, 2019; Piché, 2015; Larsen & Tønnessen, 2022).

Since this study explores changes in diversity in higher education and its association with individual experiences after the tuition policy, particularly for non-EU/EEA students at NHH, diversity will be defined with a focus on nationality. Given this focus, this study will adopt the combined definition of racial/ethnic diversity from Jeffrey Milem (2003) and cultural diversity from Guo and Jamal (2007) to define 'national diversity'.

The definition of diversity in this thesis is as follows:

"National diversity is an engagement across racial and ethnic lines, involving a broad and varied set of activities. It also encompasses distinctions in lived experiences, along with the related perceptions and reactions to experiences, which collectively serve to differentiate collective populations from one another." (Milem et al., 2005; Guo & Jamal, 2007)

This combined definition highlights both the active engagement across racial and ethnic lines and the recognition of distinctions in lived experiences as integral components of diversity.

2.3.2 Exposure to diversity

According to Gurin et al. (2002), diversity experience in higher education can be categorised in three ways: *structural diversity, informal interactional diversity and classroom diversity* (2002). Structural diversity is defined as a numerical representation of groups, and it is also commonly described as student body composition (Milem et al., 2005). According to Gurin et al. (2002), structural diversity is essential and enhances the likelihood of students encountering peers from diverse backgrounds. However, it does not automatically assure meaningful intergroup interactions and it alone does not provide the complete benefits of diversity. This is in line with Milem et al.'s (2005) argument that bringing together a diverse group of students is a crucial initial step in facilitating opportunities for learning from diversity, but it is insufficient on its own. This is why other studies (Bensimon et al., 2016; Bowman & Bastedo, 2009; Hurtado et al, 2008; Hurtado & DeAngelo, 2012) are placing emphasis on the interaction between diversity and engaging diversity. They argue that diversity alone is insufficient and that meaningful engagement is necessary to fully realise the benefits of diversity in higher education.

While diversity indicates heterogeneity among groups, engaging diversity is rather associated with feelings and indicates students' sense of belongingness to the educational environment. It is based on how much the environment values, respects, supports and cares for them despite their diverse profile (Chaudhry, 2022). This is in line with the other two concepts by Gurin et al. (2002) who explain informal interactional diversity as the frequency and the quality of intergroup interaction experience, and classroom diversity as learning in the classroom about diverse people and gaining experience with peers from different backgrounds. Hence, the framework shaping this study is grounded not solely in the composition of the student body but also in the active involvement of students with peers from diverse backgrounds.

2.3.3 Impact of diversity

Although diversity has a significant impact on higher education, it remains unclear how to effectively demonstrate its value in ways that institutions will endorse (Giovannini, 2004). Additionally, the benefits of diversity are wide-ranging in which they could benefit individual students, institutions, and society as a whole (Milem et al., 2005). As more stakeholders in higher education demand evidence of the benefits of diversity and engaging diversity, it is important to explore the effects of diversity and how to maximise these benefits.

The most frequently emphasised benefit of compositional diversity is increased social interaction and dynamic engagement on campus, which can enhance intergroup dialogue, understanding, relationships, and collaboration (Milem et al., 2005; Denson & Bowman, 2017; Negda et al., 2009). Milem et al. (2005) argue that this enhanced diversity fosters a wide range of ideas, thoughts, and opinions, creating an intellectually stimulating atmosphere. These positive effects can manifest in both informal interactions outside the class and formal interactions in the class. Diversity creates a vibrant social environment that can be used as an educational resource to enhance the learning and growth of all students. Empirical research on American law students provides compelling evidence that diversity enhances the educational experience (Orfield & Whitla, 2001). A majority of students reported that their interactions with peers of different racial backgrounds were valuable learning experiences. Diversity led to the formation of numerous connections and friendships. Mainstream caucasian students, particularly those with relatively limited prior exposure to diversity, experienced more favourable outcomes as a result of these interactions (Orfield & Whitla, 2001). This evidence strongly supports the claim that a diverse learning environment is beneficial for the educational experiences of most students. Gurin (1999) also argues that diversity can improve students' ability to thrive in a diverse society, enhance the effectiveness of institutions, and contribute to the quality of life in the broader society. On the other hand, campuses with limited diversity can: increase the visibility of underrepresented groups, accentuate group distinctions and segregation, amplify negative social stigma, and increase the stress associated with minority status (Milem et al., 2005).

While diversity is consistently important, its impact on students depends heavily on how effectively it is managed (Giovannini, 2004). Not all institutions have demonstrated support for diversity, therefore, the level of student engagement with diversity varies across campuses

(Milem et al., 2005). As a result, it remains unclear how to strike the right balance between the optimal level of diversity and students' openness to it (Milem et al., 2005). In other words, simply assembling a diverse student body is not enough; to maximise the benefits of diversity in higher education many researchers emphasise the crucial role of educational institutions (Berger & Milem, 1999; Gurin et al., 2002; Guo & Jamal, 2007; Maruyama et al., 2000; Milem et al., 2005).

To examine how students maximise the benefits of diversity on campus, Milem et al. (2005) suggested examining three institutional behavioural aspects of campus context: *interracial friendship, diversity-related courses,* and *institutional expectations and commitment*. The study explains that interracial friendship defines behavioural norms for interacting with diversity, and diversity-related courses reduce prejudice and stigma in relations with peers from diverse backgrounds (Antonio et al., 2000; Milem et al., 2005). However, even if the first two conditions are met, students will still express reservations if they perceive a lack of support from their institution (Tavares, 2021). For students to perceive these interactions as beneficial, it is important for institutions to demonstrate a strong and clear commitment to diversity. In essence, an institution's commitment to diversity has a significant impact on students' openness to it (Kuh et al., 1991; Milem et al., 2005). The Campus Climate Framework (CCF) offers a valuable approach to assessing and improving institutional commitment to diversity. Developed by Hurtado et al. in 2008, the CCF is a widely used multidimensional framework that considers four key dimensions of campus climate: structural diversity, historical legacy, psychological climate, and behavioural climate.

1) *Structural diversity* refers to the diversity on campus in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status (Hurtado et al., 2008). It allows students to learn from and interact with people from different backgrounds. It also helps to create a more welcoming environment by reducing prejudice and discrimination (Smith & Hurtado, 2003).

2) *Historical legacy* is the institution's history of marginalised groups and current policies and practices related to diversity and inclusion (Hurtado et al., 2008). For example, institutions with a history of discrimination may have a more difficult time creating a welcoming and inclusive environment (Rankin & Reason, 2009).

3)   *Psychological climate* refers to the perceptions and feelings of the community about how welcomed and included people feel, and perceive the institution's commitment to diversity (Hurtado et al., 2008). It is important because it can affect students' sense of belonging, well-being, and academic success (Smith & Hurtado, 2003).

4)   *Behavioural climate* reflects campus members' attitudes and beliefs about diversity and inclusion. It includes how people interact with each other as well as how they respond to incidents of bias and discrimination (Hurtado et al., 2008). It is important because it can reflect the attitudes and beliefs of students about diversity and inclusion (Torres, 2017).

Figure 1: Campus Climate Framework (Milem et al., 2005)
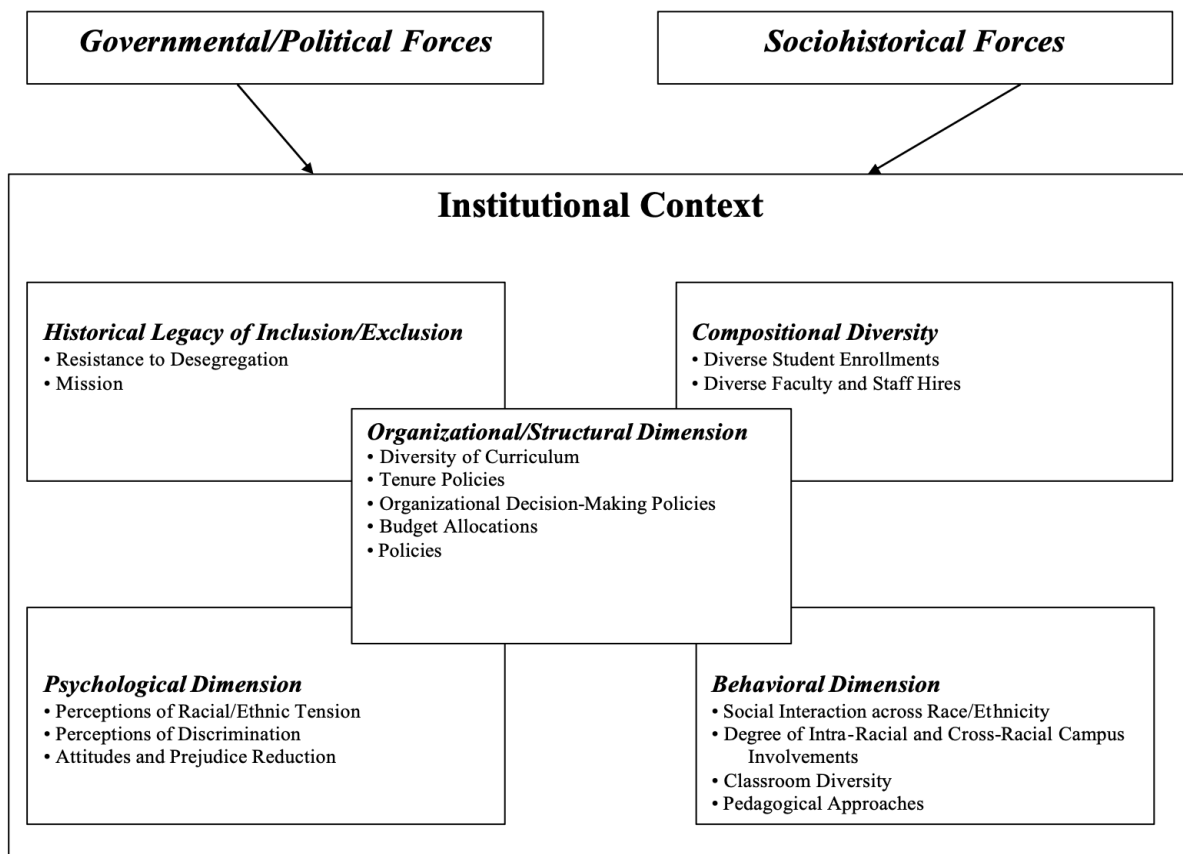
The four elements of the CCF highlight how important it is for everyone, regardless of the students' background, to have a welcoming, inclusive, and respectful campus (Milem et al., 2005). However, students have varying experiences and perceptions of campus climate, and institutions prioritise diversity in different ways and aspects (Hurtado et al., 1999). Therefore, it is important to understand how specific groups of students are affected by specific elements of diversity within a particular institutional context.

This study will use both the three institutional behavioural aspects and the four CCF elements in order to assess the diversity and engaging diversity status at NHH as well as to identify areas where NHH is excelling and where there is room for improvement. This combined framework will offer valuable insights into how campus diversity can enhance or reduce the educational environment for students from diverse backgrounds (Hurtado et al., 1999). This will be helpful in creating a campus climate where everyone feels safe, respected, and valued, fostering a sense of inclusion and ensuring that everyone on campus has the opportunity to thrive and succeed (Milem et al., 2005). The Campus Climate Framework (Milem et al., 2005) stands out as an effective tool for evaluating campus diversity particularly in the context of NHH in Norway since it is viewed as a thorough and culturally sensitive tool for assessing campus diversity. This framework's comprehensive approach not only captures the nuances of campus diversity but also aligns well with the specific educational and cultural dynamics at play in a Norwegian academic institution like NHH.

2.4 International students in Norway and NHH

International students are students with foreign citizenship who come to Norway primarily to study, including both exchange and degree-seeking students (Liu & Solheim, 2023). According to the Database for Statistics for Higher Education (DBH, 2022) and Statistics Norway (SSB, 2022), international students make up approximately 8-9% (24,000 students) of the total student body at any given time, excluding the pandemic period. While the number of exchange students has remained relatively stable at around 34-37% of all international students, the number of degree-seeking students has increased from 48% in 2016 to around 58% in 2021. The composition of international students also varies by program and major. Exchange programs are primarily composed of European students (the top 12 incoming countries are from Europe and account for 82% of all exchange students). In contrast, degree programs have a more diverse composition with non-European and low-income countries represented (8 of the top 12 source countries for degree-seeking students are developing countries). Additionally, degree programs have a wider range of nationalities (195 countries) than exchange programs (45 countries), which could be the outcome of having exchange agreements, such as Erasmus, be mainly available within Europe. Finally, among degree-seeking students, around 15% are enrolled in economics and business programs, which are the most popular study fields (Appendix 8).

Internationalisation has been a core strategy for NHH to enhance academic quality and create a diverse learning environment (Isaksen, 2016). NHH aspires to be an internationally leading business school (NHH, 2022), and attracting more international students has been the main strategy to achieve this goal. According to the Database for Statistics for Higher Education (DBH, 2022) and NHH's annual report from 2022, the number of international students at NHH increased from 485 in 2016 to 630 in 2022, accounting for 15.2% of the total student body. A significant portion of international students are exchange students, with full-time students accounting for 13-16%. However, NHH's new tuition policy has impacted its student body composition leading to having 90% less non-EU/EEA students at the masters program (Svendsen, 2023). Despite NHH's reputation and the high quality of education, it has not been able to avoid the impact of the tuition policy. In response to this change, NHH is implementing new strategies such as launching a new English bachelors program in 2024 and discussing new scholarship schemes (Appendix 8).

Compared to Norway, Sweden has shown stronger growth of 19% in 2022 in the number of international students, with almost 40,000 students, and around 70% of them enrolled in full-degree programs (Erudera News, 2023). Based on a simple comparison of the two countries' statistical data, it may seem justified for Norway to implement a tuition policy similar to Sweden's in order to increase ISM with higher financial support. However, as Bista et al. (2018) argue, educators should consider the broader picture of mobility to understand its complex and multifaceted issues, which go beyond counting numbers. Additionally, as Wiers-Jenssen (2018) mentions, Norway's popularity and growth among international students is seen as a paradox given that the country has few highly ranked institutions, high living costs, a language barrier, and a remote location. Therefore, to understand the empirical relationship between the Norwegian policy and ISM, an in-depth understanding beyond simple numerical changes is necessary.

2.5 Summary of Theory

In our literature review, we delved into a range of literature that supported our research question, encompassing aspects of tuition policy, study abroad motivation, and campus diversity. Our thesis is grounded in the Push & Pull motivation theory (Maslow, 1943; Deci & Ryan, 2020; Skinner, 1938; Cialdini, 2001), the Campus Climate Framework (Hurtado et al., 2008) and examining the influence of the new tuition policy intervention on students. Additionally, we assume potential similarities and differences in the experiences of first and second year students, paying and non-paying, at NHH regarding their motivation and experiences of campus diversity. Therefore, our study focuses on comparing these two distinct student groups within the specific context of NHH. The linear interplay between the tuition fee policy, study abroad motivation, and campus climate is visualised in the conceptual framework below. This framework will serve as the foundation for our interview guide, data collection and analysis, and will inform the findings and discussions of this paper.

Figure 2: Proposed Conceptual Framework
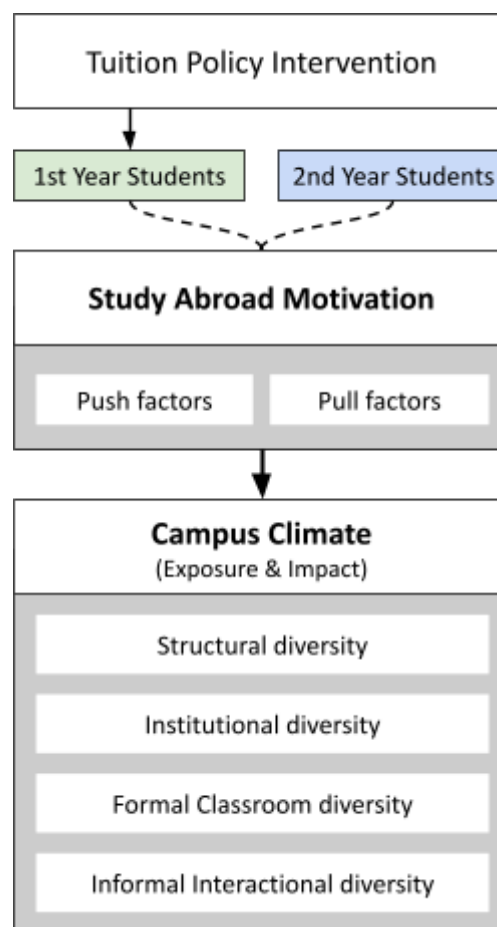
3. Methodology

In this chapter, we will present and describe our methodological choices to answer the research question. First, the research philosophy will be explained followed by the research design. Then, the data collection methods and process will be explained in detail as well as the data analysis methods and process. Finally, the quality of our chosen methods will be evaluated and discussed including ethical consideration.

3.1 Research Philosophy

The foundation of research lies in its philosophy, which is a set of beliefs and assumptions that define the development of knowledge and the nature of the study itself (Saunders et al., 2019). The research philosophy selected provides the groundwork that supports the research approach, including its design and methods (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

Our research philosophy is based on *interpretivism* and *subjectivism* within a *qualitative* framework. *Qualitative* research often aligns with an *interpretivist* philosophy, as it requires researchers to interpret the nuanced, subjective narratives and socially constructed meanings regarding the topic under investigation (Saunders et al., 2019). This choice is appropriate to our research question because the aim of this study is to understand the subjective meanings of non-EU/EEA students' study abroad motivation, experience of diversity on campus and the influence of tuition fees on them. It is imperative for us to work with subjective meanings that already exist in the social world to use them as building blocks in theorising (Goldkuhl, 2012). Therefore, interpretive points of view using qualitative methods and data are essential. Interpretivism is suitable for our research since it revolves around the belief that reality is not objective but rather subjective and constructed by individuals (Saunders et al., 2019). Furthermore, this approach offers a flexible structure, delving deeply into contexts, perceptions, and societal truths. This depth and flexibility align with our research objectives and qualitative methodology, particularly as we aim to explore potential phenomena following the introduction of the new tuition policy. Together with interpretivism, subjectivism forms our understanding of reality, which is crucial for developing knowledge, methods, and theories. Subjectivism views reality as something created by social interactions (Ontology), and it considers knowledge as the understanding of this social reality, including insights into experiences, patterns, and different situations (Epistemology) (Holden & Lynch, 2004). It

entails an emphasis on the experiences, beliefs, and values of the subject and how these can shape the research (Saunders et al., 2019). Subjectivism is pertinent in our research to understand non-EU/EEA students' experiences and beliefs from their perspectives.

These philosophies are connected and complement each other in our research. Interpretivism acknowledges the varied interpretations individuals have about their experiences, while subjectivism emphasises the input of diverse perspectives in constructing meaning. This combined philosophy will help us uncover and explore the unknown patterns or phenomena in a real setting through our study. For instance, interpretivism's allowance for multiple realities promotes us to seek diverse narratives from non-EU/EEA students, while subjectivism's emphasis on individual internal logic and experiences guides our data interpretation strategies, acknowledging students' unique circumstances and worldviews. By integrating interpretivism and subjectivism with qualitative data, our research not only acknowledges the complexity of individual experiences but also strives to construct a comprehensive narrative. This will help us to capture the nuances of non-EU/EEA students' motivations to study in Norway and experience with diversity on campus in the evolving educational landscape of Norway.

3.2 Research Design

Research design is the plan of how we aim to answer our research questions. It contains clear objectives, specifies the data sources, and the methods which allow us to collect and analyse the data (Saunders et al., 2019). In this section we will demonstrate the elements of our particular research design including the approach, method, objective, and strategy.

3.2.1 Research Approach

An *abductive approach* is fundamental as this study combines both inductive and deductive approaches. The abductive approach is a hybrid tool that entails a dynamic use of inductive (theory building) and deductive (test existing theory) reasoning (Saunders et al., 2019). This involves ongoing back and forth interplay between theory and data.

We start with a new real life observation, which in this case is the new tuition fees policy in Norway, to find surprising facts. Then, using the deductive approach, the concepts and theories that can explain the new phenomenon are determined; in this case study abroad

motivation (Push and Pull theory), diversity and engaging diversity on campus (Campus Climate). However, the findings, coming from the collected qualitative data, are approached inductively in the interpretation. The qualitative interviews are used to collect data that can help us find plausible explanations for the new phenomenon. Rather than focusing on generalisations, this approach is appropriate since this study aims to develop new insights, identifying themes and patterns which can generate a new or modified theory and is open to multiple explanations (Dubois & Gadde, 2002). There has not been any research on international students' motivation and campus diversity in Norway after the new tuition policy. Therefore, this approach allows us to understand and explore the undiscovered pattern to formulate new or revised theories that match well with the new phenomenon.

An abductive approach is a flexible reasoning that matches well with many business and management research (Saunders et al., 2019) and it is very suitable for the first phase of research for a new phenomenon especially in empirical and case-based research (Dubois & Gadde, 2002). Our study is a case-based empirical study that focuses on a special setting with the new tuition policy in Norway, NHH campus, and non-EU/EEA students with qualitative interview, thus, the abductive approach is considered appropriate.

3.2.2 Research Method, Objective and Strategy

Our research adopts a *qualitative approach*, utilising non-numerical data gathered through semi-structured interviews. This methodology is particularly effective for generating fresh insights aimed at comprehending new phenomena. The meanings and experiences of participants, extracted from their words and contextual subtleties, assist us in constructing a conceptual framework and advancing theoretical understanding (Saunders et al., 2019). This approach is well-suited for our objective of exploring the impact of tuition on students' experiences, specifically concerning motivation and diversity experienced on campus.

Due to the nature of the research question, an *exploratory study* is an effective tool for us. An explorative study poses open-ended questions, starting typically with 'What' or 'How', to uncover underlying dynamics and gain deeper understanding concerning a particular subject matter (Saunders et al., 2019). It allows us to find broad and flexible insights, initial understanding of phenomena, and to clarify understanding in the context of study abroad motivation and diversity on campus. Exploratory research has also the benefit of flexibility

and adaptability, permitting a shift in focus and direction following the emergence of new data and the accrual of fresh insights (Saunders et al., 2019). Even though we start this study with predetermined concepts and theories, this flexibility is an important aspect since there are no studies done in the context of combining the new tuition policy, study abroad motivation, and diversity neither in Norway nor at NHH.

Furthermore, we take the *case-based study strategy* for this study. A case study involves a comprehensive investigation of a phenomenon in its real-life setting with a small sample size (Saunders et al., 2019). This helps to generate valuable insights through detailed research of a subject, leading to empirical narratives and contributing to theoretical development. It is designed to identify what is happening and why, and to understand the influence of the phenomenon and implications for action (Saunders et al., 2019). Our case-based strategy is appropriate since we aim to not only deeply understand the real impact of the tuition policy but also try to come up with new insights and implications for leaders in the Norwegian education system. Thus, our research question requires us to examine the unique case boundaries in relation to the policy changes and contextualise our understanding of the people who are influenced by the new phenomenon. Given that the Norwegian School of Economics (NHH) is among the few institutions to have agreed on the tuition policy, examining its unique standpoint and the subsequent implications becomes particularly valuable. Finally, the time horizon for this study is *cross-sectional* involving a particular incident at a particular time (Saunders et al., 2019). We aim to explore the new changes in the Norwegian education system in 2023, thus, a longitudinal study is not feasible yet. However, as 2023 is the only year when Norwegian campuses will have both fee-paying and non-fee-paying non-EU/EEA students, this period presents a unique and valuable opportunity to gather data and conduct direct studies with these target student groups.

3.3 Data Collection

In this study we focus on the case of non-EU/EEA full-time students at NHH, and their support was essential during the data collection. In this section we explain the main data sources, sampling strategies, and the entire procedure utilised for data collection. We also explain how the collected data was handled throughout the study.

3.3.1 Data Source

In this study, we chose to utilise both *primary* and *secondary data*, where we gathered our own data through interviews while relying on secondary data that is readily available. Even though the idea of tuition fees to non-EU/EEA students in Norway is new, that is not the case in the rest of Europe. As mentioned previously, Norway is the last Nordic country to implement such a scheme, therefore, we have drawn inspiration from the other countries that have used this policy. Studies that examined Sweden and Finland's tuition fees policies were used to better understand what type of data was needed to conduct our study. A mix of data was presented in those cases including numeric and non-numeric data. The access to such information allowed us to *triangulate*, thus aiding with data validity and allowing for the development of in-depth evidence to back up our arguments (Saunders et al., 2019).

Since the topic is only a few months old, at the time of conducting this study, there is still no scientific research published related to it. Therefore, we focus on an *in-depth understanding* from the students' perspective (Saunders et al., 2019), which are the main parties influenced by this governmental reform. The collected primary data is in the form of semi-structured interviews with non-EU/EEA students at NHH, which will be detailed and later explained in section 3.3.3. The interview questions are based on key concepts from the Push & Pull motivation theory, as well as the Campus Climate Framework of diversity. This helps us focus our interview questions to the theories chosen for this study but still gives us flexibility to be open to new topics that are discovered throughout the study, hence following the abductive approach mentioned previously (Saunders et al., 2019).

The secondary data that is being used in this study comes from the Norwegian government, a number of other institutes, and NHH's website. The data mainly revolves around the satisfaction of the students and their choices of studying abroad which reflects diversity in Norwegian institutions. This numerical form of data helps us understand what the students generally think but does not offer an in-depth understanding of why, hence emphasising the need for having interviews with students to bridge that gap.

3.3.2 Sample Selection

Based on the research question, we used *non-probability sampling* since we subjectively picked the sample, and *purposive sampling* since the participants all had one thing in

common; being non-EU/EEA students (Saunders et al., 2019). We did not know the likelihood of choosing each case from the target population, but we relied on our judgement to select the individuals that are best suitable for us to address our research question. Purposive sampling is also suitable with very small samples such as this in-case study (Saunders et al., 2019).

We focused on non-EU/EEA Masters students studying in Norway, more specifically at NHH. Thus, the sample of interviewees that was chosen from the international students' population currently enrolled at NHH. Because of non-disclosure reasons and GDPR, NHH could not share with us who these non-EU/EEA students are or how to reach them directly. They did share, however, the number of non-EU/EEA students on campus at the time of conducting this study. We were informed that currently there are around 33 second-year students and 9 first-year students. Among the nine first yearers, only 5 are currently paying tuition fees, which was later also confirmed by the Database for Statistics for higher education's latest report (DBH, 2023a), and the other 4 have exemptions. These exemptions include either being of Norwegian descent therefore being considered Norwegian and non-EU/EEA citizen at the same time, having marital connection to Norway, or by being admitted a year prior to the policy implementation. In order to identify them, we reached out to the entirety of the masters student cohort at NHH, both first and second year students, through the Canvas platform using the message in Appendix 4.

Canvas is where professors and lecturers share course material and communicate with students. As master students, we have access to the group *Meeting Point - Master* which is set up by NHH for all masters students to get in touch with one another. In the beginning, we were open to all students reaching out to us regardless of their study year and tuition fee status. Once the students reached out to us, we asked them some questions to verify their study year and where they are from to confirm that they were in our targeted sample.

From the first-year students 6 out of the 9 non-EU/EEA students that are currently enrolled reached out to us. 4 tuition fees paying students contacted us, and 2 exempted students also reached out and wanted to be a part of our study. One of the first-year paying students agreed to be a part of our study as a result of the *snowballing* effect. They heard from one of their

friends who are already participating in our study that this study is taking place and wanted to be a part of it as well.

As for the second-year students, we reached out to people we knew that were non-EU/EEA students already enrolled in the same study year as us. We interviewed 7 second-year students to get an in-depth understanding of their motivation and experiences on campus diversity at NHH. A number of literature suggests that a sample size of 6-20 is sufficient for qualitative, thematic research (Saunders et al., 2019; Clarke & Braun, 2013). This is one of the reasons behind our satisfaction with the number of participants that agreed to be a part of our study. The other reason being the time constraint that this study was under, limiting us from exploring the topic further with a bigger sample size. The table below demonstrates the different groups we interviewed and the codes they were given.

Table 1: Participants' codes and status

Category		Participants	Number of students
1st year of Study	Paying Students	A, B, C, H	4
	Exempted	F, I	2
2nd year of Study	Non-paying Students	D, E, G, J, K, L, M	7
Total number of students participating in the interviews			**13**

3.3.3 Semi-Structured Interviews

We used a *semi-structured interview* format to get a better understanding of the students' motivation and their perception of campus diversity at NHH. This format enabled us to explore their reasoning and to ask in-depth, open-ended questions to encourage the participants' free dialogue (Saunders et al., 2019). Predetermined questions were prepared prior to the interviews and included questions that we developed by adopting the main concepts and theories of motivation, tuition fees, as well as campus diversity. Our questions were inspired by the case-based studies and the Norwegian surveys we mentioned previously. We first composed a draft of the interview guide (Appendix 1), which was sent to our supervisor for approval. It was then reevaluated by us once more based on the feedback we got and the final version of the interview guide can be seen in Appendix 2.

The overall structure of the interview guide was as follows:

- *General information* - warm-up questions aimed to make participants feel comfortable and build up trust. The answers are presented in Table 1 above.

- *Introduction to the study* - we informed participants about the intentions behind the study, their rights to retract any of their statements, how their confidentiality and anonymity are ensured, and possibility to change any of their answers post-interview.

- *General questions* - to better understand their educational backgrounds, funding status, and any other international experiences.

- *Motivation* - to identify their primary motivation to study abroad, which progressed to more in-depth push and pull scenarios.

- *Information sources* - where they got information about Norway and NHH, and how satisfied they were with that information.

- *Study at NHH & living in Norway* - to get an overview of their experiences and how the academic, social, and living in general in Norway had shaped their perception.

- *Tuition Policy* - to understand their opinion about the tuition and whether they would still have considered coming to NHH depending on whether they had to pay or not.

- *Campus diversity* - focusing mainly on structural, institutional, formal, and informal diversity based on the Campus Climate Framework (Figure 1).

- *Closure* - ensuring them anonymity once again and their rights, and asked them if they were open for a followup interview if needed.

To make sure that the final interview guide was not missing anything, *a pilot-interview* was conducted before the actual data collection. This also helped us ensure that the quality of the questions was right, test the flow, and the different sections of the interview. This showed us that we need to change the order of the introduction to the study with the general information to make sure that the participants understand clearly what they were agreeing to. Lastly, we had to register our study at the Norwegian centre for research data (NSD) through Sikt - Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research (Sikt, n.d.). We attached our consent form, interview guide, and detailed information about our study. This is an obligation for all students when they collect private data. Since we have chosen to collect personal information and voice record them, we had to declare our study to the NSD. Our

documents were accessed and we were informed that our consent form was missing some critical information that was required by law to be added, which were later included.

3.3.4 Interview Plan and Process

The initial contact with the participants was over a mass message that we sent out on Canvas to all Masters students on the Meeting Point - Master group (Appendix 4). Once the students themselves reached out to us and expressed their interest in being a part of our study, we then sent them an official email invitation to book a time that best suited them which can be seen in Appendix 5. We offered them the freedom to schedule a suitable time to avoid any feelings of constraint. This email also included the consent form (Appendix 3) that they needed to fill in prior to their interview. The form included a description of our study, detailed explanation of data protection, confidentiality, and their rights. Once the participants sent us their signed consent forms and scheduled a time, we chose a room at NHH to conduct all the interviews in to make them comfortable and safe within a familiar environment. Participant K was the only student where we conducted the interview online due to geographic distance. All the interviews were scheduled to take place within a week, each being an hour long (Appendix 6).

We were both present at all the interviews to take notes, ask questions, set the recordings on multiple devices and ask follow-up questions that were not in the interview guide. This helped us create a more dynamic environment for the interviewees and helped them feel more welcomed while having a conversation. Once the participants arrived, they were escorted to the interview room and asked to make themselves feel comfortable. Before the interview began, the interviewees were reminded that they would be voice recorded and that three recording devices were set up. We started by welcoming them, repeating the purpose and focus of the study and quickly listed their rights that were already indicated to them in the consent form. We assured their anonymity will be protected and their rights to retract or change anything they share with us. We also informed them that all the data will be deleted after the study is concluded and that they will not be traced back to this study. During the interview process, we took turns in asking questions, ensuring a dynamic and engaging interaction. After concluding each interview, we expressed our gratitude to the participants for their collaboration, inquired if they had any final remarks, and asked about their willingness to participate in a follow-up interview, if necessary. Following each interview, we took time to summarise and discuss our impressions, sharing additional notes for reflection. This practice

not only helped us reflect key insights from the completed interview but also aided in preparing for subsequent ones.

3.3.5 Secondary Data

To gain a better understanding of what the entire student population thinks in terms of diversity and inclusion and their opinions on the tuition policy, we used a statistical data set. These data sets were collected by the Database for Statistics for Higher Education (DBH, 2022), Statistics Norway (SSB, 2022), The Norwegian Agency for International Cooperation and Quality Enhancement in Higher Education (Diku), and from the Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research (Sikt, n.d.). This data helped us better understand what the students valued and their different experiences at the different institutions. However, this data is numerical and does not offer an in-depth understanding but rather shows a range of their satisfaction and their opinions. Therefore, we also collected non-numeric information from institutional websites, organisational databases, peer reviewed journal articles and opinion pieces to get multiple insights in relation to our core topics.

3.4 Data Analysis

In this section, we discuss the data analysis approach and process which involves transcribing, initial coding, and focused analysis of qualitative data. Qualitative data are likely to be rich and diverse in contextual detail, and researchers use them to produce in-depth descriptive data for interpretive analysis (Saunders et al., 2019). However, the nature of qualitative data being non-numeric, non-standardised, and complex explains its likelihood of being unclear or having multiple meanings (Saunders et al., 2019). This indicates that we need a particular way to analyse qualitative data that allows us to explore and clarify meanings. Analysing data is pivotal to ensuring the trustworthiness of the qualitative data gathered, and often a researcher's capacity to comprehend, describe, and interpret data is viewed as crucial to uncover meanings (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). However, increasingly, there is a need for explicit guidance on the practice of analysing qualitative data and thematic analysis is recognized as a widely-used tool for clarification, demystification, and contextualisation of qualitative data (Clarke et al., 2015; Terry et al., 2017). Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing and interpreting patterns of meaning (themes) within qualitative data allowing us to gain deep and nuanced insights (Clarke & Braun, 2012). We chose this method

because of its well-grounded reasoning process, flexibility, and ease of use. It helped us to logically analyse non-standardised data into different concepts and categories.

According to Clarke and Braun (2006; 2021) researchers can follow three steps for qualitative data analysis following the thematic analysis they developed. The first step involves transcribing verbal data and getting familiar with it as well as cross-checking its accuracy. It is a way of engaging and immersing in data. By synthesising notes and observation, researchers can gain ideas or insights (Terry et al., 2017). The second step involves interpreting answers into codes. To create codes, researchers capture meaningful segments and tag them into labels that are relevant to the research questions (Clarke & Braun, 2006; Terry et al., 2017). The third step involves grouping related codes into patterns and themes, where the researchers ensure that the chosen themes represent relevant relations between data and theories (Terry et al., 2017). This process helps to narrow down the broad data in relation to the chosen theories and to discover unexpected findings with new insights (Saunders et al., 2019). Subsequently, interpreting subjective data using thematic analysis allows us to lay out the groundwork for findings to produce well-grounded and contextualised explanations (Saunders et al., 2019).

3.4.1 Data Preparation and Transcription

After conducting all the interviews, the data was collected and stored. Then, we immediately started transcription to minimise data deformation or distortion due to time difference. By using Microsoft Teams' AI automatic transcription, we initially could obtain a primary script, and the other audio files for each interviewed participant were compared to the script to check grammar, errors, and missing content. It allowed us to transcribe properly what was said and notice the contextual non-verbal nuances like laughs, irony, hesitation which are typically important for the holistic understanding of the qualitative data (Saunders et al., 2019). After the initial check, we each cross-checked independently every transcript to ensure data accuracy and the quality of the transcripts.

3.4.2 Initial Data Analysis and Coding

To be able to code the transcripts of the collected data, we separated them into first and second year students for ease of finding similarities in the respective groups. Each of us handled one of the groups and then we switched to ensure that no codes were missed or misplaced. According to Clarke and Braun (2006; 2021), coding is an iterative process

meaning that the initial codes that were placed can be replaced until the coding framework is coherent and offers value. An example of the initial coding can be seen below Figure 3. A mix of coding styles was utilised including descriptive and interpretive codes (Clarke & Braun, 2006; 2021). Descriptive codes are used to describe the data into the superficial meaning such as the code 'Some family struggles' where it just indicates what the participant was talking about. While interpretive codes are used to interpret the meaning behind the data such as 'Going back home but wanting more than settling down again' where we have interpreted what the participant was referring to and its meaning. This mixed coding style offers a better sense of interpretation and helps us analyse the data while coding (Braun & Clarke, 2006; 2021). The data was re-coded twice, one time by each researcher to ensure coding accuracy.

Figure 3: Initial Data Coding example

3.4.3 Focused Data Analysis: Coding Categorisation into Themes

Clarke and Braun (2006; 2021) emphasise the importance of themes that indicate patterns of meaning from the data collected. They argue that themes need to be coherent throughout, in line with the theories and its significance for the study, can help answer the research question, as well as be replicable and easy to follow. The codings that were identified offered a wide range of definitions and interpretations of what the participants were sharing and needed to be further grouped into patterns or themes. Therefore, to be sure that the data can be compared, 33 themes were developed and visualised in Appendix 7. These themes are based on the participant's Decision of studying abroad, the Push & Pull Motivation theory, the Tuition Fee policy, and the Campus Climate Framework. This process took time and multiple revisions, even though the themes were based on the theories and frameworks chosen for this study.

Figure 4: Coding categorised into Themes example

The figure above shows an example of how one answer shared by the participant could be categorised into multiple themes of 'Pull Economic' and 'Decision (compare process)'. Therefore, we have categorised each coding into all the different themes it belongs to, which will help us later have a deeper analysis of the data and in return better understand the phenomena this study revolves around (Terry et al., 2017).

3.5 Research Quality

In this section, we plan to reflect on our overall quality of research design, data, and methods by using *trustworthiness* as a central concept. Trustworthiness within a study context refers to the extent to which the data, interpretation, and methods applied can be regarded as accurate and dependable, thus underpinning the integrity of the research's quality (Polit & Beck, 2014). A split often occurs when it comes to the constitution of trustworthiness between positivist and interpretivist. The former argues reliability and validity as a central judgement, whereas the latter deems them as inappropriate for qualitative research (Saunders et al., 2019).

Reliability often refers to the research's replication and consistency, and validity refers to the appropriateness of the measures used, accuracy of the analysis of the results and generalisability of the findings (Saunders et al., 2019). However, qualitative research based on interpretive assumptions is not necessarily intended to be replicated because it will reflect the reality as socially constructed interpretations of participants in a particular setting at the time it is conducted (Connelly, 2016; Shenton, 2004). Thus, many qualitative researchers redefined validity and reliability from a qualitative point of view in order to build multiple ways of establishing trust (Golafshani, 2003). The criteria constructed by Lincoln and Guba (1985; 1994) are more appropriate and widely accepted and adopted by qualitative researchers. The four criteria are parallel versions of reliability and validity: *credibility*, *transferability*, *dependability*, and *confirmability* (Saunders et al., 2019). Lincoln and Guba (1985) explain that credibility parallels internal validity, transferability parallels external validity, dependability replaces reliability, and confirmability is used instead of objectivity. We find these are more suitable and appropriate for the quality assessment of this study.

3.5.1 Credibility

Credibility is extremely important for qualitative research and it is used to establish and ensure trust within the study (Connelly, 2016). Credibility in qualitative research focuses on

the ability and efforts of the researcher to make sure the findings are trustworthy (Golafshani, 2003). However, qualitative data, articulated in words, requires reliable analytical methods to give meaning to the data and uphold its trustworthiness. Such rigour enhances the benefits derived from a content analysis (Bengtsson, 2016). To ensure this, it is important to build up research practices that can enforce credibility and have measures to examine it.

To ensure credibility, we first tried to make our research aim and purpose clear by checking multiple literatures, theories, and secondary sources. The use of triangulation in theory and data was to confirm logical research reasoning and methods credibility (Brantlinger et al., 2005). Then the chosen theories and concepts were used to design the data collection and analysis process. Core patterns and themes were searched to develop an interview guide, and later it was used for data interpretation. Further, in the process of data collection, we strived to demonstrate a true representation of the participants (Shenton, 2004) by choosing the right samples to ensure participants' relevance. At the same time we tried to have various participants to capture different subjective perspectives. In addition, by sharing consent forms, study purpose explanation, and warm-up questions, we tried to build up trust, a feeling of safety, and clarity on the study purpose while reducing any possible ambiguity.

To ensure credibility of findings, we developed an interview guide that was reviewed by our supervisor and pilot-tested in advance which was done to increase consistency of the process and affirm clarity in questions. All interviews were conducted in the same place and manner with the greeting, mood setting, multiple audio recording, and interview process. In the data analysis, transcription of recording took into account both data accuracy and contextual nuances like laugh, empathy, humour, irony, mixed feeling (Saunders et al., 2019). In addition, the two researchers analysed the data independently to ensure the representation, objectivity, and accuracy of the data using different angles of interpretation. It helped us minimise our own bias and influence on the data. Finally, credibility included peer-debriefing and real reflective review (Connelly, 2016). Multiple discussions and feedback from peers and our supervisor enabled us to reach methodological and analytical rigours.

3.5.2 Transferability

Transferability in qualitative research corresponds to what is often termed external validity or generalizability in quantitative research (Saunders et al., 2019). This implies that deliberate

consideration is essential when assessing how the results might apply to different contexts (Kuper et al., 2008). The goal of qualitative research is not necessarily generalisation, as it captures the subjective perspectives of participants within a specific context and timeline (Connelly, 2016; Shenton, 2004). Our study is an explorative case-based research paper that focuses on a specific setting and samples in a particular topic. Therefore, the purpose of this study is not to generalise the findings to the broad world, but rather to bring new knowledge and real-life based phenomenological exploration. In addition, the empirical findings are to help future researchers to check and judge the transferability of our research design, method, and settings. This allows readers to assess the relevance of the findings to their specific or similar contexts and settings (Connelly, 2016). To facilitate transferability, we offer an in-depth description of our context and findings in chapters 2 and 4, enabling readers to determine the applicability of our study to other scenarios or the validity of extending these results to different settings (Shenton, 2004).

3.5.3 Dependability

In interpretivist and qualitative research, dependability parallels the concept of reliability which means the stability of the data by recording and elaborating all processes of research focus that can be understood and evaluated by readers (Saunders et al., 2019; Connelly, 2016). The procedure, measure, and achievement of dependability in qualitative research is challenging. However, researchers should strive to provide enough clarity for further researchers to replicate the study (Shenton, 2004). To establish and achieve dependability in this study, we focused on the transparent and comprehensive details of evidence, description of processes and approaches, and data interpretation methods to help readers to analyse and judge our dependability (Golafshani, 2003). Furthermore, critical feedback and discussions with our supervisor and peer debriefings were held during the study to ensure dependability.

3.5.4 Confirmability

Confirmability refers to the impartiality or extent to which results are stable and reproducible which parallels objectivity in quantitative research (Connelly, 2016). Therefore, the conclusions should be derived from the data itself, rather than being influenced by the researchers' biases, experience, or preferences (Shenton, 2004). In this study, we adopted clear research design and tried to eliminate personal values by applying constant peer

discussions, supervisor feedback, data collection, and data analysis. This guidance was conducted every two weeks and it contributed to objectivity in findings. In addition, all participants were promised their confidentiality and anonymity in the consent forms, which established research trust and data objectivity. Furthermore, our findings were evaluated using direct quotation which can minimise the researchers' subjective interpretation, bias, or misunderstanding. Lastly, transparent and comprehensive research processes were thoroughly described in chapter 3 which allows future researchers' repetition.

3.6 Ethical consideration

Ethical consideration in research has become increasingly important and it represents the behavioural guidelines that direct the conduction of the study (Wiles, 2012). It is to ensure the rights and well-being of the participants who are either directly involved in or impacted by the research (Saunders et al., 2019). In this study, all processes for data were handled based on the Norsk Senter for Forskningsdata (NSD) ethical principles and legal guidelines. To follow the regulation, first the informed consent form and interview guidelines were shared in advance to NSD to notify this study. In addition, we took five ethical core points into consideration.

First, we informed participants about the purpose of the study both in advance and in the beginning of each interview. It was to ensure participants' awareness about the intention of the study and use of data. Second, detailed interview information was shared. For example, in the consent form we included conditions like timeline, recording, explanation about data use/storage/presentation/discard. Sensitive questions like financial status were asked with an option to answer. Third, we clearly delineated participants' rights in accordance with NSD and GDPR. For example, any information that could identify participants were removed. It was to ensure confidentiality and anonymity in relation to privacy concerns. In addition, voluntary participation was considered seriously by giving the right to change one's mind and withdraw at any time without further explanation. Also, participants were informed about access to interview data and verification, correction, or deletion of information. Fourth, we tried to ensure a respectful, safe, and trustworthy interview experience. Finally, both audio and transcribed data were stored only electronically in researchers' private computers and researchers' private notes. The raw data was only available only for researchers and the direct supervisor and will be disposed of in accordance with the guidelines at the end of the study.

4.   Findings

In this chapter, our aim is to present the data analysis and findings of our research. We will begin by detailing the findings, thematically organised to correspond with the theoretical concepts and significant observations from the data. The first section delves into the study abroad motivations by adopting push and pull factors, diverse viewpoints on tuition fees, and individual experiences in Norway and at NHH. The second section analyses the exposure to and impact of diversity, utilising the four elements of the campus climate; structural diversity, institutional diversity, formal classroom diversity, and informal interactional diversity. Throughout the analysis, we will draw comparisons between first and second year students to highlight their similarities and differences. This comparative analysis aims to shed light on the potential effects of the tuition policy on study abroad motivation and campus diversity experiences. Our findings will be presented through direct quotations, enriched with our own descriptive and interpretive commentary.

4.1   Study Abroad Motivation

The semi-structured interview questions were designed to delve into the distinct motivations of individuals who chose to study in Norway at NHH. Initially, these questions were framed within the Push & Pull motivation theory to gain a comprehensive understanding of the overall motivations and to compare the influence of various factors. Subsequently, we incorporated questions about the participants' views on the tuition policy, their decision-making challenges, and their future plans. The findings, which provide valuable insights for addressing our research question, are categorised into three main sections: Push factors, Pull factors, Challenges and perspectives on the tuition policy.

Generally, push and pull factors played a significant role in the decision-making process of most participants. For push factors, the participants' unique life circumstances in their home countries, such as economic and political conditions, along with personal factors like self-satisfaction from being abroad and career ambitions, were of utmost importance. Regarding pull factors, the decisions of most participants were influenced by educational opportunities, social aspects, and economic considerations. Unique cases also included factors like romantic relationships and family or community connections. Notably, there were subtle differences in the motivations for studying abroad between first and second year students.

Prior to exploring the primary factors driving participants to study abroad, we dived into their international backgrounds to understand their familiarity with such experiences. 4 out of 6 first-year students have had prior study or work abroad experience. In contrast, only 2 out of the 7 second-year students had prior international exposure, while the other 5 had no experience but were gaining it through their current studies at NHH. This reveals that, overall, that first-year students in this study have more international experience compared to the second-year students. We then asked them about their primary reason for studying abroad. The question was intended to capture the initial reason that came to their minds. However, during the interview a number of reasons kept appearing while they were answering other questions related to motivation. Consequently, the participants' decision to study abroad in Norway, particularly at NHH, was shaped by a mix of push and pull factors revealing the complexity and depth of their decision-making process.

4.1.1 Push Motivational Factors

When looking at the different factors that could push the participants to study abroad, a number of themes were discovered. These themes are illustrated in Appendix 7 and the participants pointed out a few without being asked about them specifically. Peculiarly, *Family & Community Ties* were only present in the second-year students' answers. To get a better understanding of what the two groups shared about the different themes, each theme will be presented and the number of participants that pointed it out will be stated.

Economic

3 out of 6 first-year students pointed out that the economical situation back home is not something that they want to be a part of any longer and that studying abroad offers them a way out and access to better opportunities.

> *"Study abroad motivation was done with an aim for me to leave my home country since my country is in the developing status [...] We're kind of still stuck in the post war period mentally and financially." (Participant A, 1st year, fee-paying)*

Whereas only 2 out of 7 second-year students stated that this factor had an impact. Participant D wanted more than what their home country was offering them. And Participant J stated that the economic conditions back home were unbearable.

"My career has to be a bit better. They're different from everybody else's careers in what is common in (my home country)." (Participant D, 2nd year)

Educational Opportunity

Only 2 out of 6 first-year students pointed out how their education back home did not offer them what they needed and that they wanted to expand on their knowledge.

"My primary motivation was that education in my home country is kind of bad. You don't really learn anything. You learn a lot of theory and not much practice, and it's not very well ranked [...] I didn't see myself studying anywhere in my home country because it was just so bad." (Participant C, 1st year, fee-paying)

4 out of 7 second-year students had stated mixed reasons as to why obtaining masters from their home country is not something they wanted to do. 3 students from this group wanted to study abroad because it is typically viewed as a more valuable thing to do in comparison to studying in their home countries. Only 1 second-year participant wanted to use the skills they had gained during their bachelors somewhere else other than in their home country.

"I majored in international business and then also I learned English, so I really wanted to make use of those skills." (Participant K, 2nd year)

Family & Community Ties

Only 3 out of 7 second-year students stated that family & community ties are a push factor for them to study abroad. Participant D always had their family push them to go study abroad and experience new things through education.

"My father, he studied his first bachelor and his first master degree in Poland. He lived in Poland for seven years. So me and my brothers, we grew up with this idea of exploring the world, travelling. [...] So you learn and you get and you feel curious about how it works for other cultures." (Participant D, 2nd year)

Participant E had family conflicts that pushed the participant to want to study abroad.

"I was a little bit disturbed because in my family I had clashes with my parents so it was conflict of interest between my parents and me and I think that was a little bit annoying for

me at some point. But then from there you start thinking about moving away. [...] I got the motivation to actually go abroad." (Participant E, 2nd year)

Participant L had their father push them to go study abroad and get a better education.

"It's not like I wanted to go abroad in the beginning. But I got the chance because my dad passed me and told me out of the blue. And I was like, why not?" (Participant L, 2nd year)

Self Satisfaction

Most of the participants, 9 out of the 13, pointed out self satisfaction as a factor that pushed them to study abroad, 4 of which are first-year students. Participants A and B (fee-paying) wanted to shift their lives and their education and saw study abroad as the way to do so.

"I really want to learn about not just renewable energy, but economics in general. [...] I was always looking to get out of (my home country) and learn more about the world." (Participant B, 1st year, fee-paying)

In addition, Participant B also pointed out that their curiosity to learn more about the world is what pushed them to study abroad, which is the same reason that Participants H (fee-paying) and I (exempted) gave.

"I never had a long-term experience abroad, so I wanted to explore the world." (Participant H, 1st year, fee-paying)

The second-year students had pointed out similar self satisfaction reasons as the first-year students. 4 out of 7 wanted to experience new things and explore new cultures and broaden their horizons.

"I've always wanted to live in another country and I feel like my background in living somewhere else was always shorter than a year like either it was summer or four months or six months. So I really wanted to experience being fully immersed myself in another culture for a long period of time and not treat it as an exchange or like a vacation to actually treat it like maybe closer to the experience of an immigrant and see what it's like. Is it easy to integrate into a community?" (Participant G, 2nd year)

However, Participant K also pointed out that they have had enough of their home country and wanted new experiences.

"I felt like I had enough in (home country). I felt I couldn't live there anymore. I needed to change the environment to relieve myself. [...] And then studying abroad, it's like, I wanted to see the whole and big world. I want to learn about different cultures. I want to experience totally different things." (Participant K, 2nd year)

Political

Only 3 participants pointed out that the political situation in their home country is what pushed them to study abroad. First-year Participants A (fee-paying) and F (exempted) stated that the political situation back home is either stuck or deteriorating.

"I think studying abroad had more to do with the situation in (home country) because overtime the economy and the political situation. It has deteriorated to such an extent that trying to stay back and build a career there is just not viable for anyone anymore." (Participant F, 1st year, exempted)

And second-year Participant J mentioned the conditions back home being somewhat harsh.

"The conditions in my country are a little bit harsh, so I was looking for a better opportunity." (Participant J, 2nd year)

Social

Similarly, only 3 first-year students pointed to social push factors that motivated them to study abroad. Participants B and C (fee-paying) pointed out how their societies are backwards and that they did not agree with some of the views that were the norm.

"I don't wanna live in my home country because I think we're years back in the mentality. I really don't agree with some of the views that people have and how they do things." (Participant C, 1st year, fee paying)

Whereas Participant I mentioned how their society is mainly composed of their ethnicity. They criticised how they view this as a disadvantage for their society as a whole.

"In (home country), 99% of the jobs are very domestic. All employees are (home country ethnicity). The market is (home country ethnicity), so we really don't need language skills or international experience." (Participant I, 1st year, exempted)

4.1.2 Pull Motivational Factors

The different factors that could pull the participants to study in Norway and at NHH specifically are also illustrated in Appendix 7. Similarly to the push factors, each theme will be presented and the number of participants that exhibited the specific factor will be stated.

Economic

The majority, 11 out of the 13 participants, pointed out that economic factors connected to Norway or NHH is what pulled them to apply to study abroad, 5 of which are first-year students. 2 of the fee-paying students pointed out that free education is what attracted them to Norway and to NHH specifically, even though they could not benefit from it.

"I wanted to come to NHH for a long time. I've been looking at this school for five years, since 2018 [...] the free education attracted me." (Participant B, 1st year, fee-paying)

Participants F and I (exempted) also pointed out that free education attracted them. However they could still benefit from this pull since they were exempted from paying the tuition.

"The subsidised tuition aspect was very appealing to me. There's only a handful of countries in Europe that offer subsidised tuition." (Participant F, 1st year, exempted)

In addition, Participants F (exempted) and H (fee-paying) stated that their reason for picking Norway is for the job opportunities that it has to offer in the future.

"I kind of want to use this degree to get a job and buy me some time to learn the language." (Participant H, 1st year, fee-paying)

The second-year students also pointed out that free education is what attracted them to Norway and to NHH. 6 participants were pulled because there were no tuition fees, with the exception of Participant L since they were already located in Norway.

"Tuition was a huge part of deciding where I was gonna go. Because I started looking at the continent first, so Canada and the US financially, those seemed like quite impossible. And then to Europe I didn't really have a specific preference of where I wanted to go and it was mainly because of whether I was able to pay for it or not." (Participant G, 2nd year)

Participant M mentions how they wanted to shift into the oil, gas, energy industry and that Norway's economy is heavily dependent on that which is what attracted them to move here. In addition, they pointed out how the other private universities in Norway, mainly BI Norwegian Business School, would have offered similar programs but they would have had to pay to get in since they required tuition even before the policy was implemented.

"I was gonna apply to BI anyway, so I'm not sure how much the tuition really influenced my decision to come to Norway, but it did. I think put it put it in favour of NHH. [...] I think a few reasons were one was that I wanted to shift my career to shipping, oil, gas and energy. Norway is kind of one of those big markets for that." (Participant M, 2nd year)

And Participants E and K shared that job opportunities play a role in pulling them to Norway.

"Then I started looking up for the universities here, and I knew that there was no tuition fee, so that was a really important factor in that. [...] I looked at the town as well because I wanted to work and I didn't want to go to a very small place where it would have been really hard for me to get a job, especially when I know that English is not the primary language here." (Participant E, 2nd year)

Educational Opportunity

All of the participants indicated educational opportunities in Norway and at NHH play a pivotal factor at pulling them to apply to Norway. However, the first-year students placed more importance on it compared to the second year students. 7 out of 13 participants pointed out that NHH's reputation and its world ranking are the main factors that attracted them.

"I think it's like it has prestige, especially in Norway. I think it's very commonly known that public school is just much better compared to private school, so I think that's why I just chose NHH in the end." (Participant L, 2nd year)

Whereas the other 6 participants, consisting mostly of first-year students, stated that they were mainly interested in the programs that NHH was offering.

"I didn't choose Norway. I chose the ENE (Energy, Natural Resources and the Environment) program. I wanted to study ENE. [...] It was my only option in Europe. I couldn't find another university that fit my criteria." (Participant A, 1st year, fee-paying)

Environmental

Only 3 participants pointed out environmental pull factors. From the first-year students only Participant I mentioned the Norwegian weather as an attractive factor for coming here.

"Third was the general location. I don't like hot and humid weather, so I wanted to go somewhere North." (Participant I, 1st year, exempted)

As for the second-year students, only Participants E and M stated that Norwegian nature had a role when deciding on coming here.

"Since childhood I always looked up on Instagram a lot of reels related to Norway and it's beautiful. So I always wanted to come here." (Participant E, 2nd year)

Family & Community Ties

5 of the participants pointed out family & community ties in different ways. They were either pulled through family members living in Norway, by having family members interested in Norway and NHH, or through friends that recommended Norway and NHH. Among the first-year students, Participant C pointed out that their sister is the one that was initially interested in applying to NHH which encouraged them to also apply.

"My sister applied to NHH for a PhD position. She didn't get it but I was influenced by that. She encouraged me to apply here." (Participant C, 1st year, fee-paying)

Participant F had friends and NHH alumni share their experiences which is what ultimately attracted them to Norway.

"People (referring to NHH Alumni) had given very good reviews, especially the post-graduation prospects. I've been talking to other students, and they said that NHH students are in high demand." (Participant F, 1st year, exempted)

As for the second-year students, Participant D was also attracted to Norway through their family's love of Norway and having their brother live in the country for a while.

"It's like a family, this coincidence that NHH invited me in 2012 to come to study. It was my younger brother coming here and returning and then loving Norway. So there's a bit of everything." (Participant D, 2nd year)

Participant K also had friends that encouraged them to apply to NHH specifically.

"Then I happened to have a friend who lives in Norway, and she is quite experienced. She introduced the benefits in Norway. I just looked into it. She also just let me know about the existence of NHH. Then I checked it and applied for it." (Participant K, 2nd year)

And Participant L had both family members living in Norway and friends that knew about NHH's reputation.

"I have a lot of friends here and they talk a lot about NHH, like how good it is. [...] I have family here." (Participant L, 2nd year)

Social

Only 3 participants pointed out the pull social factors. Surprisingly each pointed out a different thing about the social life in Norway that pulled them. The first-year student, Participant C, stated that they loved Scandinavian culture and wanted to be a part of it.

"I think Norway is one of the best countries to live in, that's why I wanted Norway. And when I did research, I kind of fell in love with the school because all the pictures looked really modern, nice."(Participant C, 1st year, fee-paying)

And Participant H mentioned that Norwegian culture specifically is what attracted them.

"I realised that the lifestyle in Norway is something I really appreciate. [...] I would like to try to live this kind of lifestyle in the future for a long term and since I want to get a job here." (Participant H, 1st year, fee-paying)

As for the second-year students, only Participant K stated that they enjoy the social aspect of Norway, the equality, safety, and way of living.

"I think the society here is really nice. I think it's nice to live like the culture and the equality and everything." (Participant K, 2nd year)

Romantic Relationship

There was only one case of a pull romantic relationship and that was presented by Participant H where they met their significant other in Oslo and decided to come back to continue the relationship.

"I met my boyfriend in Oslo. Romantic relationships pushed me to still come here even after the tuition policy. I will probably not come to Norway without it." (Participant H, 1st year, fee-paying)

4.1.3 Challenges and Opinions on Tuition

During the interviews, participants highlighted various challenges they encountered. These included issues with application processes, financial deposits, cultural shocks and differences that impacted their daily lives. Additionally, some challenges were directly related to the new tuition fee policy, prompting us to inquire about the students' opinions on this matter and its influence on their study abroad experiences. While there were no clear differences in the nature of challenges faced by first and second year students, it was apparent that second-year students, being more experienced, expressed fewer concerns about integrating into the new environment. We also asked the non-fee-paying students about their willingness to study at NHH if it required them to pay the tuition fee. All of them responded negatively, stating that other countries offer better education and job opportunities compared to Norway.

Tuition Fee and how it is perceived

Participants A (fee-paying) and L mentioned that the tuition fee policy was rushed and was not handled correctly, which, in their opinion, will impact the study environment and the university's reputation negatively.

"It was just rushed, and there's nothing to support students who really want to come to study. [...] I didn't know about any scholarships that are available in NHH. So one of the policies that needs to be in place first before the tuition kicks in." (Participant L, 2nd year)

Participants B and H (fee-paying) also mentioned how it is not NHH's fault that they have to pay tuition. But they think that it is NHH's responsibility to make a plan on how they handle it, which was not evident enough.

"But they weren't sure the tuition fees were going to come in. [...] I understand why they did it, but they should have done it better. [...] The way they did it, that's the wrong way." *(Participant B, 1st year, fee-paying)*

When the students were asked about the tuition fee directly, the majority thought it was unfair, sad, or that they felt excluded. Participants H (fee-paying) and K expressed this feeling by pointing out how they felt targeted and unwelcomed.

"I feel excluded. It is only for non-EU students. I feel like you are not welcomed." *(Participant K, 2nd year)*

Participants B and C (fee-paying) understood the decision and they felt like they had no other choice than to come to Norway and obtain their degree.

"I think it's fair. Norwegians, in a way, pay for it with taxes. We don't contribute anything to it, especially people out of the EU. [...] I'm not happy that I'm paying, but I understand where it's coming from, and I don't judge." *(Participant C, 1st year, fee-paying)*

Participants F and I (exempted) also had similar opinions and understood the reasoning behind the policy but they were still happy that they did not have to pay.

"I respect their decision. It's not only Norway, but all countries in the EU are approaching in the same direction. It is sad, but I do understand." *(Participant I, 1st year, exempted)*

Participant L mentioned how the tuition fee is a new source of revenue for NHH, therefore, the university needs to improve its facilities in the hopes of attracting potential students.

"If tuition is in place, you have to try to improve the facility. [...] It can be a good thing to improve NHH in general as well." *(Participant L, 2nd year)*

3 second-year students shared their concerns about how the tuition policy might create entry barriers for prospective students interested in studying at NHH. Furthermore, they highlighted their belief that this policy could have negative effects on the institution itself.

"I do think it's a shame in terms of it closing another door to opportunities from people from developing countries or from other things. I do think that a lot of inequality sometimes comes from barriers of entry. So this just creates just another barrier for poor people to higher levels of education." (Participant G, 2nd year)

Lastly, when the 9 non-paying students (both first and second year students) were asked if they would still have enrolled at NHH if they had to pay, all of them answered with a no. They stated how in other countries there are no language barriers, more job opportunities, and have more well known universities, hence, a better education. Participant L shared how they would have preferred to go to a different university in Norway instead of NHH since they obtained their bachelors from there.

"If I have to pay tuition it is just much easier to go to BI again. I think a big thing about BI is that it is in Oslo. It's a lot easier for international students to find a part time job. That's a big thing." (Participant L, 2nd year)

5 out of the 9 students shared how they would have gone to an English-speaking country instead since the language barrier is smaller and those countries are cheaper than Norway.

"Probably not or I would have had to find another way of getting loans or something from my country. Especially comparing it to my country, the cost of living here is insanely expensive. So for me it's already like a stretch to be unable to afford to live here." (Participant G, 2nd year)

3 participants shared how they would have gone to a more known and prestigious school instead of enrolling at NHH.

"If I had to pay tuition. So the comparison is not tuition versus tuition fee, the comparison is with other universities. For example, Erasmus University is a one year program, more well-known, costs less. And the Netherlands is cheaper. For sure I wouldn't come to Norway." (Participant F, 1st year, exempted)

4.2 Campus Climate: Exposure and Impact of Diversity

The semi-structured interview focusing on campus climate diversity were organised into three main categories: 1) experiences of diversity both on/off campus, 2) the institution's approach to diversity, covering its mission, vision, and supportive measures, 3) psychological and behavioural factors, such as perceptions, emotions, attitudes, and beliefs about community interactions. Together, these categories cover all aspects of the Campus Climate, providing an in-depth perspective on both the exposure to and the impact of diversity on campus. Thus, the analysis will integrate these three categories with the four Campus Climate elements. Consequently, the findings will be presented in four sections: structural diversity, institutional diversity, formal classroom diversity, and informal interactional diversity.

4.2.1 Structural Diversity

To understand structural diversity, we first checked official numeric statistics and compared the changes after the tuition policy. Then, we asked students their perception of campus diversity in terms of ethnicity, gender, and age.

Statistics from NHH (Statista, 2023a) reveal a significant decrease in structural diversity following the introduction of the tuition policy. The number of non-EU/EEA full-time students at NHH dramatically dropped from 40 in 2022 to four in 2023, representing a steep 90% decline. This sharp decrease surpasses the national average reduction of 80%. However, there was clear variation when it comes to the perceived structural diversity among students.

In general, most of the participants noted that NHH has a diverse campus environment. 8 out of 13 showed positive answers.

> *"I think it's pretty diverse to see people from a whole variety of countries and cultures and when I walk around the school I would hear groups speaking in Norwegian, but a lot of times I also hear people talking in English and I think there's an effort from the university to include international students." (Participant C, 1st year, fee-paying)*

Many students attribute the structural diversity at NHH primarily to the inclusion of exchange students. Some observed that while NHH boasts a diverse campus, the full-time student population is less varied, with a higher proportion of European students compared to those from non-EU/EEA countries.

"I think it's pretty diverse, but at the same time a lot of the diversity comes from exchange students. That's a big student population at NHH. If you had to just look at full time students, that's a much smaller group. [...] So it is diverse, but it's not as a student you get the same stable diversity for the two years." (Participant M, 2nd year)

Several students highlighted that the balance of diversity can vary depending on the major.

"I can only talk based on my major BAN (Business Analytics). I feel like this major is actually probably the most international and diverse major because we have a lot of international students. I would say half of maybe." (Participant K, 2nd year)

Conversely, those who relate diversity to ethnicity, specifically non-EU/EEA, believe that NHH lacks diversity, particularly in 2023. Both first and second year students recognized the impact of the tuition on campus diversity, and individuals from both first and second year cohorts perceive a clear minority status for non-EU/EEA students at NHH.

"Last year I would say yes. This year does feel slightly different. [...] I don't see NHH being super diverse. You can definitely tell that the international population is a minority and most people are Norwegian." (Participant G, 2nd year)

However, the second-year students more distinctly observed the changes in campus diversity after the introduction of tuition policy.

"Last year was fine. This year you can feel the difference." (Participant L, 2nd year)

One of those who perceive a lack of diversity at the campus noted that it does not significantly impact one's overall campus experience or the quality of education they receive.

"NHH is not diverse. At least 90% of the students are Norwegian. Most of the people study finance. Those are the two main reasons why I think it's not so diverse. But it doesn't bother me so much." (Participant F, 1st year, exempted)

However, all students to some extent noted homogeneity in terms of age range, and gender balance variations across different majors.

"The population is fairly homogeneous in terms of age, but I do feel like it's a cultural

thing [...] so I don't see a problem necessarily in that." (Participant G, 2nd year)

"Not a lot of women in finance. It's a heavy men's major." (Participant L, 2nd year)

A notable response came from Participant B (fee-paying) who expressed a preference of not emphasising diversity. The participant expressed concern that such emphasis might inadvertently underscore minorities and highlight differences, leading to negative attention.

"In my opinion, diversity shouldn't be something that's highlighted. It should be just OK if it's natural if it's just there, you don't see it. I think that's good enough and that's the case here. I don't really want, OK, look, we have this foreign person, or we have this woman teaching this class. If you do that, I don't believe you're really being diverse. I think it should be considered normal to have." (Participant B, 1st year, fee-paying)

4.2.2 Institutional Diversity

Institutional diversity assesses the extent to which NHH's mission, vision, and internationalisation practices are effectively implemented on campus and perceived in students' experiences. To understand this, we asked two key questions to participants: whether they are aware of what NHH's current stance is on this topic and whether they feel that they receive adequate support from the institution.

According to the data, it appears to be clear that most of the students are aware of NHH's institutional efforts to build up an international study environment, encourage international experience, and internationalise the school to the world level. In terms of the effect of international policies and practices at NHH, 9 out of 13 answered that they feel NHH is doing a great job aligning well with their mission and vision.

Regarding institutional diversity, there were no distinct differences in perceptions between first and second year students. However, a greater number of second-year students expressed more negative opinions compared to the first-year students.

"I think NHH doesn't appear to be a very international school." (Participant L, 2nd year)

Most of them appreciated the global opportunities (e.g. CEMs, Double degree, high number of exchange students), diverse English courses, and supportive faculty and institution.

"NHH's international mission and vision are fascinating. We have a lot of international opportunities like double degrees, CEMs, exchange. From that perspective, I think they're doing quite great. [...] It is probably quite difficult to attract international students to be full-time here. But attracting more exchange students might be a good way for them to at least earn more reputation internationally." (Participant H, 1st year, fee-paying)

However, those who perceive a lack of institutional diversity at NHH mentioned experiencing communication challenges, inadequate information sharing, and a lack of institutional efforts for student integration. For instance, some noted that they do not receive sufficient information from NHH, often finding that crucial information is provided only in Norwegian.

"School wise have felt quite challenging when it comes to language. For example, there are a lot of messages published in Norwegian and I have to copy and paste in Google to know what's going on here and if it's something I need to know and that's a little bit annoying to be honest." (Participant H, 1st year, fee-paying)

Others pointed out inconsistencies in the information provided about diversity, feeling that NHH did not meet their expectations in terms of being an international institution, and they believe some of the information shared was misleading.

"I did check the report before I came to NHH, and NHH emphasises a lot that they have a really equal gender, racial and everything. But based on my experience, I didn't really feel that. [...] I think there are a lot of opportunities from the NHH side, most of them are posted in Norwegian. [...] And also like company presentations, I had no idea what was going on at school until my friend told me." (Participant K, 2nd year)

4.2.3 Formal Classroom Diversity

To understand classroom diversity, we asked the students four main questions related to the course language split between English and Norwegian, student diversity, interaction in class, and teacher diversity within the classroom.

The data indicates that almost all the students, 12 out of 13, acknowledge the presence of a wide range of English courses offered at NHH. They also view the student body and professors in classes as diverse, with their classroom experiences being positively influenced

by this diversity. Those with positive experiences of classroom diversity highlighted the value of gaining new perspectives and the sense of equal treatment regardless of their background. However, no distinct differences were identified in the experiences of classroom diversity between first and second year students.

"I feel there's a lot of options. All the courses I wanted were in English. [...] Professors are different from what I'm used to. I think the professors are very professional. For me the diversity aspect in class has been great. No one has targeted me or is biassed towards race." (Participant B, 1st year, fee-paying)

Several students underscored particularly positive experiences in classes focused on international topics, noting enhanced positive attitudes and behaviours among Norwegian students in these settings. It becomes apparent that students' perceptions of classroom diversity are highly varied, and more influenced by the subjects and majors they select.

"I think that they have really diverse courses here in English. [...] And I think I didn't feel any discrimination in classes. [...] I take CEMs classes, and it is mostly international. It's very diverse and even the Norwegians in that program are different from general Norwegians. I feel it's easier to communicate." (Participant E, 2nd year)

10 out of 13 students answered that they primarily collaborate with other international students, and it does not affect their campus experience. However, they also observed that when they do have the opportunity to work with Norwegian students, they find them to be friendly, kind, open-minded, and enthusiastic about group projects. The challenge, as they mentioned, lies in finding such opportunities to connect and engage with Norwegian peers.

"I don't think Norwegians have a problem speaking English, and are very accepting, not judging you because you're an international. It's just when forming groups, the natural thing is that they form groups between themselves. [...] Most of the courses that I was interested in were available fully in English." (Participant C, 1st year, fee-paying)

Regarding teacher diversity, most participants noted good teacher diversity in classes. However, those who stated opposite opinions mentioned it does not concern them, nor do they believe it impacts the quality of education or their learning experiences.

"Some of the professors are not Norwegians. It doesn't matter if they're Norwegian or not, because they don't see us differently."(Participant C, 1st year, fee-paying)

Several students observed that their major tended to emphasise individual work, have less english courses or less diverse student body while others experienced the opposite. This discrepancy further underscores the variation in classroom diversity across different majors.

"I'm surprised there's so much group work. [...] As far as I saw in my courses, Norwegians always have groups with Norwegian. The others are German and the minorities, so usually the same nationalities stick together." (Participant I, 1st year, exempted)

"A lot of my courses are individual, so I don't work in groups. I think 50% of the time I've worked with Norwegian and 50% of the time internationals." (Participant M, 2nd year)

4.2.4 Informal Interactional Diversity

To understand informal interactional diversity, we asked questions related to their experience of the Welcome Week, their friendship circle, student club engagement, as well as their personal experience meeting Norwegian students outside of the classroom.

The data clearly indicates that all students are highly interested in informal interactions with Norwegian peers. Yet, almost all, 12 out of 13 students, reported encountering challenges and limited opportunities in this area. For example, events such as Welcome Week were regarded as intriguing, but their experiences were varied. Both first and second year students shared similar experiences regarding informal interactional diversity, with the consensus being that despite a strong desire to connect with Norwegian students, forming friendships with them is not easy for most of the respondents.

"Welcome Week was interesting because I got full exposure to Norwegian student life. I personally don't drink so much, it was a bit difficult to engage. But it was interesting. [...] I don't have any preference, but knowing Norwegian is kind of challenging because they already have their own friend circle." (Participant H, 1st year, fee-paying)

Some students expressed the Welcome Week as an ineffective socialisation primarily due to language barriers and an excessive emphasis on drinking and partying.

"I mostly participated in Welcome Week. To be honest, it was too much for me. Probably the culture and my personality are different from the majority. [...] I really wished I could drink a lot with Norwegians. Then it would be easier to become friends. I didn't imagine that this would be such a big issue to live in Norway." (Participant I, 1st year, exempted)

All students reported that their main social networks are predominantly made up of international students, further highlighting the challenges they face in establishing connections with Norwegian students. Those who formed friendships with Norwegian peers found these individuals to have international experiences with more open-mindset.

"When I'm with Norwegians I see a big difference depending on their international exposure. When I realise this person has been international and has done international exposure, it is easy to get along with and feel the difference." (Participant D, 2nd year)

Additionally, many students noted that the social activities by NHHS (the student organisation at NHH) are predominantly communicated in Norwegian, making them difficult to follow.

"I feel that there are definitely certain student activities that I can't be a part of as an international student, mainly because of a language barrier. [...] You can pretty much only take part in activities that are specifically designed for international students. [...] So the social activity circle makes it a little harder to get to know the rest of the cohort." (Participant M, 2nd year)

Regarding student clubs, all respondents indicated involvement solely in international clubs (e.g. MEBA International Student Council, IC: International Committee, FOTO club), with none being members of Norwegian student clubs. They cited challenges in joining Norwegian clubs, primarily due to language barrier and limited opportunities.

"I applied for Norwegian student clubs but I didn't get in. A lot of people have told me that they feel like for student clubs it is much harder for an international student to get in than for a Norwegian student." (Participant C, 1st year, fee-paying)

While acknowledging the value of joining student clubs for broadening their networks, they experienced significant obstacles in informal interaction with Norwegian students.

"It's difficult to join Norwegian student clubs. I guess that's one of the reasons why there is not much connection between international and Norwegian. It was one of the reasons why I feel a bit excluded. I applied but I didn't get in and most of my international friends didn't get in. I only got into 2 international clubs." (Participant H, 1st year, fee-paying)

Some students also pointed out that there is a differing attitude towards international students in the context of the student club recruitment process.

"I wanted to join (club A) and one of my international friends who joined (club B) was told, "You're international. We had a bad experience because they wouldn't show up to practices. We really want you to join because you seem different." And she did show that she was different. So I'm thinking, what if that happens to me that they don't even consider me because I'm an international student? [...] For me social activity with Norwegians is important, but I also see it's difficult." (Participant A, 1st year, fee-paying)

However, Participant L noted that the challenge of joining student clubs is not exclusive to international students; Norwegians also face difficulties due to the overall limited capacity.

"I tried to get into sports clubs but they don't have a lot of space, so it just didn't work. [...] I have one Norwegian flatmate and then he said that he basically had to apply for everything. [...] I think they don't have capacity for all the students so they have an interviewing and selection process." (Participant L, 2nd year)

4.3 Life in Norway and Future plans

Lastly, we wanted to understand the expectations that the participants had before moving and compare that to their experiences in Norway and at NHH. They were also asked about their future plans to see if they have shifted in any way following their experiences. There were no big differences between first and second year students regarding their expectations and future plans. 9 out of 13 answered that they plan to stay and work or study in Norway. The majority of the participants had clear and strong ambition to build up their life in Norway. At the same time, they were aware of the difficulties of getting jobs as foreigners.

4.3.1 Experience and Satisfaction

The students' impressions of Norway and NHH were somewhat connected to their

expectations. Some of them perceived Norway and NHH exactly how they expected, some were disappointed with how different it seemed compared to what they imagined, and some were still trying to make up their mind about it. They were also asked if they generally had any expectations about Norway or NHH. Some of the participants pointed out a number of expectations and degrees of fulfilment, while others had no expectations to begin with but they realised that their general thinking was challenged. The three different expectations that they pointed out were related to education, social life, and the environment and nature.

Participants C (fee-paying) and K (second-year) mentioned that their expectations about the level of education was met and that they are learning what they had initially set out to learn.

> *"My expectations were like quality education. That's what I expected, and I think so far, my expectations are met with regards to that." (Participant C, 1st year, fee-paying)*

While Participants A and C (fee-paying), as well as Participant J felt like they expected more than what they had received thus far.

> *"Norway would still be attractive and I would have regretted not coming here. But the quality is not enough. They are competing with way too many universities outside." (Participant J, 2nd year)*

As for the social life in Norway and at NHH, the participants stated how some expectations they had were related to their perception of what Norwegians are like. Some participants expected the Norwegian students to be closed off and not as social while others did not have any expectations and they realised that the Norwegian students are quite friendly and open.

> *"To be honest, I feel like it aligns more to me not having an expectation so I wasn't let down just because I didn't know what to expect. [...] But actually a very nice thing that I found here is that I was expecting people to be even more close to themselves." (Participant G, 2nd year)*

Lastly, for the environment and nature expectations, the participants' expectations about nature had been met and they shared that they think nature in Norway is extremely beautiful. The participants also shared that part of the environment expectations was related to their accommodation, pointing out that the dorms exceeded their expectations.

"I expected a lot of nature because it's known for that. There are a lot of mountains, trees and flowers. It also met my expectations." (Participant C, 1st year, fee-paying)

"I was so pleasantly surprised with the dorm." (Participant A, 1st year, fee-paying)

4.3.2 Future Plans

In regards to the students' plans following their experience at NHH, 9 out of 13 participants shared that their future plans are connected to Norway and 8 students stated that they want to continue living and working in Norway.

"For now, I'm hoping to work in Norway for a few more years. I really enjoyed my time here. And I would like to live here for a few more years, if I could. [...] my priority is to work in Norway for a few years." (Participant M, 2nd year)

Participant D stated that they would like to continue studying at NHH and pursue a PhD.

"The goal of doing this second master was to prepare myself because my real goal was to continue with a PhD." (Participant D, 2nd year)

On the flip side, some of the participants shared that they had intentions to pursue living in other countries, be it their home countries or otherwise. Participants A for example, is already planning on moving back to their home country and working there.

"Most likely I won't stay here [...] I want to go take experience from here, from NHH and go there and then get my city to be better." (Participant A, 1st year, fee-paying)

Participants G and F (exempted) on the other hand want to stay in the EU but not necessarily in Norway.

"I think I would love to live in Europe somewhere outside of Norway. I feel that would be defined more so by where I find a job. I would love to try another country and see how it is there." (Participant G, 2nd year)

5. Discussion

In this chapter, we will present the findings of our analysis and discuss them in relation to the chosen theories and existing research outlined in our literature review. We will delve into the findings that corroborate existing literature on tuition fees, study abroad motivation, and campus diversity, seeking to uncover compelling insights and explanations. Additionally, findings that diverge from the established literature will be examined and discussed. The findings provide insightful discussions within the unique context of Norway, the Norwegian School of Economics (NHH), and the new tuition policy. However, it is noteworthy that there are variations in responses that are influenced by each individual's background and personal experiences. Following this, we will address the limitations of our study and give suggestions for future research. The chapter will conclude with a presentation of the practical implications of our research for relevant stakeholders and the NHH academic community.

5.1 Study Abroad Motivation

5.1.1 Push and Pull Factors

This finding sheds light on the students' main push factors, including the quest for superior educational and job opportunities, and the drive to escape economic and political instability in their home countries. These factors align with existing research on ISM, which identifies similar motivators for international students (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; Yue & Lu, 2022). Moreover, the perception that obtaining education abroad enhances one's credentials upon returning home is notable, with international education often being regarded as more prestigious (Yue & Lu, 2022). This sentiment was particularly evident among first-year students, who observed that their peers educated domestically are often perceived as less qualified compared to those educated abroad. Additionally, second-year students highlighted the high value placed on international education over local options, indicating its enhanced recognition and satisfaction. However, some students also acknowledged that while they could have received quality education in their home countries, the prestige and personal fulfilment derived from an international education seems to offer an added advantage.

Additionally, the students in our sample strongly highlighted non-economic push factors such as personal growth, cultural immersion, language acquisition, social networking, and

self-development as key push motivators for studying abroad. These findings align with several existing research (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; Yue & Lu, 2022; Tokas et al., 2023) affirming how important they are becoming in terms of study abroad decisions. Since these factors offer intrinsic satisfaction, they can only be satisfied by taking the leap and exploring opportunities outside of their home countries (Lauermann, 2012), which is what the students have done. The first-year students shared how they are still exploring this sense of satisfaction and that they are looking forwards to what is yet to come. While the second-year students had mixed feelings in this regard, some of them felt a full sense of satisfaction and growth and others not as much. They connected this feeling to their own personal experiences and their degree of socialisation, claiming that the language barrier is a cause of their challenges (Collins et al., 2021). In addition, the second-year students shared how their experiences with Norwegian culture has shifted from being curious to more understanding and appreciative.

The role of family support as a push factor in studying abroad, highlighted by Yue and Lu (2022), is also confirmed by our findings. Some of the first and second year students indicated the significant moral and financial backing they received from their families while deciding to study abroad, emphasising how this support facilitated their decision-making process. This aspect of family support accentuates the importance of social and familial networks in shaping educational choices and facilitating the transition to international study. However, an intriguing counterpoint emerged from a second-year student's experience (Participant E), where family opposition occurred rather than support. This student's decision to pursue education abroad in the face of familial disapproval challenges the notion that family support is always a crucial factor in such decisions. This divergence presents a compelling discussion; it suggests that individual decision and personal situation can also be powerful motivators for international education. However, it is difficult to draw conclusions from one observation about the full impact of familial opposition in relation to making the decision to study abroad.

The main differences in motivation between the first and second year students were in relation to the pull factors that had a great impact on the students choosing Norway as their study abroad location, and NHH as their host university. However there were also some similarities such as the students pointing out the free education as their most important factor when making the decision to come to Norway. The non-paying students (consisting mainly of second-year students) continuously affirmed this reason as being their number one motivator

further emphasising its importance by claiming that they would not have chosen Norway or even NHH if they had to pay. While the fee-paying students pointed out how it was a factor since they believed they might not be subjected to the policy. This finding is in line with Wiers-Jenssen (2018) literature which found that students also cited free education as a primary motivator for selecting Norway as their higher education destination before the implementation of tuition fees. Interestingly, first-year students at NHH demonstrated an investment-oriented mindset towards tuition fees, rather than viewing them simply as costs. They placed a greater emphasis on the value of their education at NHH, particularly in terms of future career benefits. This finding provides new insights into how tuition fees can be perceived through the lens of individual cost-benefit analysis, highlighting a more strategic approach to educational investment.

The shift in student pull factor priorities following the implementation of tuition fees appears to cause a significant change in study abroad motivation. The first-year students especially emphasise the appeal of NHH's diverse and specialised programs, particularly in the energy sector and business world, as key reasons for their choice. This trend reflects a broader perspective on educational choices, where program content and specialisations become more critical than financial considerations like tuition fees. Some first and second students were mainly interested in the energy sector and pursuing such a degree is available at NHH, making the institution a very attractive option. While others wanted to shift more into the business world, they found that NHH had what they were looking for. The reputation of NHH also plays a crucial role, as both first and second year students cited it as a decisive factor, favouring it over other Norwegian universities. This aligns with Mazzarol and Soutar's (2002) literature, which highlight the importance of institutional reputation and the perceived value of degree programs in students' decision-making processes. Interestingly, the international opportunities promoted by NHH were less influential for some students. The fact that being in Norway itself was considered an international experience indicates an understanding of what constitutes an 'international opportunity'. This suggests that for some, the act of studying in a foreign country, regardless of extra international offerings, brings a sufficient global experience. This is in line with Mazzarol and Soutar (2002) explaining how these factors play a role when picking the institution specifically, and that they can be defining factors depending on how much the students value the degrees they pursue.

The findings from this study reveal a diverse range of pull factors influencing students' decisions to study in Norway, extending beyond academic considerations. While research opportunities at NHH and Norway's political and economic stability were mentioned, they were not the predominant reasons for choosing NHH. Instead, aspects like Norway's safety, natural beauty, and overall appeal as a desirable place to live and grow in the future were significant attractions for both first and second year students. This aligns with Mazzarol and Soutar's (2002) observations about the influence of external factors such as family and friends in shaping study abroad decisions. Furthermore, some students shared that their families and friends motivated them by sharing their own experiences in Norway. This increases the students' curiosity to explore the country themselves and learn about the culture by being submerged into it. Moreover, a unique pull factor emerged in the form of romantic relationships, with one fee-paying student (Participant H) citing this as a key reason for their location choice. This reflects De Winter et al.'s (2021) findings, which highlight the importance of personal relationships in the decision-making process, sometimes even outweighing the location's academic or cultural attributes.

Lastly, the findings of this study echo Collins et al.'s (2021) assertion that the study abroad journey often begins with challenges, eventually leading to adaptation and enhanced experiences. This was particularly noticeable among the first-year students, who, having been at the institution for only two months at the time of the study, predominantly discussed their initial challenges. The most significant of these was the first-year's uncertainty about tuition fee payment, coupled with the culture shock experienced during Welcome Week. In contrast, the experiences of the second-year students mirrored the other pattern described by Collins et al. (2021). These students discussed challenges more related to language barriers and academic hurdles. However, they also shared their successful adaptation to the new environment, marked by forming friendships and growing appreciation for Norway and its offerings. Notably, many second-year students expressed plans to remain in Norway post-graduation, signifying their recognition of the country's potential for providing a fulfilling and thriving future, unlike the first-year students who remain uncertain.

5.1.2 Tuition Fee Policy

There are two main reasons that were shared in the public debates regarding the tuition fee policy and its different implications which were also reflected in the findings. These reasons

are related to the economic contribution of the tuition fee policy and wanting to attract motivated students.

The side agreeing with the tuition policy clarified that the policy is needed since funding for higher education was recently cut due tight budgets (Sanchez-Serra & Marconi, 2018). Our findings show that this is noticed and understood by the students. One second-year student (Participant L) pointed out how this extra revenue could potentially help NHH to improve their facilities. The improvements could lead to better study environments which will attract more students to choose NHH. There is also the argument that the policy is an investment in education which will ensure better career prospects and international exposure (Mikkelsen, 2023c). The second-year students pointed out how they first believed that their job prospects would be increased by obtaining a degree from NHH. However, with their increased understanding of the Norwegian job market, it is proving to be less likely. While the first-year students are still optimistic and believe that their job prospects will be increased by obtaining a degree from NHH. Thus, they continue to seek all the opportunities they can get, especially since some are paying tuition.

Furthermore, the students pointed out how the international exposure they receive at NHH is through the international student body, meaning the exchange students that are mainly from the rest of Europe are the ones to bring diversity to NHH. The second-year students specifically pointed out how after the tuition policy they can directly notice the decrease in the number of international students and the impact that it had on the study environment. This shift in diversity can have an impact on NHH's reputation, which some of the students pointed out, since what is advertised is not reflected in real life. This discrepancy between the students' expectations and what they experience at NHH could potentially impact its ranking making it more difficult to attract international students. In addition, this inconsistency and the drop in the number of non-EU/EEA students could also impact NHH's credibility when it comes to how it is advertising itself in terms of diversity and inclusion. To combat this, NHH had already started looking into scholarship schemes, following Sweden's and Finland's strategies of attracting students (Nilsson & Westin, 2022; ICEF, 2023). Some fee-paying and second-year students pointed out how important it is for NHH to have a scholarship scheme set in place to aid motivated students that might have some economic struggles. This scheme would attract motivated students which value their education and the specific programs that

NHH offers. However, it is unclear if the tuition fee policy and the scholarship schemes will truly attract only motivated students or if opportunistic students will continue to take advantage of Norwegian institutions.

Additionally, it was argued that Norwegians themselves have to pay tuition when they study abroad, therefore it is only fair for non-EU/EEA students to do the same when seeking an education in Norway (Iversen, 2023). Some first-year fee-paying students indicated this to be true since they are not citizens and do not contribute to the country's economy through taxes. Furthermore, there are housing concerns that were presented by the Minister of Higher Education and Research in his reasoning advocating for the tuition fee policy (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2022). Ola Borten Moe claims that there is a housing crisis caused by international students moving to Norway and staying for longer than intended. The outcome is that Norwegian students do not have enough housing options which makes it difficult to find spots to pursue their higher education. Since our findings were mainly focused on the non-EU/EEA students' side, this issue was not reflected. All the students shared that they are happy with their accommodations and that they are glad they did not have to suffer through a complex process to find a place to live.

Another argument presented in the public debates was related to the goal of attracting motivated students to study in Norway (Hogan, 2023; Wisborg, 2023; Fquihi, 2022; Infanti & Sripada, 2023). The line of thought was that only students that truly want to come to Norway for educational reasons should be prioritised and filtered out from the rest of the students applying. This would also ensure that students are not abusing their student visas to relocate to Norway and use it as a loophole to stay in the country for longer than intended (Brekke, 2006). The concern of exploiting study visas as a backdoor to immigration and associating it with low academic performance was also raised by the Swedish government (Nilsson & Westin, 2022). Since the tuition fee policy is a new phenomena in Norway, the implications of students extending their stay in Norway reflecting on low academic performance cannot be indicated just yet and it was not reflected in the findings of this study. However, what was realised in the findings is that only truly motivated students still applied to NHH. The fee-paying students shared what mainly attracted them to Norway and to NHH were the programs that they chose and the education that they are pursuing.

However, they did also share that the tuition fee has stressed them immensely, stating that up until their enrollment they had no idea if they were going to be subjected to the tuition policy or not. This led to some of them needing to take out loans and trying to figure out other financial streams to be able to carry on with their enrollement at NHH. This is also in line with what Liu & Solheim (2023) stated about the timing of the tuition policy, the lack of planning and clarity, and how fast the tuition policy was implemented. All participants indicated, to some extent, how the situation was handled poorly and how there was no clear indication of the implication of the policy. Some even pointed out how poorly NHH handled the situation by not planning ahead and not giving them definitive answers in relation to the process.

5.2 Campus Diversity

5.2.1 Structural Diversity

Regarding structural diversity, our findings support the significance of structural diversity (student body composition) in fostering opportunities for students to engage with peers from diverse backgrounds, a perspective in line with Gurin et al. (2002). The students themselves highlighted the value of a student population diverse in ethnicity, nationality, and culture, noting its vital role in enriching their educational and social experiences on campus. Furthermore, a majority of the non-EU/EEA students attributed the diversity of the NHH campus to the inclusion of exchange and European students. However, they perceived a noticeable decline in structural diversity, particularly among non-EU/EEA students, following the introduction of the tuition policy. This reduced perception was especially evident among the second-year students, who observed a clear decrease in non-EU/EEA students' representation post-policy. These observations align with literature on the impact of tuition policies in other Nordic countries, which documented similar declines in structural diversity (Nilsson & Westin, 2022; The Swedish Institute, 2022; ICEF, 2023).

In terms of structural diversity's impact on educational quality, students reported that it does not adversely affect their study experience or quality of life. This finding contrasts with existing literature that suggests tuition negatively influences an institution's competitiveness and quality (Saadeh, 2023; Larsen & Tønnessen, 2022; Guro, 2022). This discrepancy arises because students experienced diversity not only from non-EU/EEA diversity but also through

other factors such as gender, age, teachers, and varied academic subjects. Therefore, while it is evident that structural diversity has been affected by the introduction of tuition fees and is significant in fostering interaction and engagement, a reduction in non-EU/EEA student diversity does not necessarily diminish the overall quality of diversity on campus.

While most students emphasised the significance of structural diversity, one first year student (Participant B) expressed reluctance to overly emphasise it, fearing it could bring negative attention while highlighting differences or the minority status of international students. This perspective aligns with research suggesting that limited diversity can make underrepresented groups more visible, exacerbating group distinctions, segregation, negative social stigma, and the stress associated with being a minority (Milem et al., 2005). Consequently, it is crucial to recognize that while increasing structural diversity is an essential first step in reaping the benefits of diversity, it alone is insufficient. Diversity's benefits are not just from a varied student body; institutional management plays a crucial role too. This view is consistent with Milem et al.'s (2005) assertion that increasing compositional diversity is fundamental in creating opportunities from diversity, but by itself, it is not enough. The positive outcomes of structural diversity arise from both formal and informal interactions and depend significantly on how effectively it is managed and the openness of students to it (Giovannini, 2004; Kuh et al., 1991; Milem et al., 2005).

5.2.2 Institutional Diversity

Regarding the findings on institutional diversity, a majority of both first and second year students acknowledged NHH's initiatives in fostering an international study environment, highlighted by a mission and vision geared towards internationalisation. These efforts include encouraging international experiences, providing global opportunities, and supporting both outbound and inbound students. Additionally, the institution's stance on diversity significantly influenced students' decisions to choose NHH and subsequently affected the quality of their campus experiences. This aligns with Giovannini's (2004) literature emphasising the vital role institutions play in fostering diversity. Furthermore, the findings highlighted the value students place on a supportive faculty and the institution's proactive approach to diversity, along with its offering of varied global opportunities. As Antonio et al. (2000) suggested, students considered institutional diversity in terms of the institution's commitment to

diversity, support for interaction in both formal and informal settings, and academic relationships.

While there is consistency in the literature regarding the positive relationship between institutional diversity and its impact on non-EU/EEA students' campus diversity experiences, some students pointed out disparities between the information provided and their actual experiences at NHH. For instance, NHH's public reports described a picture of significant diversity, but the reality on campus did not match these descriptions, and the diversity level of NHH on social media felt misleading. Furthermore, students faced challenges in accessing and sharing information due to language barriers, which led to less active engagement on campus. These findings are related with Tavares' (2021) literature, who highlighted that a perceived lack of institutional diversity could lead to students' hesitancy in embracing diversity. It seems clear that NHH has established solid infrastructures, a mission and vision, and a strong commitment to internationalisation and diversity, however the actual experiences in communication and information sharing diminished the benefits of diversity and their willingness to engage with it. Therefore, many researchers (Berger & Milem, 1999; Gurin et al., 2002; Guo & Jamal, 2007; Milem et al., 2005) argue that to maximise the benefit of diversity, institutions should recognize the specific challenges non-EU/EEA students experience and facilitate tailored management tools and close support.

5.2.3 Formal Classroom Diversity

Regarding formal classroom diversity, the findings support existing literature that engaging diversity in the classroom is associated with students' sense of belongingness to the educational environment based on how much it values, respects, supports and cares for them despite their diverse profile (Chaudhry, 2022). Both first and second year students at NHH reported positive experiences of classroom diversity, attributed to the availability of various English courses and the diverse composition of students and teachers in classrooms. Moreover, students felt they were treated equally, without bias or discrimination based on their backgrounds, by both peers and teachers. This finding highly supports the literature from Gurin (1999) arguing a diverse learning environment is beneficial for students' educational experiences and their ability to thrive in a diverse environment.

Both first and second year students recognized the beneficial impact of classroom diversity on their educational experience, particularly in acquiring new perspectives and experiencing various learning styles. This aligns with the findings of Gurin et al. (2002), which describe classroom diversity as an opportunity to learn about and from people with different backgrounds. Additionally, this observation supports empirical research on American students, which provides compelling evidence that diversity in the classroom significantly enhances the educational experience (Orfield & Whitla, 2001). However, it is noteworthy that the advantages of classroom diversity appear to vary depending on the specific course subjects and the students' openness and willingness to engage with peers from diverse backgrounds.

While most students acknowledged the satisfactory level of classroom diversity at NHH, they primarily collaborated with other international students rather than with Norwegians. Additionally, those majoring in finance reported more individual work, resulting in reduced classroom engagement. Despite not perceiving a decline in classroom diversity as detrimental to their educational quality, they found it challenging to connect with Norwegian students who were open to integrating with international classmates. This contrasts with Orfield and Whitla's (2001) assertion that classroom diversity often leads to friendships with mainstream students, particularly those with limited prior exposure to diversity, resulting in more positive outcomes from such interactions. However, the students noted more positive interactions in classes with international topics, and they felt Norwegian students in those courses are more open-minded and actively engaging. This finding provides new insights into how engaging diversity in the class can be positively enhanced by different approaches and teaching styles.

5.2.4 Informal Interactional Diversity

Regarding informal interactional diversity, our findings present a strong interest among both first and second year students in engaging informal diversity with both Norwegian and international peers. Every student emphasised the importance of interacting with individuals from diverse backgrounds, highlighting the benefits for networking, making connections, and learning about different cultures and languages. Consistent with the literature by Gurin et al. (2002), the frequency and quality of these intergroup interactions in informal settings appear to enhance students' positive experiences on campus. However, a common challenge faced by

students across both years was the limited opportunities for informal interactional, particularly with Norwegian peers, highlighting an area for potential improvement in campus dynamics.

The primary challenges identified by students were cultural differences, language barriers, and restricted access to, or information about, activities organised by NHHS. For instance, while some students found Welcome Week to be a fascinating method of exposure to Norwegian student life, others struggled to engage with Norwegian peers due to the language barrier and their party culture. Although all students had the opportunity to join international clubs, they found it extremely difficult to participate in NHHS activities or to join Norwegian student clubs. Consequently, this led to the perception of a segregated social environment, which they felt created a challenge to connect with other cohorts, particularly Norwegian students, on campus.

Some students answered that there's an existing bias or a difference in attitude toward international students when Norwegian student clubs recruit members. This perspective is in line with Milem et al. (2005) literature suggesting segregation, negative social stigma and group distinctions associated with limited diversity. However, it was also noted that Norwegian students with international experiences tend to be more open-minded and easier to engage with. As highlighted in the literature by Gurin et al. (2002), an openness to interracial friendships significantly influences behavioural norms, prejudice, and stigma in interactions with diverse groups. Consequently, it is crucial to recognize that meaningful engagement does not come alone from structural diversity, and it is necessary to assure good informal intergroup interactions to realise the benefit of diversity (Gurin et al., 2002). These findings provide new insights into how the students' informal interactional dynamics and their attitude toward international students can differently affect the overall benefit of campus diversity.

5.3 Limitation and Future Research

This study has inevitable limitations which can be improved, therefore in this section, we discuss our limitations and offer recommendations for future researchers seeking to build upon and enhance this area of study.

Firstly, this study is based on a qualitative case study with a small sample size, which may raise concerns regarding its transferability. While this study is not designed for broad

generalisation to other contexts, expanding its scope could provide varied perspectives and insights. To address this limitation, future researchers could benefit from employing multiple sources of data and considering diverse samples or cases, including expanding the research to encompass more institutions or to include European/Norwegian students.

Secondly, this study delved into a relatively unexplored research question and newly emerged phenomena, resulting in limited opportunities to compare our findings with existing studies. In light of this limitation, we recommend that future researchers undertake longitudinal (long-term period) research. Such an approach would provide more time to observe potential developments and patterns over an extended period, enriching the understanding of relevant research areas, the changes in Norwegian education system, and the experiences of students.

Thirdly, we considered the new tuition policy as a key intervention potentially influencing student motivation and diversity. However, there may be other factors contributing positively or negatively to these aspects, such as scholarship, tuition price range, and institutional strategies. Given this limitation, future researchers could broaden their insights by considering different factors. This would reveal new insights and foster different discussions, enriching the understanding of the new patterns and dynamics in the Norwegian education system.

5.4 Practical Implications

This section presents practical implications derived from our study, offering insights that NHH and educational leaders can utilise in shaping future strategies. This study revealed that the new tuition fee policy has a clear influence on students' study abroad motivation especially on pull factors. Additionally, it also showed a significant impact on campus diversity. These are crucial factors for NHH to consider in promoting its international brand and positioning itself in the global education market.

To optimise its strategic goals, NHH must thoroughly evaluate its existing approach towards its international student body. Central to NHH's Strategic Priority Areas for 2022-2025, as stated by NHH (n.d.), is 'Widespread Internationalisation', which aligns with the other goals of 'Sustainable Value Creation' and 'Collaboration and Commitment to Common Goals'. This internationalisation strategy encompasses various actions and objectives, involving stakeholders such as partners, students, faculty, and staff. NHH's active participation in

international alliances like CEMS and ENGAGE.EU, its commitment to recruiting globally distinguished faculty and students, and its efforts to capitalise on the diverse knowledge of its international student body, all support this strategic focus. A pivotal aspect of maintaining its global standing involves seeking international accreditations and consistently upholding high academic standards.

However, the tuition fee policy poses significant challenges to NHH's strategic priorities, especially in light of the sharp decline in non-EU/EEA student enrolment post-policy implementation. This situation necessitates a strategic pivot specifically targeting these students. This study's findings suggest potential risks to NHH's reputation, highlighting a gap between student expectations and their actual experiences regarding inclusivity and diversity. Consequently, it is imperative for NHH to align its marketing with the reality of its campus experience. Furthermore, the tuition fees, representing a new revenue stream, should be strategically reinvested to enhance facilities, thereby elevating NHH's image and rankings.

In addition, the urgency of introducing effective scholarship schemes to attract motivated non-EU/EEA students is paramount. Timely implementation of these schemes is crucial to prevent further exclusion of potential candidates. Lastly, NHH should amplify the role of its international students, integrating their unique knowledge and cultural perspectives more prominently in campus events and initiatives, thereby enriching the academic and cultural integration and benefits to the institution.

6.   Conclusion

This study employed a qualitative methodology to explore and investigate the following research question, focusing on the experiences of non-EU/EEA students at NHH:

How has the introduction of tuition fees altered the study abroad motivation and diversity on campus with respect to non-EU/EEA Master Students at NHH?

By comparing first and second year students, we were able to identify the similarities and differences regarding their study abroad motivation and campus diversity experiences, particularly focusing on how these aspects were influenced by the introduction of the new tuition policy.

As for the motivation to study abroad, our interviews revealed that first and second year students had similar patterns when it comes to their *push* factors but there were clear changes in their *pull* factors after the tuition policy. It was discovered that the main push factors were the ones related to self satisfaction and wanting more than what their home countries offered them. In addition, both groups presented the perception of international education as being more beneficial and highly valued. Additionally, family support was an important factor when making their study abroad decision.

On the other hand, the pull factors that the students presented were of different priority between the first and second year students. The second-year students stated free education at NHH as their first motivator, or indicated that it was the ultimate reasoning behind choosing NHH over other Norwegian universities. Whereas, the first-year students perceived getting an education from NHH as an investment rather than a cost while recognising the value of the free education that they could not benefit from. Therefore, the direct impact of the tuition fee policy is the shift of the economic factors from being the main motivator of the second-year students to not being a motivator for the first-year students. Other non-economical factors that were impacted by the tuition fee policy were the educational opportunities. The reverse of the pattern in the economic factors is reflected. The first-year students stated the educational level and different majors they are obtaining from NHH as their main motivators. Whereas, the second-year students had this motivator lower on their list of factors. This indicates that the

public debate of the tuition fee attracting only motivated students appears to be true and was directly realised after its implementation.

In conclusion, it appears essential to enhance the education quality and institution's position internationally to attract more non-EU/EEA students. In addition, even if the new students perceive the tuition as an investment, it does not indicate that NHH will recover from the reduced number of non-EU/EEA students. Through the other Nordic countries' experience, it is evident that an extensive scholarship system would be appreciated and could open doors for more motivated and qualified non-EU/EEA students.

For the campus diversity part, our research revealed that non-EU/EEA students' NHH campus diversity experience can vary depending on their diversity perception and focus. Additionally, it was clear that they were aware of the negative influence of tuition in student composition diversity. However, students observed positive NHH campus diversity in relation to formal classrooms and institutional diversity irrespective of the tuition fee influence. On the other hand, informal interactional diversity emerged as a significant challenge for all students, who viewed it as crucial to their study abroad experience but noted limited opportunities due to cultural differences and language barriers. Hence, it seems crucial to enhance integration efforts between Norwegian and international students and foster a campus environment that encourages openness to engaging with diverse backgrounds.

All in all, we hope our research can serve as an insightful initial step for understanding the new tuition policy influence on non-EU/EEA students' experience in Norwegian higher education that can guide relevant stakeholders in the formation and direction of future policy and strategic approach, ultimately enhancing the student experience on campus.

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Appendix

Appendix 1: Draft Interview Guide

General Demographic Information

- Nationality, gender, age, marital status
- Primary reason to move to Norway and living period : study, marriage/romantic, work
- Financial funding support status : self, scholarship (from home country or Norway), loan, parents, work in Norway (part-time to finance self)

Introduction

- Welcome and thank participants for being part of this study
- Explain the purpose of this study: Our aim with this interview is first to explore the influence of the new tuition policy to study abroad motivation for non-EU/EEA full-time students who are studying at NHH. In addition, it is to understand how they are experiencing campus diversity and inclusion.
- This interview will take around from 60 up to 90 minutes.
- Your personal information and the data from this interview will be anonymized and protected as a confidential data
- This interview will be recorded (audio) and later it will be transcribed if the participant agrees on it

General Questions

- Could you tell me a bit about yourself
- Could you tell me about your education background? (country for secondary school/ higher education, level: bachelor/master, current field of study)
- Could you tell me about your international experience (study, work, living, travel, etc)

Motivation

- What was your primary motivation for studying abroad?
- What was your primary motivator for picking Norway as your study abroad destination
    - Was it your first choice or the only choice (if not what were the other options)
- What was your primary motivator for picking NHH as your study abroad institution
    - Was it your first choice or the only choice (if not what were the other options, how many did you apply)
- What were the most important reasons for you to choose Norway?

If the students get stuck these will be the options they are provided with: the quality of the education, work opportunity after studies, norwegian nature, norwegian language/culture,

_____

peaceful and safety society, technologically advanced country, high standard of living, developed democracy, family and friends living in Norway, other reasons

- What were the most important reasons for you to choose an institution (NHH)?

If the students get stuck these will be the options they are provided with: the availability of courses taught in english, the recognition/reputation/prestige of the diploma, international ranking of NHH, quality of education, quality of research, international campus environment, possibilities of a particular study, level of tuition fees, availability of financial support to study in Norway, the possibility to work during studies, job opportunity after graduation, simple admission process, home university relation, recommendation from family/friends/teacher, location of the NHH

- Did you choose the destination first (Norway) or the institution (NHH)?
- Did you experience any difficulties during the time you prepared for your studies in Norway (before you come)?

Study and living experience in Norway and at NHH so far

This part will be semi structured so depending on what they say we will ask questions related to these topics.

- Academic

Academic quality, curriculum, teaching activities (group work, assignment, evaluation, reading), highly qualified researchers, general satisfaction (better than home university or same or not), opportunity to work with Norwegian/international/same nationality (how often, how was it), attended Norwegian language courses (will, did, doing, want, no)

- Campus social life

Introduction week (did you join, satisfied or not), academic staff guidance/support (satisfied or not), opportunity to discuss with staff, joined student club/union/teams (Norwegian club or international club, how many, wanted but can't?), social environment, social activities, able to become friend with Norwegian/international/same nationality (how's your friendship relations), how often do you socialise with Norwegian/international/same nationality,

- Living in general in Norway

Current accommodation status (share with Norwegian, international, home country, alone), is it easy to make friends (Norwegian, international, same country), do you feel Norwegian students/staff are interested in your country and culture, would you like more chance to experience Norwegian people

- Overall impression and future plan/goal : getting a job and staying in Norway, Phd in Norway, stay (why?), relation between Norwegian students and staff, teaching, international students are treated as resources or equally by university or by

Norwegian students, experience in discrimination/inequality, overall satisfaction of your study, would you recommend to study in Norway and NHH to others?

- How would you compare your expectations before you come to Norway and after?

Tuition policy

- What do you think about the new tuition policy in Norway?
- (If you're not paying tuition currently, and if you have to hypothetically) would you still be willing to study at NHH with the new tuition fee obligation?

Diversity and inclusion (structural, formal, informal)

- Structural diversity (institutional status)
  - Do you think the study environment at NHH is diverse enough? Why or why not?
  - Do you feel NHH has a good mission and vision for international students?
  - Do you feel you are getting enough support from the staff?
  - Do you feel like NHH shares enough information about events that you can attend or you are interested in?
- Formal diversity (classroom status)
  - Do you feel there are enough English curriculum/courses?
  - Do you feel the lectures, professors, and students are diverse enough and well organised for international students?
  - Do you prefer to collaborate with Norwegian/international/same nation students in class for group work? Why?
- Informal diversity (social network, friendship, acceptance status)
  - Did you join the Welcoming week? Why or why not? If you joined, how did you feel about the whole experience?
  - Do you think Norwegian and international students are well integrated together?
  - Do you feel like NHHS specifically shares enough information about their events that you can attend?
  - Do you feel included in events and fun activities at NHH? If so, what are your favourite parts? If not, how would you like it to change?
  - How are you trying to engage with Norwegian students? *(join students club, live together, work together in class, attend social activities, etc.)*
  - Do you normally hang out with which group? *(Norwegians, Internationals, friends from same nation)*

Information source

- Where did you seek information about studying abroad or chosing Norway as a study abroad destination? *(web, institution: home or NHH, friends or family, alumni network)*

- Do you feel like there was sufficient information about Norway and NHH specifically that helped you shape your decision?
    - What type of information was lacking or anything you couldn't find about NHH before moving here?

Closure

- Is there anything you would like to add or comment?
- Reassure data confidentiality and anonymous handling of the collected data
- If a follow-up interview becomes needed, would you be willing to join it?
- Thank you for dedicating time and putting effort into participating in the study project

Appendix 2: Revised Interview Guide

General Demographic Information

- Nationality, gender, age, marital status
- Primary reason to move to Norway and living period : study, marriage/romantic, work
- Financial funding support status : self, scholarship (from home country or Norway), loan, parents, work in Norway (part-time to finance self)

Introduction

- Welcome and thank participants for being part of this study
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- This interview will take around from 60 up to 90 minutes.
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General Questions

- Could you tell me a bit about yourself
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- Could you tell me about your international experience (study, work, living, travel, etc)

Motivation

- What was your primary motivation for studying abroad? (ex: what comes first, Push or Pull?)

Scenario 1. If the first answer comes as Push, the next question will be those below

- Why is it important for you to study abroad? (in detail the reason)

ex) among push examples : home country situation (job market, high competition), self development, better opportunities or income, international experiences, language learning

Scenario 2. If the first answer comes as Pull, the next question will be those below

- What was your primary motivator for picking Norway as your study abroad destination (knowledge and awareness of home country)
    - Was it your first choice or the only choice (if not what were the other options)

- What was your primary motivator for picking NHH as your study abroad institution
  - Was it your first choice or the only choice (if not what were the other options, how many did you apply)
- What were the most important reasons for you to choose Norway?

If the students get stuck these will be the options they are provided with: the quality of the education, work opportunity after studies, norwegian nature, norwegian language/culture, peaceful and safety society, technologically advanced country, high standard of living, developed democracy, family and friends living in Norway, other reasons

- What were the most important reasons for you to choose an institution (NHH)?

If the students get stuck these will be the options they are provided with: the availability of courses taught in english, the recognition/reputation/prestige of the diploma, international ranking of NHH, quality of education, quality of research, international campus environment, possibilities of a particular study, level of tuition fees, availability of financial support to study in Norway, the possibility to work during studies, job opportunity after graduation, simple admission process, home university relation, recommendation from family/friends/teacher, location of the NHH

- Did you choose the destination first (Norway) or the institution (NHH)?
- Did you experience any difficulties during the time you prepared for your studies in Norway (before you come)?

Information source

- Where did you seek information about studying abroad or chosing Norway as a study abroad destination? (*web, institution: home or NHH, friends or family, alumni network)*
- Do you feel like there was sufficient information about Norway and NHH specifically that helped you shape your decision?
  - What type of information was lacking or anything you couldn't find about NHH before moving here?

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- Campus social life

Introduction week (did you join, satisfied or not), academic staff guidance/support (satisfied or not), opportunity to discuss with staff, joined student club/union/teams (Norwegian club or international club, how many, wanted but can't?), social environment, social activities, able to become friend with Norwegian/international/same nationality (how's your friendship relations), how often do you socialise with Norwegian/international/same nationality,

- Living in general in Norway

Current accommodation status (share with Norwegian, international, home country, alone), is it easy to make friends (Norwegian, international, same country), do you feel Norwegian students/staff are interested in your country and culture, would you like more chance to experience Norwegian people

- Overall impression and future plan/goal : getting a job and staying in Norway, Phd in Norway, stay (why?), relation between Norwegian students and staff, teaching, international students are treated as resources or equally by university or by Norwegian students, experience in discrimination/inequality, overall satisfaction of your study, would you recommend to study in Norway and NHH to others?
- How would you compare your expectations before you come to Norway and after?

Tuition policy

- What do you think about the new tuition policy in Norway?
- (If you're not paying tuition currently, and if you have to hypothetically) would you still be willing to study at NHH with the new tuition fee obligation?

Diversity and inclusion (structural, formal, informal)

- Structural diversity (institutional status)
  - Do you think the study environment at NHH is diverse enough? Why or why not?
  - Do you feel NHH has a good mission and vision for international students?
  - Do you feel you are getting enough support from the staff?
  - Do you feel like NHH shares enough information about events that you can attend or you are interested in?
- Formal diversity (classroom status)
  - Do you feel there are enough English curriculum/courses?
  - Do you feel the lectures, professors, and students are diverse enough and well organised for international students?
  - Do you prefer to collaborate with Norwegian/international/same nation students in class for group work? Why?
- Informal diversity (social network, friendship, acceptance status)
  - Did you join the Welcoming week? Why or why not? If you joined, how did you feel about the whole experience?

○ Do you think Norwegian and international students are well integrated together?

○ Do you feel like NHHS specifically shares enough information about their events that you can attend?

○ Do you feel included in events and fun activities at NHH? If so, what are your favourite parts? If not, how would you like it to change?

○ How are you trying to engage with Norwegian students? *(join students club, live together, work together in class, attend social activities, etc.)*

○ Do you normally hang out with which group? *(Norwegians, Internationals, friends from same nation)*

Closure

- Is there anything you would like to add or comment?
- Reassure data confidentiality and anonymous handling of the collected data
- If a follow-up interview becomes needed, would you be willing to join it?
- Thank you for dedicating time and putting effort into participating in the study project

(Note) Push and pull *migration* Factors categorization

	Push factors (intrinsic)	Pull factors (extrinsic)
Economic	• Lack of job opportunities in the country • Low wages and limited income prospects • Economic instability, inflation and currency devaluation • Poverty and lack of economic security • Overpopulation leading to competition for jobs • Perceived higher earning potential with a foreign degree • Financial support from home country: scholarship, loan	• Job opportunities and potential higher wages • Economic stability • Prospects for internships, work experience, and post-graduation employment • Pathways to acquire skills relevant to future careers • Availability of scholarships, grants, or financial support
Social & political (including quality of life, cultural & social attractiveness)	• Political instability or concerns about government interference in education • Desire for academic freedom and freedom of expression • Desire to escape social or political discrimination • Health concerns, including the prevalence of diseases • Inadequate infrastructure & basic services (e.g., transportation, utilities, electricity, water, health)	• Favorable living conditions; safety, and quality of life • Access to healthcare, social services, and amenities • Political stability and security • Respect for human rights and social inclusivity • Exposure to different cultural experiences and rich diversity • Opportunities for personal and professional growth

Environmental	• Natural disasters and environmental hazards • Climate change and its effects on livelihoods	• Favourable natural conditions and access to the environment • Distance from the home country
Educational opportunity (including language skills, globalisation)	• Limited access to quality education • Insufficient availability of desired academic fields or majors • Desire to access world-class education • Attraction to globalised academic and professional environments • Seeking opportunities to learn or improve language skills • Perceptions of better quality education in the host country • Access to cutting-edge research and academic resources	• Access to quality education and research institutions • Reduced tuition fees or living expenses through funding options • Renowned universities and colleges with strong academic reputations • High rankings in international education assessments • Access to top-notch faculty and academic resources • Opportunities for research and skill development
Family and community ties	• Recommendation from family and friend • Family support • Peer influence • Strong alumni network	• Existence of family members, friends • Support networks in the host country • Sense of community among international students • Romantic relationship
Migration and legal policy	• Simple and easy migration process; visa • Embassy being in a different country	• Student-friendly immigration policies; simple and easy visa process, low costs • Support services for international students and assistance with visas and housing • Opportunities for legal migration and pathways to residency or citizenship • Strong law and protection against discrimination
Personal (self-satisfaction)	• Want to grow as a person • Experience new things and new cultures • Used to moving around, it is the norm for them	

Appendix 3: Informed Consent Form

Informed Consent Form

Informed consent form –Participation in master thesis project
NHH Norwegian School of Economics

Background and purpose
This research is a part of the master thesis project at NHH Norwegian School of Economics. The goal is to understand how the new tuition policy in Norway influences non-EU/EEA students' motivation to study in Norway. In addition, it is to examine their experience and perception of diversity and inclusion at NHH. We are targeting non-EU/EEA full time master students at NHH that have experiences with studies at NHH and influence from the tuition policy changes.

What does it mean to participate in this study
We invite you to participate in an one-on-one interview lasting up to 90 minutes. If you are willing to join the interview and permit the process, the interview will be recorded during the whole conduction and later will be transcribed. The recorded audio file will be deleted after the transcription and the transcribed version will be anonymized. Upon request, the transcription can be shared and confirmed.

How is personal information protected and handled
We will only use your personal data for the purpose(s) specified here and we will process your personal data in accordance with data protection legislation (the GDPR). All personal information will be handled confidentially. Any information that could identify individuals will be removed (eg name, nationality, sex, age). Transcriptions will be categorized as codes instead. Personal information including this consent form, will be kept separate from any interview data. Only interview participants joining in the master thesis project will have access to the anonymized interviews.

All of your personal information and data will be anonymized and be destroyed after the study is completed.

The project will be completed in December 2023.

Voluntary participation
Participating in this master thesis project is absolutely voluntary. You have the will to withdraw at any time without any further explanation. If you choose to withdraw, all of your personal information and your interview consent will be deleted.

You have the rights
If your personal information is included in and identifiable in the data, you have the rights of

- To get access in which personal data is registered in your name
- To correct/delete/add/confirm your personal information
- To receive a copy of your personal information and interview data
- To inquire a complaint to data protection officer (Personvernombudet) or The Norwegian Data Protection Authority (Datatilsynet) regarding the use of personal information on you

What gives us the right to use personal information about you?
By signing this form you consent to participate in this master thesis study.

Based on an agreement with NHH, The Data Protection Services of Sikt – Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research has assessed that the processing of personal data in this project meets requirements in data protection legislation.

Which institution is responsible for the research project?

The Norwegian School of Economics (NHH) is responsible for this project. This study will be in cooperation with the institution as a joint data controller.

Where can I find out more?
If you have questions regarding the research project, please contact

- Joelle Soumi (+46) 76 444 95 73 and Hyunyi Um (+47) 46 27 97 10 or via email: Joelle.Soumi@student.nhh.no and Hyunyi.Um@student.nhh.no
- Data Protection Officer at NHH: personvernombud@nhh.no
- SIKT Data Protection services telephone: (+47) 73 98 40 40 or via email: personverntjenester@sikt.no

Informed consent form:
I have received written information and I am willing to participate in this study.

Signature .... Date...................................

Printed name...

Please return the updated and signed form to:
Joelle.Soumi@student.nhh.no or Hyunyi.Um@student.nhh.no

Appendix 4: Message sent out to all masters students inviting them to be a part of the study

Meeting Point - Master
27 Sep 2023 at 14:05

Hello,

We are two Masters students, Joelle and Hani, writing our thesis about non-EU Masters students at NHH. We want to know more about your motivation when it comes to moving to Norway and studying at NHH.

We are looking for people open to being interviewed. Of course you will be kept anonymous, but we would love to get your point of view.

If you are a non-EU Masters student in your first or second year, or know someone that fits these criteria please contact us.

Our contact information is: joelle.soumi@student.nhh.no and hyunyi.um@student.nhh.no or you can respond to this message if you wish.

Please contact us for more information about our study, and hope to hear from you guys soon!

Best regards,
Joelle & Hani

Appendix 5: Conformation and invitation email sent out to all participants
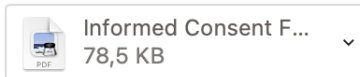
Interview Time setting for Masters Thesis

⊗ **Joelle Soumi <Joelle.Soumi@stu...**

Wednesday, 11 October 2023 at 16:23

Cc: ⊗ Hyunyi Um; **Bcc:**

; **+10 more** ⌄

Informed Consent F...
78,5 KB

Download · Preview

Hello,

Thank you again for agreeing on being a part of our study.

We would like to officially invite you to have the interview next week. It will be an hour long so please make sure that you have enough free time for it.

It would be perfect if you can book which ever times suites you, using the link below. Please let us know straight away if the link does not work.
https://outlook.office365.com/owa/calendar/MastersThesisInterview@nhhit.onmicrosoft.com/bookings/

We will inform you of the place for the interview later.

Also, please fill in the consent form attached to this email and send it back to us as soon as possible with the following file name [your name _ Consent form].

See you soon!

Best regards,
Joelle & Hani

Appendix 6: Interview Schedule

Monday	Tuesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Participant A 11:00-12:00	Participant E 10:30-11:30	Participant G 10:30-11:30	Participant K 10:00-11:00	Participant L 14:30-15:30
Participant B 12:00-13:00		Participant H 12:30-13:30		
Participant C 13:00-14:00	Participant F 14:30-15:30	Participant I 14:30-15:30		Participant M 16:00-17:00
Participant D 16:00-17:00		Participant J 16:00-17:00		

Appendix 7: Themes developed in the Analysis

Themes for Motivation
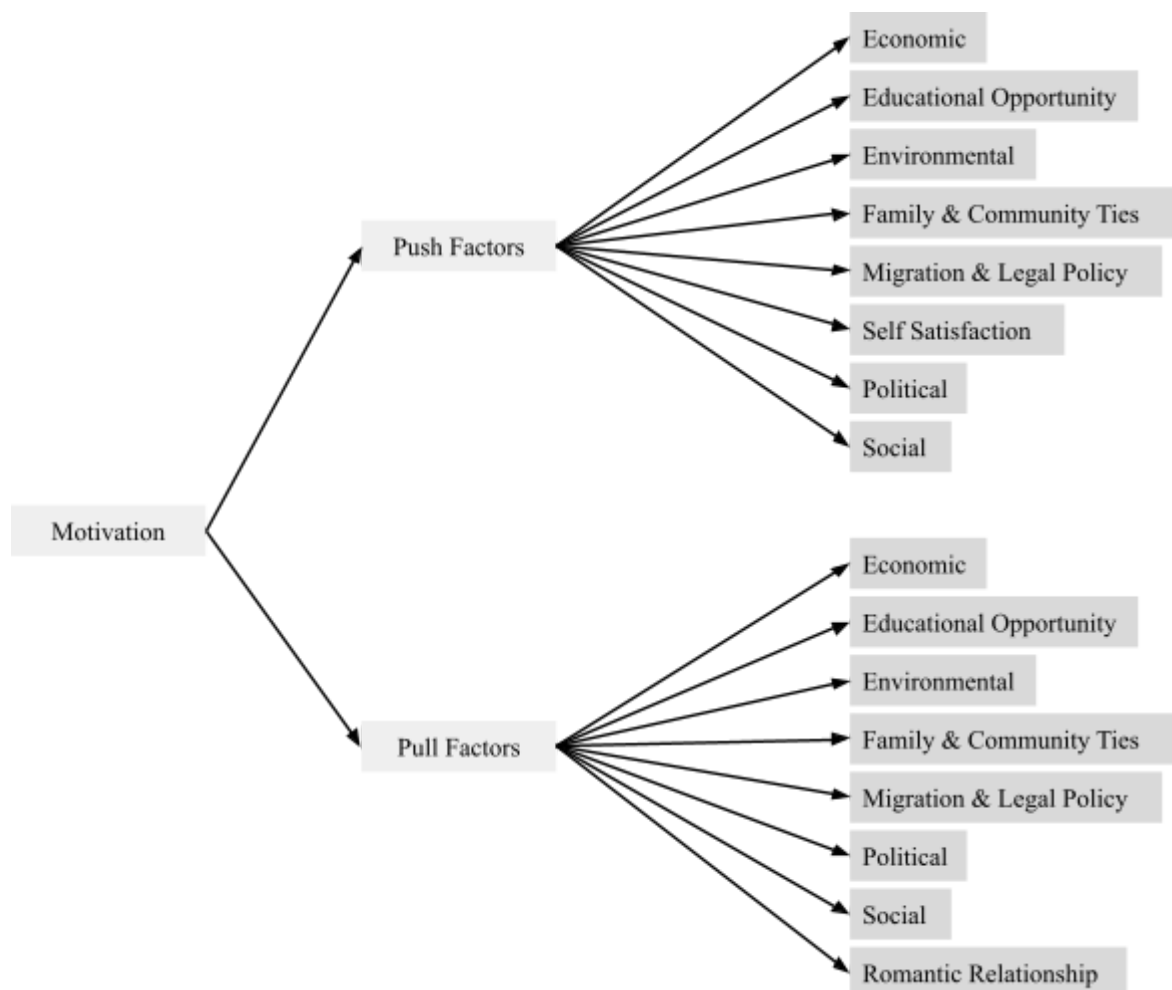
Themes for Tuition Fee
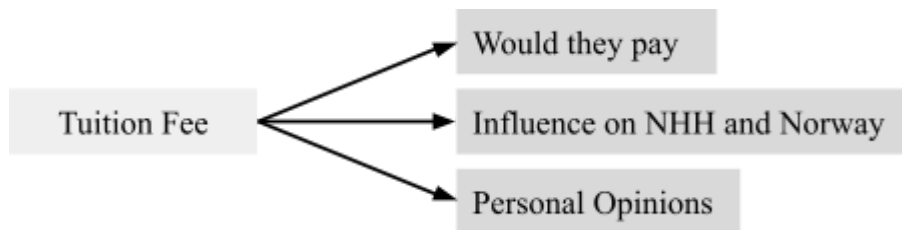
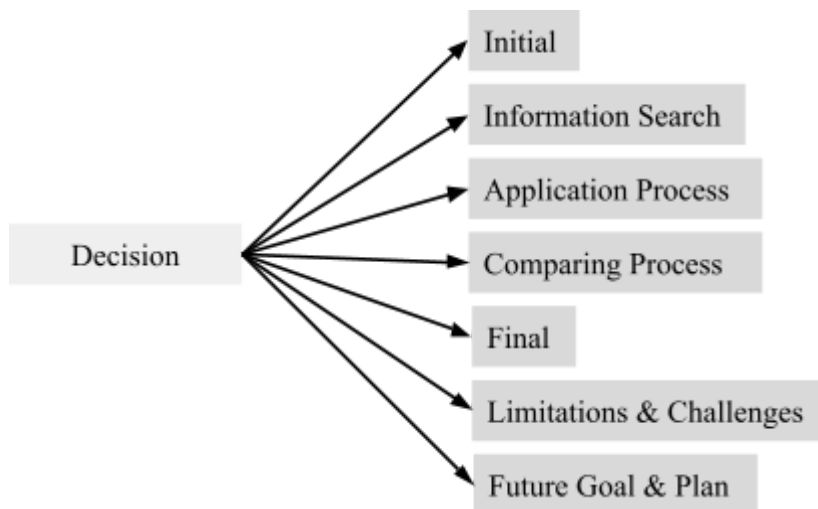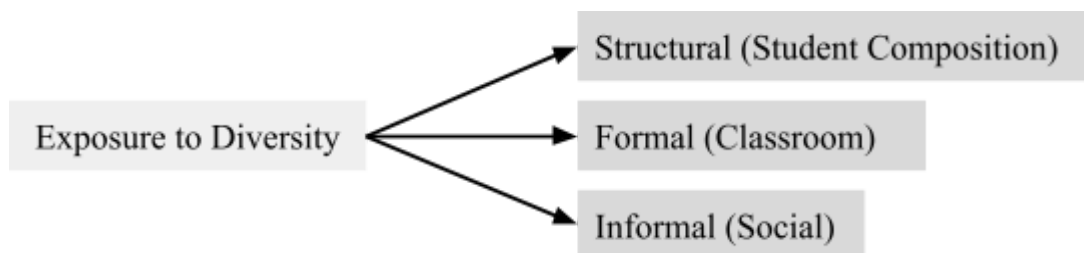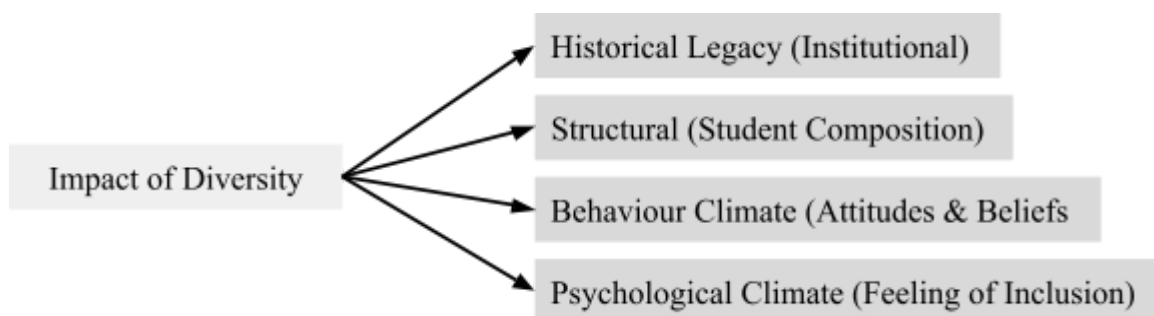Themes for Decision

Themes for Exposure to Diversity

Themes for Impact of Diversity

Appendix 8: International students in Norway and NHH

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Registered students at HEIs in Norway	277 322	277 637	278 334	281 702	292 834	304 885	297 775	295 922
Registered foreign students at HEIs in Norway	25 306	25 072	24 155	23 695	18 040	22 540	24 020	23 687
	9,1%	9,0%	8,7%	8,4%	6,2%	7,4%	8,1%	8,0%
Registered foreign students in exchange programs	8 478	8 683	8 950	8 766	4 602	7 016	10 285	
	33,5%	34,6%	37,1%	37,0%	25,5%	31,1%	42,8%	
Registered foreign students in degree programs	12 199	12 255	12 347	12 809	12 789	13 157	13 735	
	48,2%	48,9%	51,1%	54,1%	70,9%	58,4%	57,2%	
Foreign students from Europe	6 406	6 176	5 812	5 695	5 375	5 667		
Foreign students from Asia	3 648	3 810	4 328	4 870	5 186	5 235		
Foreign students from Africa	1 163	1 165	1 053	1 037	1 025	1 042		
Foreign students from North America	503	559	577	598	589	593		
Foreign students from South America	414	473	517	540	547	543		
Foreign students from Oseania	66	71	60	64	67	77		
non-EU/EEA students who pay full tuition								461
Number of students at NHH	3 425	3 495	3 485	3 660	3 580	4 040	4 145	4175
Foreign students at NHH (total)	485	510	535	560	270	590	630	610
	14,2%	14,6%	15,4%	15,3%	7,5%	14,6%	15,2%	14,6%
Foreign students in exchange program at NHH	368	416	456	447	168	472		
Foreign students in master programs at NHH	190	185	220	245	225	210	195	175
European students	115	100	120	135	120	110	90	95
non-European students	75	90	100	110	105	100	110	80
non-EU/EEA students who pay full tuition								5
Foreign students in Economy & Business degree programs	1 772	1 937	1 897	1 908	1 951	2 099		
	14,5%	15,8%	15,4%	14,9%	15,3%	16,0%		

Additional Examples of Quotes from Interviews

Category	Theme	Year one Fee-paying students	Year two non-fee-paying students
Background	International Experience	*"My international, well it also started in (home country) partially because I finished IB, the high school. I already studied English language under international curriculum for four years. [...] I finished my bachelor in Budapest on a scholarship"* (Participant A) *"I studied in high school that was kind of international, like our teachers were all from a different country and there were students with different nationalities. [...] I did my bachelor's at a German university with 75% international and 25% German."* (Participant C) *"I did an exchange at the University of Oslo before, and I worked in a Danish energy company, Ørsted."* (Participant H) *"This is my first time in Europe actually [...] I lived in Qatar for five years and I studied high school there."* (Participant B) *"I got a job at Nordea in Estonia and I worked for about 1.5 years, but it's my first time studying abroad."* (Participant I)	*"I studied in France. Just three months I lived in Florida, in Orlando [...] it's a program, work and travel. I lived in China for one year studying Chinese. I worked for this French Academy Alliances Francaise for almost three years. so I was surrounded by French people that travelled."* (Participant D) *"I did an exchange semester in Amsterdam at WU [...] before coming here, I took a two year gap [...] I was hired by HSBC [...] worked in the US team, so my team was the people from the US. [...] I also lived for 2 summers in Canada."* (Participant G) *"I did an internship for a Canadian company."* (Participant E) *"I travelled a lot before coming to Norway. But, last semester I went to Japan as an exchange student from NHH."* (Participant J) *"It was my first time studying abroad. Actually my first time abroad as well. Norway is the first country I moved to."* (Participant L)

		"I worked for a US based company." (Participant F)	*"I've only travelled abroad and never lived abroad before. I've only travelled in Asia actually, so coming to Norway, it's my first time in Europe." (Participant K)* *"Education wise and work wise, no. This is my first time abroad. [...] I travelled as a kid." (Participant M)*
	Financial Support	*"I am funding myself through savings and I'm also looking for a part time job." (Participant F)* *"I pay living costs with my savings." (Participant I)* *"I'm looking to get a part time job to support myself here, but currently for the fees I have a student loan from back in (my home country) and support from my mother." (Participant B)* *"I'm looking for a part time job. I am financed through a loan from (my home country), and from my family and or from my previous savings." (Participant H)* *"We have a family business and that's my source of support." (Participant C)* *"Self-funded plus parents' support." (Participant A)*	*"I applied for a scholarship. One of the scholarships that NHH has. [...] so they have scholarships for just the first two years. Now it's over. I work almost from Monday to Sunday. And different student jobs, you know, like cleaning hotel rooms, waiter, receptionist, dish washer. Like almost the whole summer." (Participant D)* *"I saved up the money. [...] I found a job here and it was related to the service industry and throughout where it's now a year and I'm financing myself through that." (Participant E)* *"Fully funded by myself. It is self funded in the sense that I don't have a grant or loan or anything like that, but it's partly saving up from when I worked and partly helped from my dad. So my parents helped with that. I don't have any help from the government or anything like that." (Participant G)*

			"My parents basically, and I worked in summer. [...] My parents and my brother, he's working in Canada, offered to give me the money, which is a lot to 140,000-150,000 krone." (Participant J) *"From my parents." (Participant K)* *"So far only except for last year with my own money, because I worked for one year. The rest is from my parents." (Participant L)* *"Primarily through the money I made when I was working and also some parental support. I currently have no job." (Participant M)*
Push Motivational Factors	Economic	*"The work life is very disheartening. It's not honest. [...] There's no open communication. [...] And the society as a whole, it's very backwards [...] and I don't believe people get rewarded enough." (Participant B)* *"I think studying abroad had more to do with the situation in (my home country) because overtime the economy and the political situation. It has deteriorated to such an extent that trying to stay back and build a career there is just not viable for anyone anymore." (Participant F)*	*"The conditions in my country are a little bit harsh, so I was looking for a better opportunity." (Participant J)*

	Educational Opportunity	*"I think it's really important to obtain international exposure because when I came here to Norway, specifically in a certain course I was exposed to things that are happening in Norway that I couldn't have even perceived to have been happening back in (my home country) I was completely unaware of." (Participant F)*	*"I think going abroad to study was something more compared to a degree back home. So I think that's a good opportunity as well." (Participant L)* *"It's not uncommon to do your bachelors, and then go abroad for your masters. So that was kind of always in the back of my head that I would like to go abroad after a year or two of working. And COVID happens. So the plan shifted a little bit. So I came here after three years of working." (Participant M)* *"I felt that if I'm doing a lot of things and I'm studying, why not expand that to a different country where I can learn more about it. [...] Since I was working, I could understand the hardship of earning money, so I was like, I want to put it to use rather than just wasting it shopping, going out, making no sense of it." (Participant E)*
	Self Satisfaction	*"I wanted to shift to be in the energy industry to pull myself there and to work for non-governmental organisations rather than for profit. [...] I wanted to use my masters to shift me and pull me out of what I experienced until that point." (Participant A)* *"I wanted to have a different life experience. [...] I just wanted to study abroad because of my curiosity." (Participant I)*	*"You learn and you get and you feel curious about how it works for other cultures and then you get OK. I want to see it by myself, with my own eyes." (Participant D)* *"It would be to experience something they would never have experienced if you stayed in your home country. To be uncomfortable and to know how to adapt." (Participant J)* *"It's always just kind of been there in the back of my head that I want to go abroad and study mainly to broaden your horizons, experience a new culture, maybe learn a new language, see how the rest of the world kind of works." (Participant M)*

	Political	*"Study abroad motivation was done with an aim for me to leave my home country since my country is in the developing status." (Participant A)*	
	Social	*"Society as a whole, it's very backwards." (Participant B)*	
Pull Motivational Factors	Economic	*"I chose Norway because at the time it was still free to study here." (Participant C)* *"The first is the financial [...] I found out that Norway is the only country that accepts non-EU students without expensive tuition fees." (Participant I)* *"I landed in Norway because my ultimate aim was to settle down in Europe. [...] So to me Norway made a lot of sense because it's in Europe, it's a self-sufficient country, the economy is very strong and very resilient." (Participant F)*	*"I think something very attractive about Norway is the free education." (Participant J)* *"I checked a lot of countries in Europe, since I'm not going to the US, and I found some countries that have free education like Norway and Germany. Then I don't wanna learn German. [...] Since I wanted to not only study abroad, but also live abroad afterwards, I had to consider if it's easy for me to live there afterwards." (Participant K)* *"This scholarship didn't come with any conditions and it was good. It was not a fortune, but it was good to the one here in Norway. It was good to live, to have a decent life." (Participant D)*
	Educational Opportunity	*"I knew that NHH was my first choice because it's better than BI." (Participant C)*	*"I looked up the rankings and the presence of the university." (Participant E)* *"It was first because of Norway then NHH. Because it's a good school and free education." (Participant J)*

| | | "NHH was pretty much the only place that I applied to because given that I come from a marketing background, I thought that it would make more sense if I were to apply to a business school program. [...] People have given very good reviews, especially the post-graduation prospects." (Participant F)

"I really wanted to learn about the renewable energy aspect of the world [...] and was looking for the best programs for environmental economics. [...] So I was looking at several schools that had a program similar to that. [...] I didn't really know much about NHH, but it was super highly ranked [...] and only applied to NHH." (Participant B)

"The second is the program I can learn in English because English is the only language I know other than (my language). I applied for BI but it's a private university, so I think it's better to go to a public NHH. [...] I thought probably public universities are more reputational in Norway than private universities." (Participant I)

"I looked BI, but I heard the reputation of NHH is better. I just go for the one that has a better reputation and has more potential job opportunities." (Participant H) | "At least from what I found online, they say NHH was a more reputable school, so the reputation kind of played into my factor for applying here." (Participant M)

"The PhD program. I was looking for a university that is well ranked all over Europe. And since then NHH has an even better ranking than BI. It's OK because it gives me more confidence that this was a good university." (Participant D)

"I think it's the international opportunities. That's what I checked like all the programs inside the master program, like you can do a minor like exchange a lot of different things. [...] Also it's the best school you know. I knew its reputation was good from my friend." (Participant K)

"I was waiting more so on NHH because I also preferred the major here. I feel that was also a little bit of a motivation for my major specifically because I didn't particularly enjoy my bachelors major. So I was really looking to find a major that aligned more with what I wanted to do, and the course and the curriculum here aligned better. So when I heard from NHH, it was just like a no-brainer to come here. [...] I just knew that it was a good university, that it was a prestigious one." (Participant G) |

	Environmental		*"I've grown up in a very big city which is very crowded. It's very large it's very dense. Wanted to be closer to a place where I could be closer to nature, something I haven't grown up with, something a little different, something a little smaller." (Participant M)*
Challenges	Main Challenges	*"I was supposed to come here last year but the visa didn't come through. So, I had to defer it to a year, so that's why technically I'm a current student and that's why I don't pay tuition." (Participant F)* *"The visa application was just terrible. It took me a lot of time to communicate with UDI. And the payment of tuition fees was another topic. It took me a lot of time to communicate with the bank in (my home country) or talk to the school." (Participant H)*	*"I already deposited a lump sum money before I was moving. It was locked in the university account. [...] They gave me a card so I can access it, but I was depending on that and I didn't know how much I was using. How I managed it and it was like a procedure. If I get out of a certain amount I have to ask them to refill it. So it was like for two months I was struggling with that." (Participant E)* *"I do feel like the social life of Norway to me so far, I think is the biggest challenge. [...] So if you are not able to make it to like the more meaningful part of the relationship, then you just always stay as an acquaintance unless you really work very hard to try to make your way in." (Participant G)* *"I knew it's gonna be hard 'cause, like different people." (Participant L)"I know that Facebook is a primary means of communicating here, which isn't a website I personally use a lot. And I'm not super comfortable using it either because I haven't used it in a long time." (Participant M)*

		"I had to go to another country to apply for it. And I was lucky that one of the countries that had the representative for the Norwegian consulate was Serbia, where I can go with my ID because I had to leave my passport there. [...] And then there were additional fees of, like the visa that is €500 then the process in the console that caused like 50 or €100. And then the travel cost, you get there and then. And then the rest is, the dorm, the tuition this semester. There were quite a lot." (Participant A) *"The main thing was the information provided by NHH was a bit very slow. Probably they were discussing the tuition fees, like how to treat and their responsibility. [...] The communication took a lot of time."* (Participant I) *"It would mostly have to do with the process not being streamlined and just the bureaucracy."* (Participant F) *"Living in Norway after coming here, everything was really difficult. Like getting a residence permit, getting a Norwegian national ID number, getting a bank account. [...] So it took a lot of time to figure out what I exactly needed to do."* (Participant I)	*"It's a European country and business oriented, so it should be faster like one week for everything [...] But like now I'm renewing my residency permit. They say they told me 4 weeks to kind of study the case, but it could take between four and eight weeks. So now I cannot travel to any places."* (Participant D) *"I always struggled with the visa because it's a lot of documentation and it's a lot of steps, so I always struggled with that."* (Participant E) *"I think when I came here it was a bit of struggle to adjust in the society because it was very culturally different."* (Participant E) *"They were pretty slow with that. And then for the banks, even the arrival of documents and then the bank ID and residence permit arrival of that."* (Participant E) *"In (my home country) we don't have the Norwegian Embassy. I have to travel to Colombia and it was right in the middle of the pandemic. So that was difficult and then also was the possibility that Norway doesn't open the borders, don't open the borders in August 2020."* (Participant D)

| | | "Visa was a bit of a process because I had to travel to get it. [...] The process took a bit longer, so I got it like a few days before I had to come here." (Participant C)

"It's kind of difficult and when I checked for scholarships because I checked pretty much every month to see if something showed up. [...] there's still absolutely nothing that I could find that is applicable for me." (Participant A)

"The (my home country's) education system is so different, I didn't know how my degrees translated here. That was one of the hard things about translating the grading system. To understand that took me a long time." (Participant B) | "The process in general was not easy at all coming from (my home country), I had to get a visa in Jordan by the time, which was kind of far because Algeria was closed because of COVID at the time. I couldn't get it in (my home country), so I had to go to another country. [...] Coming in from the Arab world, you can only apply in Algeria, Palestine or Israel, Lebanon, Jordan, and those countries are not very stable, so not a big presence in that world." (Participant J)

"About school, I'm not sure because when I first applied here, I think the students had to take a little bit deeper to know, especially if you didn't go to bachelor at NHH, you kind of don't know what happened like Cems. Only the exchange program was mentioned. [...] I think it's just you have to look a little bit deeper. It's not like it's hard to find hidden things." (Participant L)

"Also the money transfer is not an easy thing for everyone. I had to get authorization from the central bank. That's just not easy. [...] There's also this thing in (my home country) where you can't use foreign money currencies that's blocked. Like you can't have an international card, which is crazy. So to pay the deposit was a little bit difficult, it's just the difficulties coming from my home country." (Participant J)

"I think that was not that hard except for the transaction because you have to move your money all the way from (my home country) to Europe. So it's quite scary." (Participant L) |

			"It's the biggest culture shock and the first culture shock. Because I assumed that the alumni from NHH will show us around the campus, around the city and just introduce things like tour guides and everything." (Participant K)
	Tuition Fee Opinions	"This is what I want to do in my life [...] but someone put a price on my dream. [...] it's not fair. [...] I hated the idea of putting a price on something like education. You shouldn't discriminate, [...] the people who will pay tuition are the ones who can't afford it." (Participant A) "What I wished when they introduced the tuition was not to do it a month and 1/2 before school started because they had no idea what they were doing. [...] I know that the school had to just comply with that but now it's on them to show how they really feel or come up with new strategies." (Participant A) "The government just introduced the policy this year, so nobody has fully prepared for everything and I feel like international students are forced or pushed to do everything instead of fully informed by the school or the government." (Participant H)	"It's sad. [...] This tuition is kind of closing the border for foreigners. [...] It's a barrier for sure. Very talented people, they're not gonna come." (Participant D) "And then now it's like money is a big barrier for them to come here and then nothing is not fair." (Participant L) "The incentive to come to Norway as a foreigner, if you have the money between going to Norway and New Zealand, Canada or Switzerland or other. I don't know how, but I think I would choose other countries." (Participant D) "If I would be coming this semester, I would never choose Norway as my country. Because firstly there is a language barrier here. If I'm paying that much money coming here, I would have gone to an English speaking country which is bigger. I have more opportunities there and I won't be restricted. [..] if I had that much money especially, I won't pay that for NHH, I might go for BI or the private university." (Participant E)

		"I would say the experience wasn't so good and I feel excluded. I felt like I wasn't so welcomed by this whole situation since we are the first tuition paying students. [...] Disappointing. I mean it will be better if I don't need to pay the tuition fee and I feel like it discourages a lot of people from studying in Norway because Norway is normally not the most popular place to study and the biggest advantage before the tuition fee was that people don't need to pay tuition fees." (Participant H) *"I understand that, but when that happens to you, you don't really think rationally. They're just protecting themselves. I don't blame the school, because the school was very apologetic when this was happening."* (Participant B) *"From my understanding, it seems like a lot of Europe is starting to embrace the more right-wing spectrum of government, more of a nationalistic stance on the economy. And you know Sweden, Denmark, have tuition fees. Naturally, I think Norway had to implement it as well."* (Participant F) *"If I have to pay that I wouldn't come to Norway. Because it's expensive. [...] I like Norway but if I have to pay that amount, I will use that money to study abroad in England, then I don't need to learn a new language and more options for universities, more job opportunities because they have a larger population."* (Participant I)	*"If I have to pay for that I'm not coming to Norway. I will just go to the UK. Because, even though it's difficult to get a job there, the reputation of the school is a lot better, like internationally. And if I couldn't get a job there, I can go back to my home country and my degree would be acknowledged."* (Participant K) *"If I were paying tuition I don't think it would be very fair that I wouldn't get all the experiences that NHHs has to offer. In spite of paying so much money."* (Participant M) *"I think it's a little bit expensive. I wouldn't have come if I had to pay that tuition. [...] And I don't know why, it's not like Norway is not that attractive, but the quality of the education is not that good. You can go to Sweden or Denmark, you pay the same for better quality for more known universities, or even Germany."* (Participant J)

| Life in Norway, at NHH and Future Plans | Expectations | *"Like my other expectations, it's basically from the research that I did that Norwegians are perceived as cold. I don't think that's true and so far, my experience has shown me that it isn't."* (Participant C)

"A lot of my peers mentioned that you don't really get into a master's program to learn, especially into a business-oriented program because a lot of what we learned is on the job. [...] The main point of your business program is to mainly develop a network. [...] One of my main expectations was just trying to get to meet people here and kind of broaden my horizons and talk to people. If you live in a bubble, you're not really exposed to other ideas or other perspectives or whatnot. So coming here, my expectation was that I would get to interact with a lot of many different people. That expectation really hasn't been met." (Participant F)

"I love studying. [...] I came here to study. [...] All the social activities that they offered were great, but my first impression of the school was that for a week everyone is wasted 24/7 and I did not see how those people would sit with me in class and take it seriously." (Participant A)

"I thought it was going to be very desolate. I lived in Qatar and there were not many people there, so it was always lonely and empty. But here you do see a lot of the people. [...] People are closer together than I thought it would be." (Participant B) | *"There are so many different kinds of platforms and softwares for finance students to know about and to get hands-on experience on it. We are just learning the theories and all the bookish things rather than learning. [...] And especially being a master student, I'm expecting that because after this I have to step into the world and I need to know. [...]I had the expectation that it's gonna be amazing. It's a European university. It has standards and you know, it's gonna be very good for me. [...] But when I came here, I actually didn't find that my expectations were fulfilled concerning the way they were teaching the courses, so I thought I was expecting more. I was expecting more learning but It wasn't fulfilled."* (Participant E)

"I knew that I wanted to stay here after my graduation and find a job here, start working here. [...] Right now I'm a bit sceptical. [...] But for me, the first priority will be Norway because I feel it's more peaceful [...] So I want to work in this market for a while. But I'm still deciding depending on the opportunity that might come for me because for here I am still not sure what kind of job I will like to end up getting [...] I want to keep my options open, so I was firm in the beginning, but now I am 50:50." (Participant E)

"I think it took me 2 years but I'm there like my expectations are met. But it took me a lot of work and two years. It was a comfortable and happy life. It was to work in a place that you really appreciate. You appreciate the people around you. It's a safe place. You get to have work life balance and you get to enjoy yourself. Like going to the gym and going outside. I think that was my expectation. And get paid comfortably because I was not in my home country." (Participant J) |

| | | | "I think I was looking for a very different experience from what I had so far. Like I said, I grew up in a very big city. It was very crowded, very large. It's got a lot going on all the time. It's very fast-paced. So I was looking for a slower pace. I was looking for something that's closer to nature. Those kinds of expectations were definitely met. Other than that, I didn't really have any big expectations." (Participant M)

"I think it's quite good, at least as I expected. I got to learn what I wanted to learn." (Participant K)

"I knew all the Norwegians speak perfect English, but I didn't expect that they wouldn't really prefer to speak English. I'm a bit surprised." (Participant K) |
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| | Future Plans | "I would love to live here. It's a beautiful city. I really want to work here, and I would love to live here." (Participant B)

"I'm hoping to stay in Norway. Like if it's not a PhD then like maybe a job. I do like the culture. I think people are nice." (Participant C)

"I want to get job opportunities in the energy sector in Norway." (Participant H)

"I want to work in Norway after graduating. [...] It's difficult for foreigners to find a job. And as a non-EU nationality, we could only get work if the job is related to my studies." (Participant I) | "I wanna get a job first and then after several years after some savings, buy an apartment and just live here afterwards. So totally settle down." (Participant K)

"Of course working in Norway. First, I'm gonna live here for a while, but I'm hoping to go to Europe. If I can't find anything here, I can just move back to Asia. So, my options are very open." (Participant L) |

		"My lifelong plan has always been to move to Europe. I would like to stay in Norway, but I've heard that it's very difficult for someone who doesn't speak the language or is an international. If that doesn't work out, Germany is going to be my other option." (Participant F)	"For so long I was not willing to stay because I was not feeling comfortable. But then when I went to Japan and I came back, I saw many things that I missed in Norway. So I started to appreciate them more. Nature is one of them, and like tranquillity even the fact there are no ads in the street, that's amazing. [...] Now I want to stay. Of course I need the job seeker thing and I don't speak Norwegian yet. To just change my mind, now I'm gonna put effort into it. it's difficult to find a job, so my plan is to work as a skilled job until I learn something and learn the language." (Participant J)
Campus Climate: Exposure and Impact of Diversity	Structural Diversity	"I think the campus has facilitated diversity well when it comes to nationalities. The only thing that's missing is people outside of the EU. I feel that when they introduce tuition, the number of non-EU students is so small that I feel limited. it's going to be much harder to fit in and harder to find friends." (Participant A) "I think the level of diversity is OK because I see a lot of Italians, Germans, and Austrians, but they're mostly exchange students. So from this point of view, NHH's championing diversity. But you don't see a lot of non-EU students." (Participant F) "Gender balance is quite good. [...] But in my business analytic courses, there are more guys." (Participant I)	"I do see enough women versus men." (Participant G, 2nd year) "Not really. [...] It's like the Western definition of diverse, which may be French or German." (Participant J) "For my finance major, mostly Norwegians and male. [...] I feel like it's not that diverse here. Especially at NHH, because every degree is somehow related to business." (Participant E) "Gender is a little bit strange like I have an evaluation course and there's only one girl among 30 boys. Gender wise, for sure I can see that it's not 50:50. Maybe it's the finance thing." (Participant J)

			"Based on the number of international students, there aren't many international students in total. And it's quite difficult to integrate like to mix international students with Norwegian students. As far as I know, Norwegian students have no difficulty integrating with each other. So I guess the whole situation is not diverse." (Participant K) *"Age wise, honestly I have been feeling like I'm the oldest at the university for so long. Although I did meet older people. Generally, it makes sense." (Participant J)*
	Institutional Diversity	*"One piece of information that wasn't really conveyed to me I think in a manner that should have been, [...] the level of integration here with international students. [...] I think NHH was kind of poor in that respect. In terms of trying to integrate the international students together. [...] I don't think I am getting enough information from NHH." (Participant F)* *"One of the things NHH did well was their courses in English. That is the biggest thing you could do to get more international inclusion. So, the first thing that was all I really cared about was that if you give me the same education that you do for everyone else. Everything else is just a bonus after that, in my opinion." (Participant B)* *"I think institutions really hit diversity with the tuition fee. [...] I think non-EU students require more help with administration. I don't know if we will get it." (Participant A)*	*"I think it's doing pretty good. I'm pretty sure this is the school that sends out the most students in Norway. [...] I see a lot of Norwegians going abroad. [...] I do think that they work hard to make sure that everybody has some kind of international background here. [...] And everybody's willing to help if you need it." (Participant G)* *"I've been feeling this lately. You know when NHH takes pictures of people and they include Indian or black guys. That's very misleading because it feels like the university is putting effort into including people, but that's not the case." (Participant J, 2nd year)*

		"The problem here is that there is no singular person who coordinates international student life. [...] I missed orientation because I arrived after. Apparently, a lot happens during the week. [...] Every international student is technically an exchange student." (Participant F) *"I don't feel like I'm getting support from them. But I think it's the culture. Like it's better to ask some of your friends who already knew than asking the admission office or faculty. I think that is the culture here." (Participant I)* *"I know that they really push internationalisation as a forward idea. They want Norwegians to have international experience and they want internationals to come. That's something that made me very happy when I heard about it. [...] And I think NHH shares information well with internationals" (Participant A)*	*"I think they're doing that pretty well. They encourage international opportunities a lot. I know it was encouraged quite a bit in my first semester here and I did apply for CEMs. If I remember correctly, they said about like 60 to 70% of the cohort goes on exchange at NHH and that's a pretty big number. And they have a very large exchange student population. [...] So I think that they're doing good." (Participant M)* *"The faculty is super diverse, professors are very diverse. [...] The Career Center is international and approachable." (Participant D)* *"I do acknowledge that they send out a lot of emails and I read them and it's great to know. I do still consider that they assume some things sometimes like you should go, you should just know this. And it's hard to do that when you're not from here and you're not used to the system." (Participant G)* *"I would say NHH, yes. Most of their announcements, if they're on their website, are in English or even I follow their Instagram. So most of the information I get from them is there. And they'll usually have both English and Norwegian, so that's helpful. So there's like PhD day or an info session, and at least I haven't missed that. As long as you're following their Instagram page, I think that's another thing a lot of internationals might not know. It's like their Instagram page and a lot of information is there." (Participant M)*

	Classroom (formal) Diversity	*"I have a lot of English course options. I have so many classes that I want to take. So I'm very happy that I picked this major I am passionate about."* (Participant H) *"I have no preference in group work, it's just in reality it's difficult to engage with Norwegians. They prefer to form groups with locals."* (Participant H) *"All my professors are male, white, Norwegian. But that's just the courses I picked."* (Participant B) *"I do not have an impression that there's enough English courses in my major and most professors are Norwegian and men."* (Participant I) *"I haven't had any experience where I felt disadvantaged because I'm not Norwegian. Professors treat us equally."* (Participant C) *" When you form groups, usually internationals make groups with internationals and Norwegians make groups with Norwegians. I would prefer to have some Norwegians in as well because it's important for us to integrate into the culture."* (Participant C) *"There's a good number of English courses [...] and I guess all of my professors are European, Caucasian, so maybe not diverse, but that doesn't matter to me."* (Participant F)	*"A lot of professors are not from Norway, so that's good. [...] So far in my particular major there are very few courses that are taught just in Norwegian. Everything is in English, so that has been great."* (Participant G) *"All of the guest lecturers were male mostly in their later stages, like they had a lot of experiences. They weren't someone with 2-3 years of experience. [...] Some of them were Germans as well, but then again I consider them all European."* (Participant E) *"I preferred Norwegians. They are more open and honest. And they respect the work and deadlines. I felt like the international was usually slacking, like if I don't do it, he'll do it tonight. That kind of thing."* (Participant J) *"I was half and half in group work. [...] in class people don't really talk to each other."* (Participant K) *"Professors are mostly men and mostly European, but it's OK. You don't have to push it."* (Participant J) *"I had the mandatory courses for finance, all of the things that were done individually, the course approvals and everything. We had the group for investments and that was a random group and I had to group for the Norwegian. There were a lot of Norwegians in that group rather than internationally."* (Participant E)

		"Students in classes are ethnically diverse. I do group work both with Norwegian and internationals." (Participant F) *"In my group work, there's only one guy from Norway, but mostly because he speaks Chinese. We met in glass. Apparently, he really wanted to practise the language. But it's quite difficult to know Norwegian." (Participant H)* *"In class I mostly stick with internationals. [...] But I feel the class diversity and quantity of English courses are really good." (Participant A)*	
	Informal Interactional Diversity	*"I think 90% of my friends have been internationals. I think that's one of the things I should be better at. [...] I think a lot of people have similar experiences, where they're mostly in touch with internationals rather than Norwegians. [...] Welcome Week was fantastic. I did not expect anything like that. It was super fun." (Participant B)* *"I think the blame is shared. If I put myself out there more, maybe I'll have more connections, but I don't really see any Norwegians trying to approach me either." (Participant B)* *"I felt that it was harder for international students to get into clubs than Norwegians. They are super competitive to get into. [...] I tried a lot of clubs. I didn't get into any. That's on me. I'm not good at sports." (Participant B)*	*"I would say NHHS is a bit less diverse than NHH. [...] Student clubs not being super open minded to other people. It's a downside for me. I also get it like I'm the one who's in their country so it's my responsibility to integrate, not theirs. [...] [...] I feel the language barrier is a thing. I wouldn't blame it on them or me. But it's just the fact." (Participant G)* *"The NHHS events are mostly posted in Norwegian. So I don't really join. [...] It also takes a lot of courage to show up alone and try to make friends." (Participant K)* *"My struggles with NHHS have been that there's just a lack of information and opportunity for international students. It's just exceptionally hard because the student body operates in Norwegian. As an international student a lot of times I just don't understand what's happening." (Participant M)*

| | | "Someone told me that I should join organisations outside of NHH because NHHs tends to be a bit of a bubble. The main goal is networking." (Participant F)

"I'd go to more events if I had more information, but I just didn't know the event was happening in the first place. So that could be better. To just get people to know everything that's happening. [...] Everything is not right for everyone. I can understand that, but just to have the choice to know what's happening, that's important." (Participant B)

"Regarding events in the school, I think I visited a few stands on the recruitment days. Like when companies were here, I talked to a few companies and they were like, we just need some Norwegian. I understand that it's not their fault that Norway is not that much of an international country and doesn't have many companies that are international." (Participant C)

"The interaction between Norwegians and exchange. No, not at all. So, all the exchange students are together. Almost little to no Norwegians are included with international. Norwegians are not really leaving their social circles. If you were to see a Norwegian with an international, it could probably be someone from Finland or Sweden." (Participant F) | "From the starting point if you are international, and if you don't make it to that club, then that whole experience of you meeting and forming bonds and relationships, you just don't get any of that, which makes it harder to create actual meaningful relationships with Norwegians." (Participant G)

"You don't really get to know people. I don't mind having drinking games, but it should be a balance of both of them. I feel like you can have fun while you're drinking but then you're not really connecting or integrating or making friends with the Norwegian. If you really want them to be a part of the school internationally, they're not really putting the work there." (Participant E)

It feels like I'm at this point thinking it's useless to me. I understand why they're there, I don't think they make such a big impact." (Participant J)

"I will say I have a couple of friends (Norwegians) I can easily talk to. But the closer friends are of course international. Because of the differences in interest as well." (Participant L) |

| | | "For the Career fair it was a bit difficult to find the information, but I guess probably because I only speak English. Like I talked to some people standing in the mirror, but it seems like they are expecting to meet local students." (Participant I)

"Most of the interaction that I have with people is very superficial. Someone might approach me during classes, mostly exchange students and south Asians kind of tend to find each other. That's how they kind of find friends mainly just because of that in group association." (Participant F)

"I think there's a separation between the Norwegians and the international students. But I don't really think there's a separation between exchanges and full-time international students. [...] But the Norwegians, I can understand. Even in the group works, I see a lot of Norwegians have their own groups. And internationals have their own groups, and that's fine. [...] You're always going to stick with your friends. I'm not saying that's a bad thing." (Participant B)

"I mostly hang out with internationals because it was much easier. [...] I felt the Welcome Week was a bit much, but I enjoyed it. I think only for classes international and Norwegian students are engaging, socially not so much." (Participant A) | "For some time, at least at first, of course I tried to have more Norwegian friends. I thought it would help with the language and to get to know the people, the culture, but then you end up in this situation of being the only foreigner in 7-8 Norwegians and at some point you kind of start feeling bad that they're speaking English. [...] But with Norwegians it is just something that happened. Also maybe they fear that internationals will believe so that they wouldn't invest time. It is like Norwegians in general fear foreign things

"There definitely could be improvements for international students. Predominantly happens in Norwegian.I definitely try, I'm still trying to learn Norwegian. If you're not fluent, it's a huge barrier to entry. So I think there's like 95% of activities that you won't be taking part in." (Participant M)

"I heard a lot of people having problems integrating the social aspect of NHH or the Norwegian in general. For me I feel like if you try a little bit more it will work. That'll be better for you and especially the culture part." (Participant L)

"I feel like they were biased when they recruit for the committees or clubs because they look for people who are Norwegian and who can connect with them." (Participant E)

"I think in general Norwegians are easy to talk to. But if you want to get into a friend zone, it's just you have to work for it. I think it's OK. It's not like a bad thing because you're moving abroad. You have to make an effort to move. It's not like you are in your home country." (Participant L) |

		"I didn't go to all the Welcome Week social events. I'm not a party person. I don't enjoy drinking. I felt like I was the only sober person in a group of like 20 drunken people. It wasn't fun for me, and people talked in Norwegian." (Participant C)	