



REPORT 090331

International Students' Union
of Norway (ISU)

Bi-Monthly Report

31 March 2009

Prepared by

Farshad Tami, National President

Prepared for

Member Branches

and

Cooperating Partners

- Studentenes Landsforbund (StL)
- Norsk Studentunion (NSU)
- Studentenes og Akademikernes Internasjonale Hjelpfond (SAIH)
- Utviklingsfondet Ungdom (Spire)

ISU General Info and Objective

The International Students' Union of Norway (ISU) is an independent, democratic, non-profit, non-partisan organization run for and by international students. ISU is committed to the social, academic and political interests of all international students studying in Norway. ISU's national administration is located in Oslo, with a National President, two Vice Presidents and an Organizational Secretary. ISU member organizations are located at 12 institutions of higher education around Norway. ISU's basic funding is from the Norwegian Government with the annual amount of NOK 270.000,00 (July 2008 – June 2009). ISU is in partnership with NSU, StL & Spire, and members of SAIH & LNU.

Overview of Report Period

During the past three months, ISU has been involved in organizing the Presidents' Meeting in Bergen, attending NSU, StL, SAIH and Spire activities, and finally focusing on solving the yearly challenges faced by some Quota Scheme Students when they arrive to Norway. ISU National was involved successfully, along with StL, in helping the students at Agder University to establish an International Student Union Local Branch. ISU National was also following up closely with the "differential treatment" of [Studentsamskipnaden i Stavanger](#) (SiS) case facing international students in Stavanger.

Previous and Current Activities

Since ISU has acquired an organizational number, it has had an impact on both our financial and administrative capabilities. Our [accountant](#) company has been able since late 2008 and early 2009 to improve our financial activities: fixing our accounts, payment of salaries and taxes, assist in organizational rules such as purchase of insurance policy for the office. This had required a continuous involvement of ISU Organizational Secretary, Solveig Aamodt, in



such matters and increased and strengthened her knowledge. Also we have established a stronger financial system at the office. ISU National has also established guidelines that are new to the organization: Financial Guidelines, National Assembly Task and Organizational Matters and National Assembly Conducts and Procedures.

We were also faced with a challenge when the Norwegian postal service 'Posten' lost our Financial Documents for 2008. By February 2009, our auditor and account both contacted Posten requesting an immediate inquiry for the reported lost documents. A month later Posten provided a letter claiming that they could not find the package. ISU National did its best to follow up with Posten, the ministry as well as the accountant and auditor companies to find the documents. Unfortunately the documents are no where to be found so ISU National had to reestablish the lost receipts and documents and managed to report 2/3 of the financial transactions during 2008. We hope that this challenge will be awarded positively by the [Ministry of Education and Research in Norway](#), and will not have any implication on our application for yearly funds.

ISU National President traveled to Kristiansand twice and helped the international students to successfully prepare a General Assembly in February. The result was an establishment of ISU Agder. During the upcoming National Assembly, ISU Local Branches will hopefully vote to include ISU Agder in our organization.



ISU Presidents' Meetin at NHH (Bergen), January 2009

Since almost a year, ISU National has been involved in [Spire](#) (Utviklingsfondets ungdom) activities. The fruits of this involvement was harvested in March 2009 when both organization signed an agreement (please refer to attached document) that would increase our cooperation and presence at each other's meetings. Since Spire's work is mostly related to the countries that ISU members are from, then ISU hopes to give more legitimacy, feedback and support for Spire projects. Also ISU local branches can actively be involved with the campaigns that are directly

related to development issues globally. On the other hand, Spire can help tackle ISU concerns in Norway; such as, acting as a pressure group to solve the challenges that the Quota Scheme Students are going through. The latter students are on a scholarship scheme under the development fund that Norway has for students from Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa and South America. The theme of this scholarship is not very far from what Spire is working on. ISU and Spire hope that this new cooperation will grow and benefit both organizations in the future.

ISU organized a Presidents' meeting in Bergen. ISU NHH had acquired funds, around 8 000.00 NOK from the university board in support of this activity and further organized the event's logistics in Bergen. The result was a very successful meeting where ISU presidents had the chance to discuss the concerns and priorities of ISU in depth. The presidents



discussed how to further increase cooperation between the branches and discussed the establishment of an on-line forum that would assist in that goal. The second focus of the meeting was the challenges faced by the Quota Scheme Students and how to tackle this issue locally and nationally. ISU Agreed to send a letter to educational institution boards and ask them for direct support of any scheme that the ministry is coming up with as well as place more pressure on the [Ministry of Education and Research in Norway](#) to finalize a solid sustainable solution. As previously mentioned in ISU reports, the Quota Scheme Students arrive to Norway and have to wait a couple of months until they receive their scholarship funds. ISU believes that the ministry along with the host educational institution should be responsible to secure a solution until the funds arrive that will maintain the student's dignity and allows him or her to focus on his or her studies instead of managing their finance. ISU National had a meeting with Mr. Jens Revold, at that time he was the State Secretary for the [Ministry of Education and Research](#). Again, the ministry had promised ISU that a solution will immerge and that they are trying their best before the next Quota Scheme Students arrive in August. However, Mr. Revold resigned from his job and the currently new appointed State Secretary is aware of the situation. We hope the ministry will come up with a solution soon and keep their promise to ISU, NSU and StL.

During February, the Norwegian Police Security Service, [Politiets Sikkerhetstjeneste](#) (PST), announced on the media about one of their yearly report concerns that they don't have any means or resources to follow up on screening students from rogue countries that are applying for education in Norway that will aid in the development of weapons of mass destruction. ISU along with its partners, NSU, StL and SAIH quickly responded to such announcement in the media as well as asking them for a meeting. Mr. Jørn Presterudstuen, Head of a Special Section, attended the meeting with ISU and partners and discussed the report. PST was cooperative and listened to ISU and partners' request that PST should explain their report properly to the media and avoid statements that increase stigmatization against international students in Norway. PST agreed to try to do so in the future.

ISU Trondheim, Michel El Ghaba, represented ISU National at the [StL Spring Conference](#) that took place in Trondheim. The main discussion that concerns ISU was when Lånekassen explained about Quota Scheme Students. According to Michel's report: Lånekassen is trying to implement a digital application system to shorten the application process but their main challenge is to identify Quota Students; hence, further cooperation with institutions of higher education is needed to shorten the time between the application is sent and the time the funds are received by the students. However, Michel adds that Lånekassen aknewleges that students face a period of two months before they get their fund and it is the primarily the responsibility of the ministry. Lånekassen cannot offer any solutions at this point.

ISU National President as well as members Tsehay Ataklt (ISU Ås), Piotrek Ochal (ISU Trondheim) and Isaac Mensah (ISU Tromsø) participated at SAIH Spring Gathering. The objective of the event was to discuss how to approach media and visual aid in campaigns as well as discuss SAIH next year's campaign.

Finally, during the winter, ISU National President attended ISU Bodø and Ås General Assemblies and encouraged the local branches to have successful meetings. In addition, ISU National President attended NSU and StL Landsstyre and Landsstyremøte and discussed current campaign and priorities.



Table.1 Summary of official meetings that ISU have been invited to and attended:

Meeting	Date	Place
ISU Agder General Assembly (1)	27 January	Kristiansand
Presentation at welcoming week for students at UMB, Ås	29 January	Ås
Spire Winter Gathering	31 January – 01 February	Hønefoss
Meeting StL HiB with ISU UiB to discuss merging	06 February	Bergen
NSU Landsstyre	07-08 February	Bergen
Meeting Jens Revold at the ministry to discuss Quota Scheme Students	17 February	Oslo
Meeting with Norwegian Police Security Service	19 February	Oslo
ISU Agder General Assembly (2)	23 February	Kristiansand
Hearing about Quota Scheme Student at the Norwegian Parliament	27 February	Oslo
StL Landsstyremøte	27 February	Sørmarka
ISU Bodø General Assembly	09 March	Bodø
StL Spring Conference	13-15 March	Trondheim
Interview RadioNova about Quota Scheme Student	20 March	Oslo
Signing of Agreement with Spire	27 March	Oslo
SAIHs Vårsamling (Spring Gathering)	27 – 29 March	Råde

Up-coming Activities and Meetings

The main up-coming activity is the ISU National Assembly (NAi09). During the NAi09, we hope to further discuss our concerns, priorities, challenges, success stories, and establish strategic steps for increasing the inclusion of international students in the Norwegian society. ISU will be voting on adding a new member, ISU Agder, to our organization and will also be working on strengthening the ties with our cooperation partners and student organizations. ISU will be applying for funds (please refer to attached suggested budget) from the ministry of education before the 14th of April (new deadline from 31st of March since we had to reestablish our documents.) ISU is also looking forward to attend both annual assemblies of StL and NSU. During both meetings the members will be voting on a merging process between the two student organizations. ISU is not only supportive of this process but also is



looking forward for the challenges that lie ahead of the students and student democracies in Norway.

The following activities/events are to take place:

- ISU will be applying for its yearly funds from the [Ministry of Education and Research in Norway](#),
- ISU will be attending both partner organization's National Assemblies: NSU is having its meeting in Oslo (17-19 April) and StL in Tønsberg (23-26 April),
- ISU will be having its National Assembly (24-26 April),
- ISU will be attending LNU annual assembly (24-26 April) as well.

Summery

The increase in our campaign efforts for Quota Scheme Students, having a successful Presidents' Meeting, signing an agreement with Spire, preparing guidelines for ISU National, Organizational Secretary gaining administrative and organizational experiences, as well as ISU National attending various meetings with partners and ministries has positively contributed to the growth of our organization. Our administrative strength has improved and is steadily adding to our organizational history. We hope the above successes will contribute to an easy transition between future National Boards.

Acknowledgments

ISU National would like to thank the efforts of both (a) ISU NNH for arranging and organizing the yearly ISU Presidents' Meeting in Bergen, and (b) ISU Stavanger for working hard to solve the "differential treatment" facing students in Stavanger. Also, ISU would like to thank Helge Hovland, leder of student parliament at Agder, for his support of ISU to establish a branch at University of Agder, Kristiansand.

ISU National would like to thank the former ISU Local Branch Presidents, Amanda Greaves, Moses Ajetunmobi and Elena Egortseva for their services to ISU locally and nationally, and welcomes the new presidents of ISU Ås, Stavanger and Bodø. ISU would also like to thank NSU, StL and SAIH for their support during the past months.

Attachments:

- *Memorandum of Understand between Spire and ISU*
- *Report on ISU National expenses for expansion purposes funded by StL*
- *Suggested Budget for ISU National expenses during 2009/2010*



Memorandum of Understanding *March 2009*

This Agreement entered into by and between Spire,
and
The International Students' Union of Norway
Hereinafter referred to as ISU

ARTICLE I

Spire and ISU hereby confirm their cooperation based on mutual respect.

ARTICLE II

TERM. This Memorandum of Understanding shall begin on 31st March 2009.

ARTICLE III

DUTIES AND RESTRICTIONS. Spire and ISU shall, to the best of their abilities, meet as observers at each other's national assemblies, leadership meetings and or other relevant meetings.

ARTICLE IV

VOLUNTARY TERMINATION. This Memorandum of Understanding may be dissolved at any time by mutual agreement of both parties.

ARTICLE V

OBJECTIVES: This Memorandum of Understanding aims to strengthen both organizations locally, nationally and internationally by (a) supporting each other as organizations for students and (b) encouraging students to get involved in the activities of both organizations.

On behalf of Spire / På vegne ar Spire

Johanne Sæther Houge
Leder - Spire 2008/2009

Date & Place / Sted, Dato:

Memorandum *mars 2009*

Denne avtalen ble inngått av og mellom Spire
og
The International Students' Union i Norge, heretter
referert til som ISU

ARTIKKEL I

Spire og ISU bekrefter herved at deres samarbeid er basert på gjensidig respekt.

ARTIKKEL II

PERIODE. Dette memorandum trer i kraft 31. mars 2009.

ARTIKKEL III

OPPGAVER OG RESTRIKSJONER. Spire og ISU skal, etter beste evne, møte som observatører på hverandres landsmøter, ledelsesmøter og/eller andre relevante møter.

ARTIKKEL IV

FRIVILLIG OPPSIGELSE. Partnerskapet kan opphøre når som helst etter gjensidig avtale mellom partene.

ARTIKKEL V

MÅL: Partnerskapet har som mål å styrke begge organisasjoners arbeid lokalt, nasjonalt og internasjonalt gjennom (a) støtte til hverandre som studentorganisasjoner og (b) oppfordring av studenter til å delta på begge organisasjoners aktiviteter.

On behalf of ISU / På vegne ar ISU

Farshad Tami
National President 2008/2009

Date & Place / Sted, Dato:



International Students' Union
of Norway (ISU)

Brief Report

Prepared by
Farshad Tami, National President
Prepared for
Member Branches
And
Studentenes Landsforbund (StL)

Expenses Endured for Expansion Purposes: A Project Funded by StL

Studentenes Landsforbund had provided ISU with an amount of 50 000.00 NOK in 2006 for expansion projects. ISU targeted several institutions for higher educations since then and the main success has been materialized by a successful establishment of an international student union at Agder University (Kristiansand.) Other targeted institutions are mainly Høgskolen i Molde and Høgskolen i Finnmark.

In 2009, ISU started the project funds with an amount of 46 768.00 NOK and endured the amount of 8 554.40 NOK in expenses where around 70% were traveling costs. In addition, ISU National allocated additional 2 000.00 NOK for further administrative activities for ISU Agder and travel costs for 3 members of ISU Agder to attend ISU National Assembly in April. It is expected that the total use of the funds by end of April to be around 15 000.00 NOK. That is around 30 000.00 NOK will remain for future expansion projects in 2009 and 2010.

We are positively looking forward for a vote to include ISU Agder in our organization during the National Assembly.

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We thank our partners StL for their support and encouragement, both at the national level and also at the level of the parliament and parliament leadership, Helge Hovland. ISU is also looking forward for more cooperation in the future.



Budsjetterte utgifter for ISU 2009

Budsjettpost	Beskrivelse	Beløp i NOK	Enheter	Sum i NOK
Lønnsutgifter	2 personer i 33% stilling, lønnstrinn 14, 1 måned overlapp ved lederbytte i oktober	5 900,00	25 månedslønner	147 500,00
Arbeidsgiveravgift			14%	20 650,00
Feriepenger for 2008	Beregnet fra lønnsutgifter i 2008	8 000,00	N/A	8 000,00
Reisekostnader Landsmøte 2009	Narvik	1 200,00	25 deltagere	30 000,00
Reisekostnader Landsmøte 2010	Sted for landsmøte avgjøres i løpet av 2009	1 000,00	25 deltagere	25 000,00
Telefonkostnader		250,00	10 måneder	2 500,00
Kontorutgifter	Rekvisita, møtemat, porto etc.	200,00	12 måneder	2 400,00
Reisekostnader	Styrets reiser i forbindelse med jobb	2 000,00	8 måneder	16 000,00
Revisor	Honorarer etc.	5 000,00	N/A	5 000,00
Web	Utgifter til oppdatering av hjemmeside	200,00	N/A	1 200,00
Regnskapsfører	Honorarer etc.	1 500,00	12 måneder	18 000,00
Bankutgifter		50,00	12 måneder	600,00
Oversettelse	Utgifter til oversetter på møter	200,00	12 måneder	2 400,00
Lokallagsledermøte	Reiser til møtested samt utgifter til kost og losji	1 000,00	15 deltagere	15 000,00
Personalforsikring	Vital forsikring 0,66 årsverk	700,00	årlig pris	700,00
Eventuelt	Møter, medlemskontingenter etc.		N/A	5 050,00
TOTALT				300 000,00