



**International Students' Union  
University of Tromsø**

**Branch Report**  
*Fall 2007*

**1. Introduction**

The overall objective of the University of Tromsø is to develop, maintain and disseminate relevant knowledge through education and research of high international standard. The Strategy on Internationalisation is one of the tools in the efforts to reach the University's overall objective.<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, University of Tromsø accommodates substantial international students. At present, about 10% of the 6000 students of the university are foreign students. This year more than 200 students have come from 33 countries of the world. Duration of their stay in Tromsø depends on the programme he or she follows. But, no matter how long their stay may be, it has been ISU that stay at front door to welcome them and ceaselessly trying to make their stay more comfortable in a way that they feel like at home in this island city.

ISU Tromsø branch has been functioning since the academic years 1990-1991. According to the tradition and constitution, a new board has been elected on the 7<sup>th</sup> September 2007. A detail about the new board is as follows:

<b>Position</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>e-mail</b>	<b>Phone</b>
President:	Mohammed	Bangladesh	<a href="mailto:kabirdubd@gmail.com">kabirdubd@gmail.com</a>	41551787
Vice-president and Treasurer	Natacha	Belgium	<a href="mailto:lays.natacha@gmail.com">lays.natacha@gmail.com</a>	4802754
Public Relations:	Shang Ao	China	<a href="mailto:myfreewills@gmail.com">myfreewills@gmail.com</a>	94842328
Secretary General:	Shou	China	<a href="mailto:Wangshou92@gmail.com">Wangshou92@gmail.com</a>	94477132
Webmaster:	Jeremy	France	<a href="mailto:jeremydeschamps@gmail.com">jeremydeschamps@gmail.com</a>	96888587
Organizer Officers:	Maria Elena	Italy	<a href="mailto:maxime.thiry@gmail.com">maxime.thiry@gmail.com</a>	94853876
	Maxime	Belgium	<a href="mailto:maxime.thiry@gmail.co">maxime.thiry@gmail.co</a>	94480769
	Odirile Moroka		<a href="mailto:kenzomary@hotmail.com">kenzomary@hotmail.com</a>	
	Evelyn	Austria	<a href="mailto:ela005@mailbox.uit.no">ela005@mailbox.uit.no</a>	41061279

## 2. What have we planned?

*First Meeting:* Short after the official election of ISU Tromsø, the new board seated in the first meeting. Newly elected members as well as the former President, Mr. Dieudonné Ndanga, attended this meeting. Mr. Ndanga officially greeted the new board and he briefly stated about the status and functions of ISU Tromsø. Then he handed over his charge to the new president. The new board members acknowledged Mr. Ndanga for his excellence in running the organization with great success.

Then, the new board members scheduled their office hours at ISU. Members **agreed upon attending office** 2 hours per week, which would be in application from September 18, 2007.

Monday: 12:00-14:00 Mohammed

Tuesday: 12:00-14:00 Maxime

Wednesday: 12:00-14:00 Maria

Thursday: 14:00-16:00 Shang

Friday: 12:00-14:00 and 16:00-18:00 Natacha

Members also decided that every member should get a key from the office at the bookshop as soon as possible.

Further the board discussed about **members recruitment**. They also felt that more positions in the ISU board are still to be seated; namely, the Treasurer, Organizer Officer and Webmaster. For the webmaster, a volunteer was proposed, being Jeremy (French).

Later on, the board planed **future activities**:

- First of all a small gathering should be organized to celebrate the birth new board and to thank all students who have voted. Maria Elena and Maxime, as organizer officers, have all ready proposed this party should be held in the *Ardna* a small sami house in University of Tromsø. More shall be discussed in the next meeting.

- Hugin's Report should be organized and contact should be made with *Drin*, the student pub, and these should be done as soon as possible. Proposed date was Thursday 28 September. An ex-board member, Nicole, is willing to help us organizing this event.

- A football tournament shall also be organized. No date so far has been proposed. The people responsible for this event are Natasha (Vice president) and Shou (Secretary).

- Further a movie night has been proposed. This could be organized each month. For this *Studentsamfunnet* should be taken in consideration as they have all equipments needed for this type of occasion.

- Last but not least, a trip to *Skiboten* would be a nice thing to organize. More shall be discussed next meeting.

Meeting ended with the decision that the next board meeting would be held on Tuesday 11 September at 16:00-18:00 where a plan of activities might be devised.

*ISU Board Meeting II:* According to the previous decision, on Tuesday, 9/11/07 ISU Tromsø seated in the second meeting. In this gathering, the new board members firstly welcomed our new Webmaster Jeremy, and Organizer Officer Evelyn from Austria to join the board. All the board members except our music organizer officer Odirile Moroka attended the meeting.

**The board discuss about the financial situation of ISU and possible solutions to our current financial crisis. Solutions that came up were**

- T-shirt selling (souvenir T-shirts made by ISU)
- Football tournament tickets;
- Selling beverages at parties;

**Later, the board planned for next three months and distributed responsibilities among members. Following are the activities planned in the meeting.**

- *Ardna* party at *Sami* center on Friday (21/9) starts from 8pm:  
Organizer: Maxime and Maria

Suggestions: Selling beers and T-shirts in the party, discount price for the T-shirt (Nok100)

- Hugin's Report on Tuesday(27/9) starts from 8pm (monthly activity):  
Organizer: Natacha and Nicole

Suggestions: Contact Driv to book the place, we should contact NSU and announce this activities to Norwegian students.

- Football tournament on Sat(20/10) 10am-4pm  
Organizer: Natacha and Shou

Suggestions: we gain the participation fee Kr 125 for each team and set the prize Kr. 100-150 for the champion team; each team can have 6 members(at least one girl in each team); form will be 2\*10' or 3\*15'(we can discuss more about it); inform NSU;

- First Movie night on Tue(2/10) 8pm-11pm(monthly activity)  
Organizer: Shang and Mohammed

Suggestions: Contact Studentsamfunnet to reserve place and equipment; serve popcorn for free during the movie, and soft drink offered at a minor charge (kr 5); inform NSU;

- Trip to *Skiboten* (end of October):  
Organizer: Evelyn

Suggestions: Contact Artue and Ndanga for more information; contact counseling centre and ask for cooperation. Board should discuss more detail in our next meeting;

- Proposed trip to Kroken mountain  
Organizer: Evelyn

Suggestions: we will arrange mountain trip once a month before totally dark;

The board meeting ended with fixing a board meeting every first Tuesday in each month and the next meeting will be held on Tuesday (2/10).

### **3. Things we have done so far**

#### *Ardna Party*

The word "árdna" means a place with a treasure or something valuable. Against this back drop on Friday (21/9) ISU arranged Ardna Party at Sami Centre, Ardna - the Sami cultural house on campus. The party was started at 8 pm. The seats were organized around the fireplace so students could gossip to each other. Organizer Maxime and Maria arranged all the activities and Natacha helped them selling beverages at the party.

#### *Website*

Since the inception of the journey of the new board, the need of a useful and attractive website has been felt. Our French webmaster Mr. Jeremy has been dedicating his time and creativity for an up-to-date webpage. If you have any question about the creativity of our webmaster, just go and find <http://www.student.uit.no/isu/>  
Hopefully you will get pleasure watching an interesting cartoon "Under construction".

#### *Movie Night*

ISU board decided that international students should be asked what movie they want to watch. It was also decided that the movie to be showed has an English version or at least with English subtitle. We would welcome some innovation and creative piece of work from students, if they have any.

#### *Meeting with NSU*

Vice-president Ms. Natacha Lays have had a meeting with the Norwegian Student Union (NSU) regarding fund. She has submitted a budget asking 118,000 NOK to the Union. Now we are waiting for the positive move from their side.

#### *Agreement of Cooperation between ISU and Studentsamfunnet*

We had a meeting with the *Studentsamfunnet* on 28<sup>th</sup> September, 2007. In the meeting subjects that came up were organizing parties and trips, rent the society basement, mutual usage of mailing lists, use of equipments and so on. In general what we agreed that would keep the existing cooperation and offer each other that would be beneficial for our organizations socially and financially. Especially, we would organize the Movie Nights together in every second week.

Generally we came in consensus that we will plan our activities in the way that do not coincide or overlap each other.

**4. The most important concerns for international students in Tromsø**

*Language:* International students in Tromsø came from many different countries with different expectations. Generally, the first thing they got to face is a huge language barrier in doing different administrative and academic stuff. More importantly, they can't find the building they want to go for class or buy the food they want to eat because there are no English names of these things.

*Cost of living:* Another, and perhaps with great concern, students find the cost of living is too expensive here in Tromsø. Even, staying in the student hostel is quite expensive and the rent has been rising continuously. And daily commodities seem to be expensive and in cases unaffordable for students. There is no cheap shop for students on campus from where they can buy books, food and other materials.

Apart from this, to get more intensive understanding about the concern of International students, we are going to undertake a small survey where respondents are asked to mention their concerns about being a student at the University of Tromsø. Hope we will be able to come up with the result of the study and present their opinions at the next National Assemble. We need to make further discuss on it in the National Assembly so that other ISU branch may have same initiatives.

**5. Financial Report/Budget**

Estimated budgets for ISU Tromsø 2007-2008

<i>Incomes</i>	
Annual Financial Support From NSU (expected)	118 500 NOK
Distribution of ISU T-shirts	2 500 NOK
Selling beverages at ISU parties	20 000 NOK
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<b>Total</b>	<b>141 000 NOK</b>
 <i>Expenditures</i>	
ISU Activities	132 000 NOK
Running ISU Office Expenditures	9 000 NOK
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<b>Total</b>	<b>141 000 NOK</b>

## 6. Challenges for the future and potential solutions

Challenges in future are many. The first and foremost is to keep all the board members active and motivated for playing their roles properly in different occasions and activities of the ISU. Besides, it is very important to continue the existing warm relations with different institutions and organizations including Student Society and Norwegian Student Union. We would like to develop more friendly interactions with the Norwegian peoples and different Norwegian institutes. We also wish to make sure the spaces where more interactions could happen between Norwegians and international students and a strong network is built. Shortly, more effective way of integrating international students in the Norwegian society and culture is still the big challenge that ISU have to deal with in future.

The path is not smooth but we oath to pass it over. We are inspired to find a good board with some interested and creative people in different capacity. Now, we need to nourish them with cooperation and let them enjoy the work that they would like to accomplish. Fraternity with the fellow organizations needs to be kept warmth with more interactions, exchange and organizing activities together that serves achieving goal for both. Current programme like arranging host family for the foreign students shall have to be expanding and popularize. Some more excursions, game and sports activities between Norwegian students and foreign students can be a good way to enhance the integration process. Last but not least, time has to think about the living cost of the students. The ISU board would like to pursue student welfare and other respective bodies on finding the way that can be reasonably reduce the cost of living for the international students. We along with NSU and Student Council Centre will take initiative so that Career Centre of the university will make some better option so that students get part time job in the city. In general, ISU Tromsø would like to advocate for a happy and prosperous student life for the international students where cost of living would no longer bother them.

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<sup>i</sup> <http://uit.no/english>(accessed date 29/09/2007)