

Towards a crisis in student housing

Thursday last week NSU (Norwegian Students' Union) and StL (Norwegian Association of Students) published the results of their yearly student housing inquiry. The numbers are bleak, on national level only 14,66% of the students are offered student housing, far below the political goal of 20% coverage.

“The development in coverage on national level has been standing practically still the last years”, say Anne Karine Nymoen, leader of NSU and Ina Tandberg, leader of StL. “In spite of the new funding for student housing this year, it does not help much when so little has been done the previous years”, they continue.

The number of students in Norway is estimated to rise steadily the next four years, and in 2013 the number of students will probably have increased with 80 000 compared to today.

“Student housing is one of the main pillars in securing equal right to education for all. Student housing contributes to keeping the rent prices in the private market down, something that will increase in importance with the new explosion in the number of students” says Nymoen and Tandberg.

The students stand united in the demand for student housing: The student welfare organisations in each institution (Studentsamskipsnadene) must receive funding to build student housing for at least 1000 new students each year, and the regulations must be improved in order to help the welfare organisations realise the building. Already, housing for at least 10 000 students is lacking, a number that will increase dramatically the following years.

“The politicians know that the crisis is emerging. We expect them to act in time, and that the escalation in funding continues also after the elections in September”, concludes the student union leaders.

This article is written by Solveig Aamodt, based on a press release from NSU and StL on Thursday 30 July 2009.

Link to the student housing inquiry (in Norwegian):
<http://nsu.no/uploads/boligundersøkelsen2009.pdf>