

EXPAT LIFE IN LYNGBY

Survey of the everyday life in Lyngby from the
internationals' perspective

Lyngby, 2020



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Summary

This analysis is based on a survey with responses from 632 internationals either studying, working, or living in Lyngby. The survey focuses on the everyday life in Lyngby as an international.

Key findings

- Almost half (46%) of the respondents find it hard to get to know Danes, whereas almost the same number of respondents (49%) find it easy to get to know other internationals.
- A large portion of the respondents does not know where to find information (in English) on activities in their local neighborhood.
- 61 % of the respondents feel at home in Lyngby, while 39 % of the respondents do not.
- The lack of places, activities, and initiatives in Lyngby for internationals/expats to socialize with students, colleagues, etc., affects internationals' chances of meeting and socializing with Danes.
- Student life takes place at DTU Campus because Lyngby lacks student-friendly (read budget-friendly) offers.

Recommendations

- Communicate news, information, and activities in English
- Create a welcoming letter/meeting from the city's stakeholders (DTU, Vidensby, Lyngby-Taarbæk Municipality) to the new internationals
- Create forums where internationals can meet Danes (language cafés, student house, dinners, sport)

Background

Expatriate life in Lyngby 2020 - survey

The aim of the survey is to study how everyday life is experienced by international students and citizens in Lyngby as well as international employees working in one of the city's organisations or companies.

Science City Lyngby wants to create an attractive city for national and international talents characterized by a high quality of life.

In addition to creating jobs for the many international talents who come to Denmark to work or study at DTU, Cphbusiness and other universities in Greater Copenhagen, it is essential to develop a vibrant city where joining a social network, a sports club, a variety of local activities after work is a natural part of everyday life. It is crucial to create a city where the 10 % inhabitants, equivalent to approx. 5000 people, with an international background also feel at home and welcome.

With this survey we hope to get insight into the relevance of the city's existing offers and activities and identify factors that can be improved in the future.

The participating internationals

This report is based on an analysis of responses from 632 respondents located in and around the municipality of Lyngby-Taarbæk. The respondents have an international background and are from 72 different countries from 6 continents. The questionnaire, which forms the basis of the report, was distributed to educational institutions, organisations and companies in Lyngby and posted in various forums and social media groups in January 2020.

Following criteria were crucial for participation. The respondents are:

- Born and raised outside the borders of Denmark
- Living and/or working or studying in Lyngby
- Over 18 years old

The respondents represent several age groups and they are either students, home-accompanying partners, or employees.

Who are the respondents?

This section will provide insight into the respondents' backgrounds, both in terms of nationality, age, educational level, employment situation, and place of residence.

Origin of respondents

The respondents represent 72 different countries (figure 1).

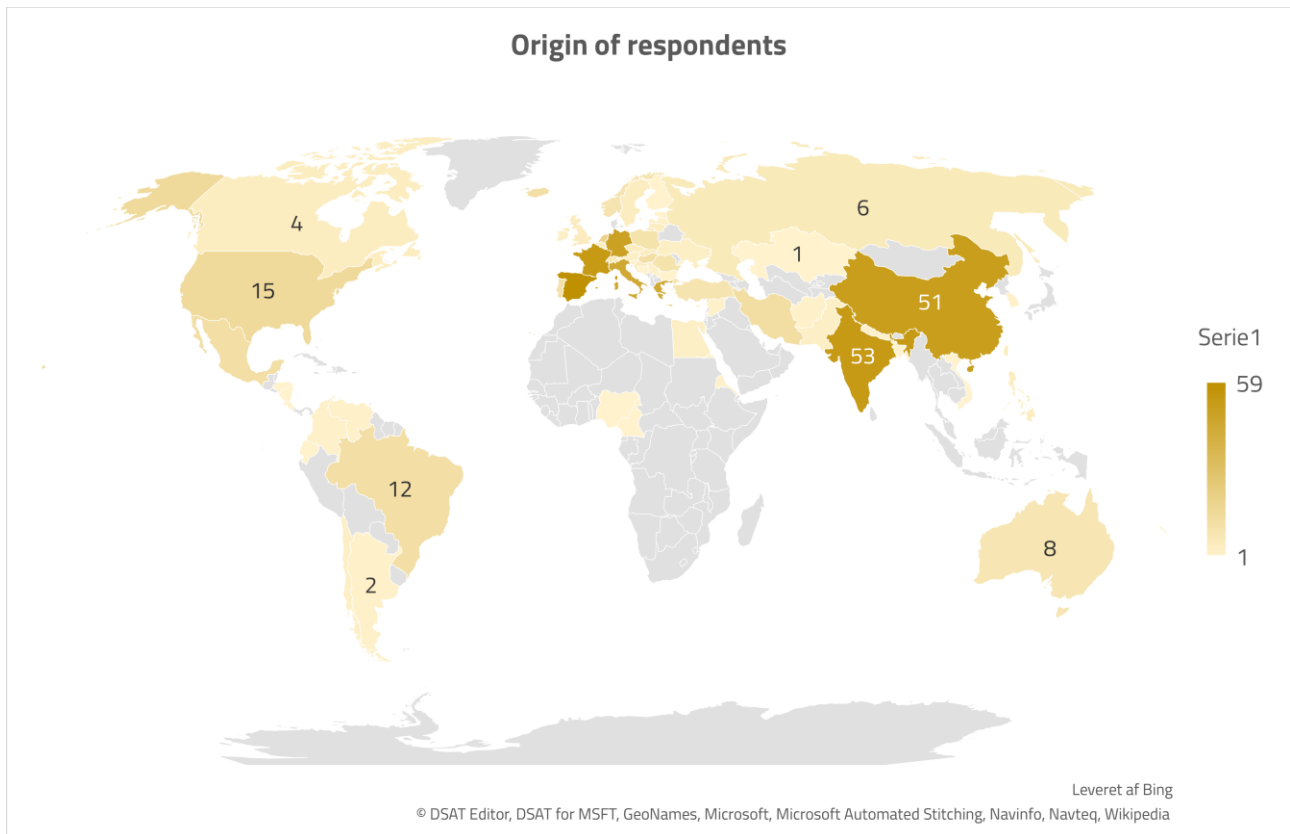


Figure 1. Origin of respondents

Top 15

Spain, India, France, and China are most strongly represented with more than 50 respondents from each country (figure 2).

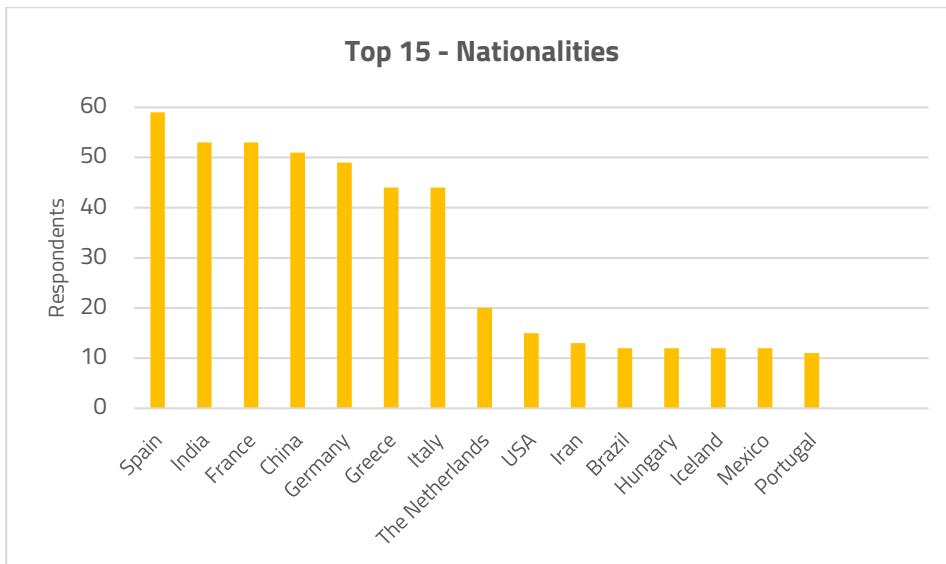


Figure 2. Top 15 - Nationalities

Gender and age

The respondent group consists of 270 women and 357 men, which are divided into five different age groups. The two youngest age groups are strongest represented (figure 3).

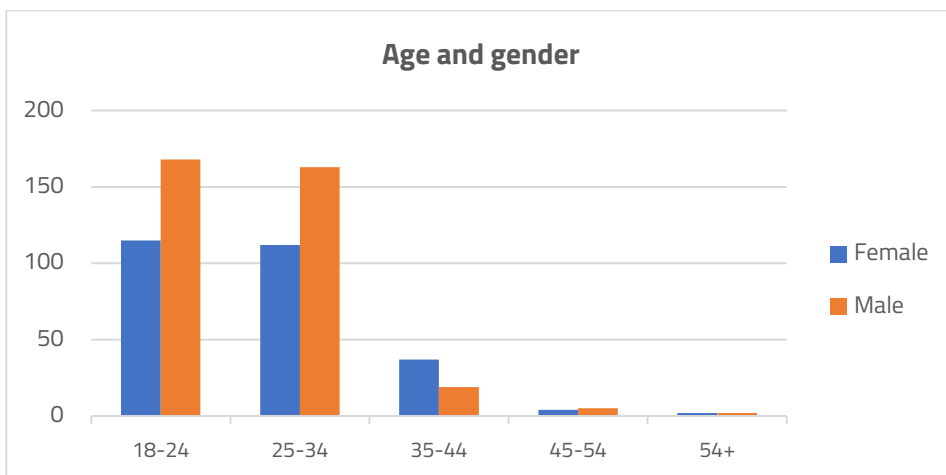


Figure 3. Gender and age

Relationship status

39 % of the respondents are in a relationship or married (figure 4).

Bonus info: 16% of the respondents, mostly the fulltime employees, are accompanied with a spouse. 72% of the spouses are employed.

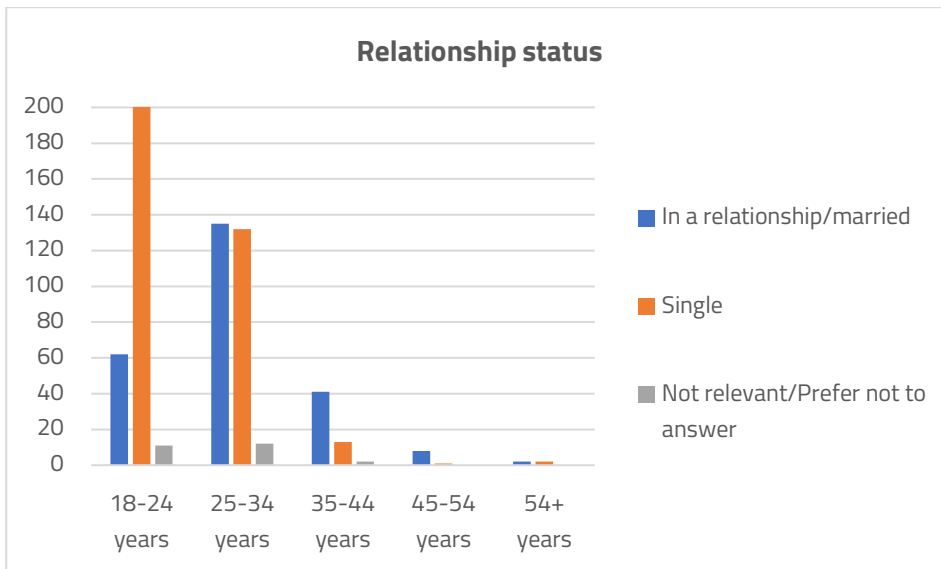


Figure 4. Relationship status

Children

The majority of the respondents do not have any children living with them. Of the 53 respondents having children living with them either full time or part time, most of them are full time employees (56%) (figure 5).

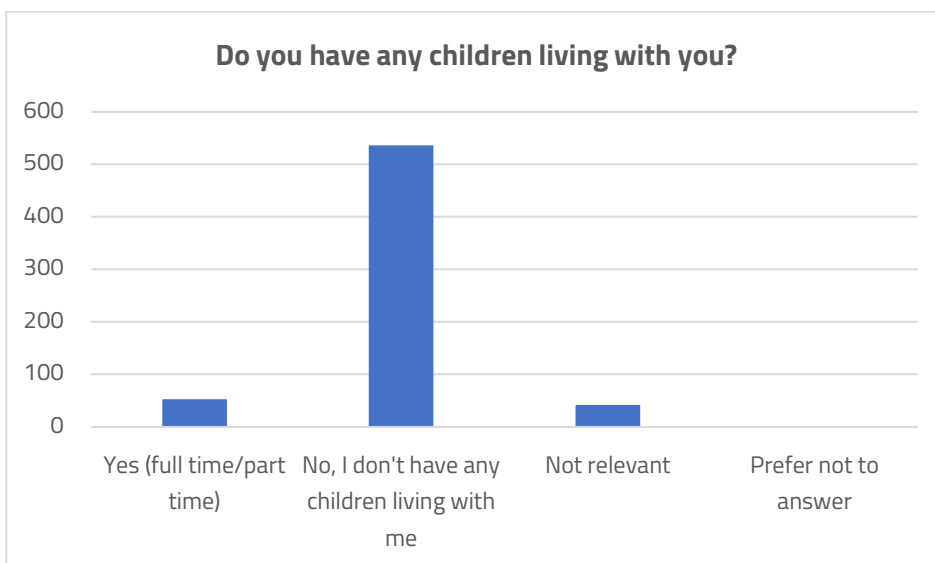


Figure 5. Children

Number of years in Denmark

Approximately 50% of the respondents have lived in Denmark less than a year. Only 26 respondents have lived in Denmark more than 5 years (figure 6).

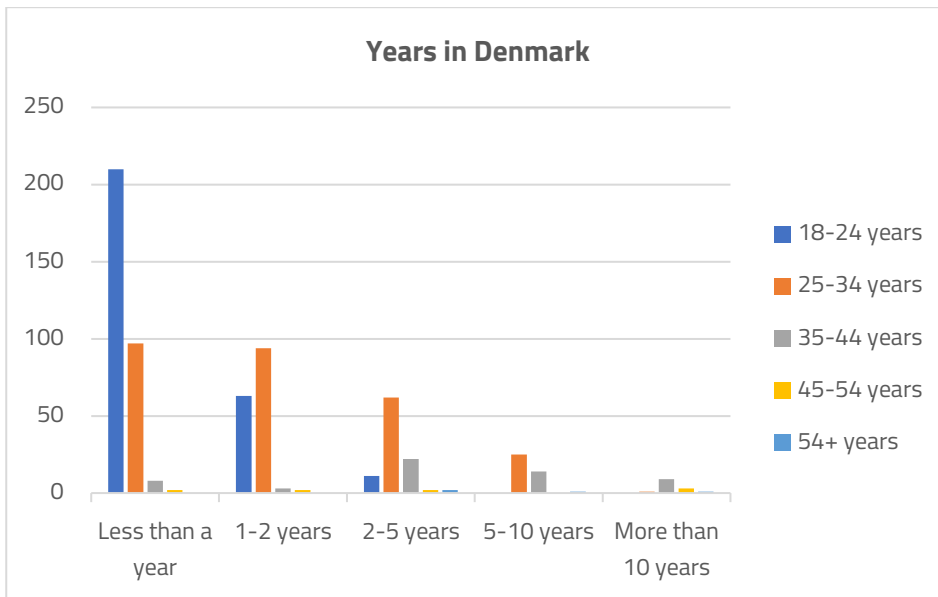


Figure 6. Number of years in DK

Educational background

Regarding the respondents' educational level, 61 % have at least a bachelor's degree, 29 % have at least a master's degree and 8 % hold at least a PhD. That means that 98% of the respondents can be considered highly educated (figure 7).

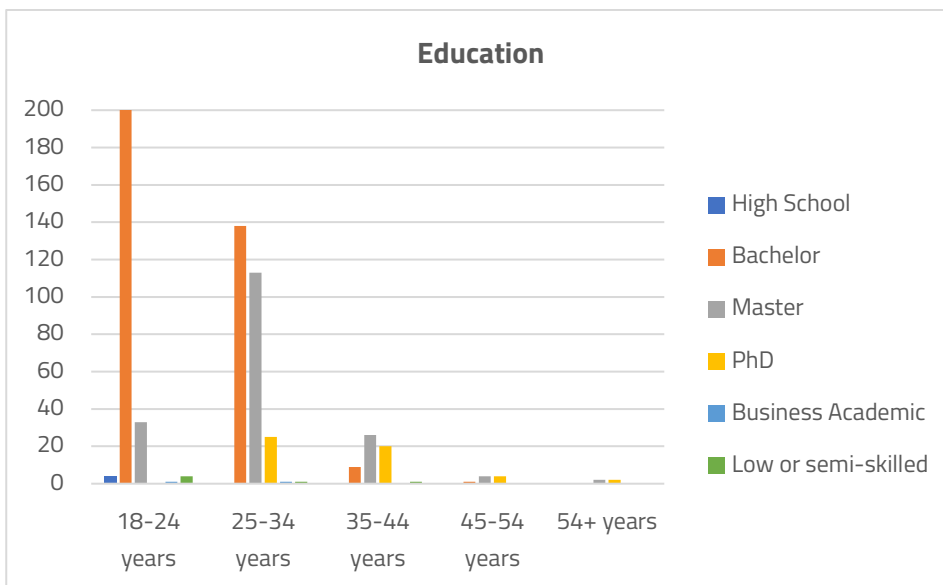


Figure 7. Educational background and age

Employment status

Most of the respondents (68 %) are students. Out of the 434 students 98 % of them studies at DTU. Next after students, the fulltime and part time employees represent the majority of the respondents with 25% (figure 8).

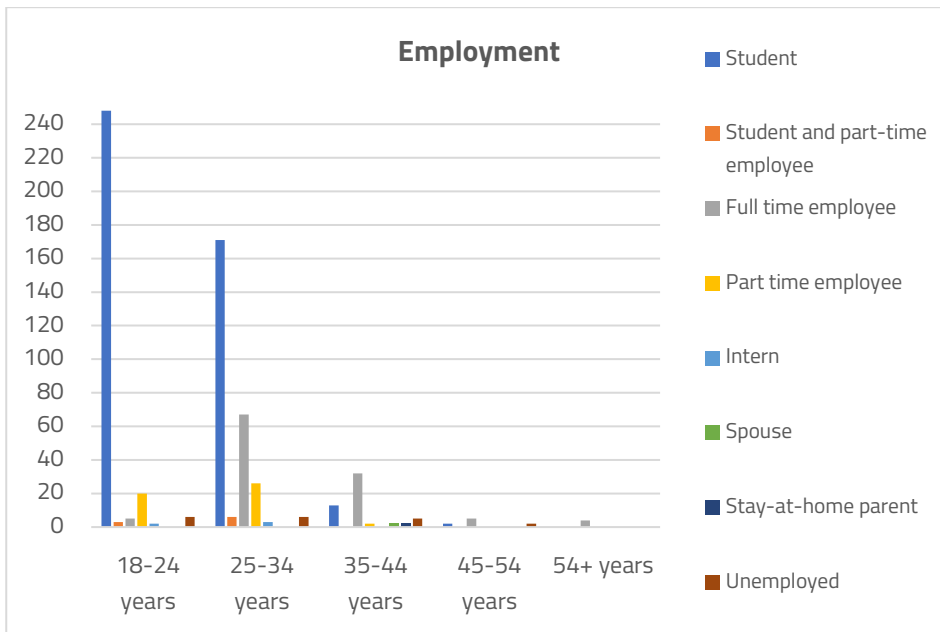


Figure 8. Employment status and age

Of the 161 respondents working either fulltime or part time, 49 % are working at a public organization in Lyngby, which could very well be DTU – The Technical University of Denmark. 16 % of the respondents are working at a private company in Lyngby-Taarbæk Municipality, and 22% are working at a private company in Greater Copenhagen (excl. Lyngby-Taarbæk). Very few of the respondents are self-employed/entrepreneur (figure 9).

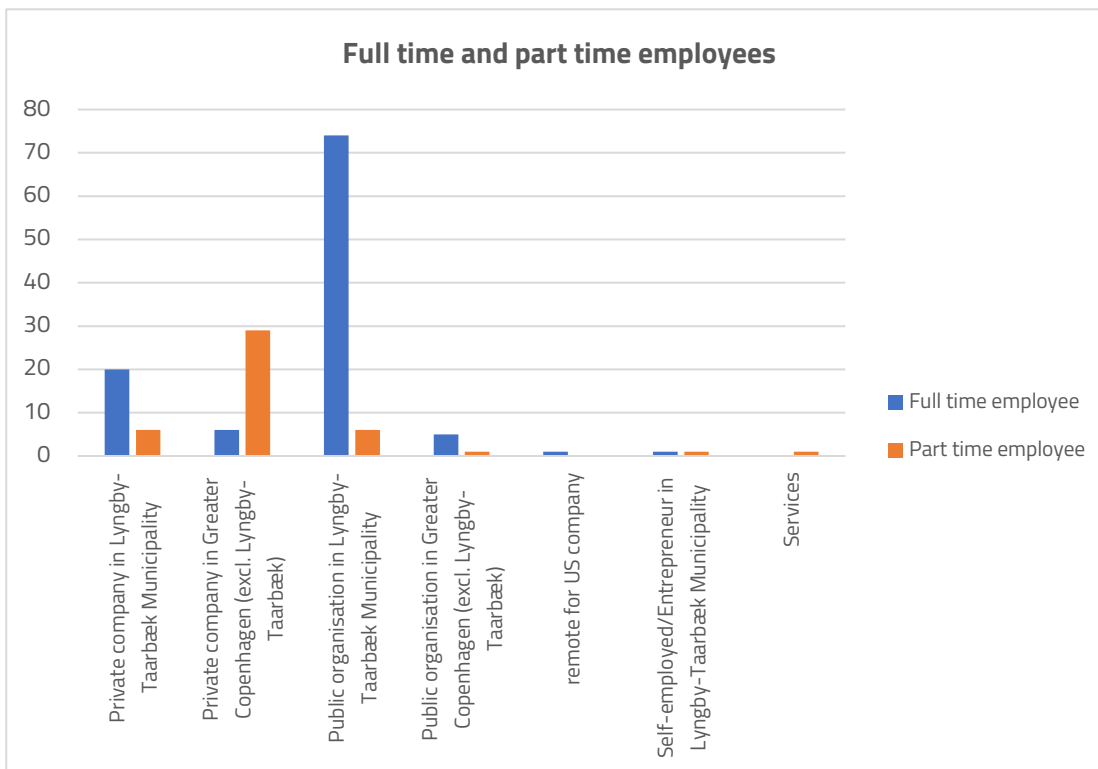


Figure 9. Full time and part time employees

Place of residence

40% of 632 respondents live in Lyngby-Taarbæk Municipality (255 respondents). 14% live less than 5 km from Lyngby-Taarbæk, 18% live 5- 10 km from Lyngby-Taarbæk, 15% live 10-15 km from Lyngby-Taarbæk and 11 % live more than 15 km from Lyngby-Taarbæk (figure 10).

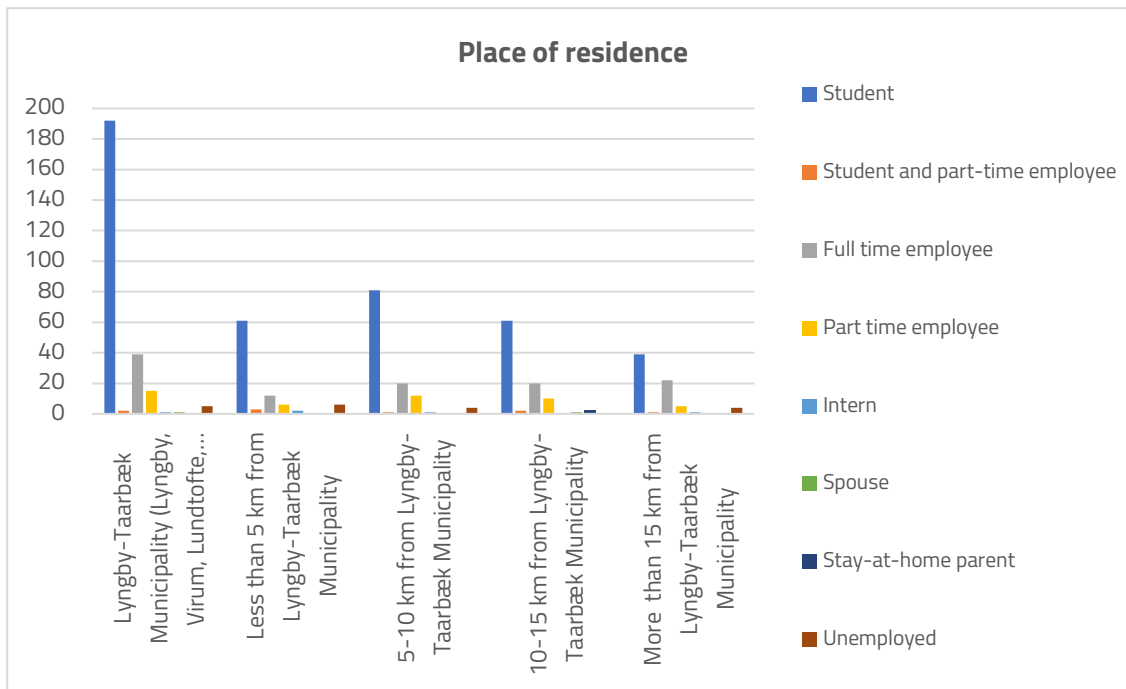


Figure 10. Place of residence and employment status

Number of years in Lyngby

Of the 255 respondents who live in Lyngby-Taarbæk, 68% of the respondents from the youngest age categories "18-24 years" and "25-34 years" have lived in Lyngby less than a year. Very few of the respondents (13) have lived in Lyngby more than 5 years (figure 11).

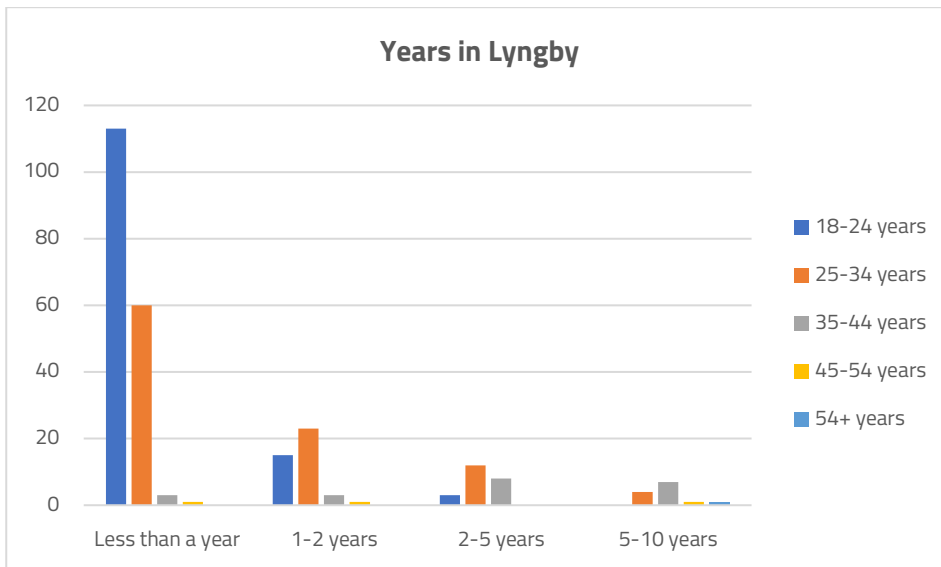


Figure 11. Years in Lyngby

Housing status – Lyngby

As expected the international students are primarily housed in Lyngby in temporary housing such as dorms or private rented rooms (47%) or in rented houses/apartments (23%). Of the 54 respondents who either work full time or part time 68 % of them rent a room or a house/apartment (figure 12).

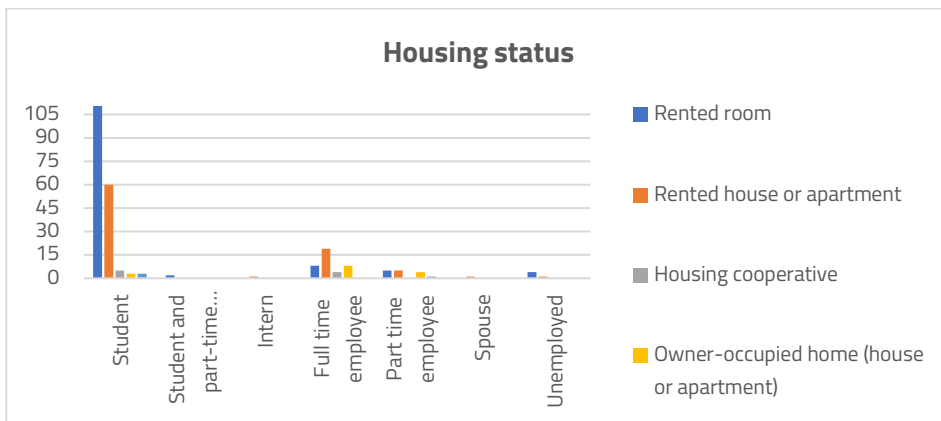


Figure 12. Housing status

Why do the respondents choose to move to Lyngby?

This section comes across the respondents' choice of residence and how they use and perceive activities, institutions, and places in the city.

What attracts the internationals to Lyngby?

Of the 255 respondents who live in Lyngby-Taarbæk Municipality, the determining reasons for moving to Lyngby-Taarbæk is mainly due to studies (63%), exchange studies (20%) and job (10%) (figure 13). The field "Other" includes: "Close to work", "Erasmus semester", "Office + location" and "The Danish education for my children".

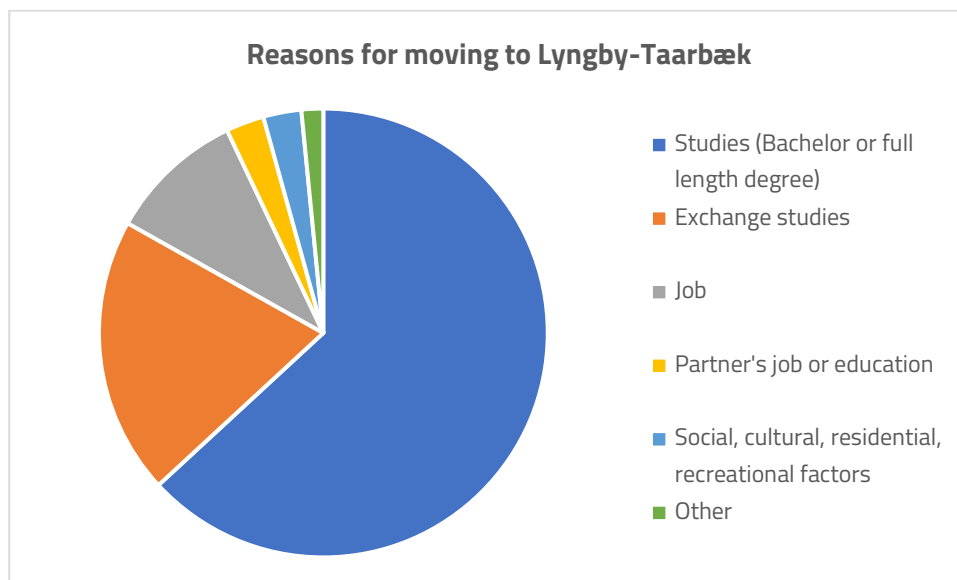


Figure 13. Reasons for moving to Lyngby-Taarbæk

Everyday life in Lyngby

This section comes across the respondents' view on places, institutions, and activities as well as the ease of getting to know new people and finding information on news and activities.

The respondents had to decide how much they use 8 different places, institutions or activities in Lyngby: 1) The Volunteer Centre, 2) Shopping at Lyngby Storcenter and Lyngby Hovedgade, 3) the library, 4) Local fitness/swimming pool, 5) Restaurants, cafés and bars, 6) Dyrehaven and other green areas, 7) Cultural institutions (museums, cinema etc.) and 8) Local sport clubs.

Volunteer Centre

0 respondents of a total of 632 use the Volunteer Centre more than 10 times a year. 4 out of 632 use it 5-10 times a year. 14 use it 1-5 times a year, 268 answer "I rarely make use of it". And for 346 respondents the answer is "Don't know/Not relevant" (figure 14).

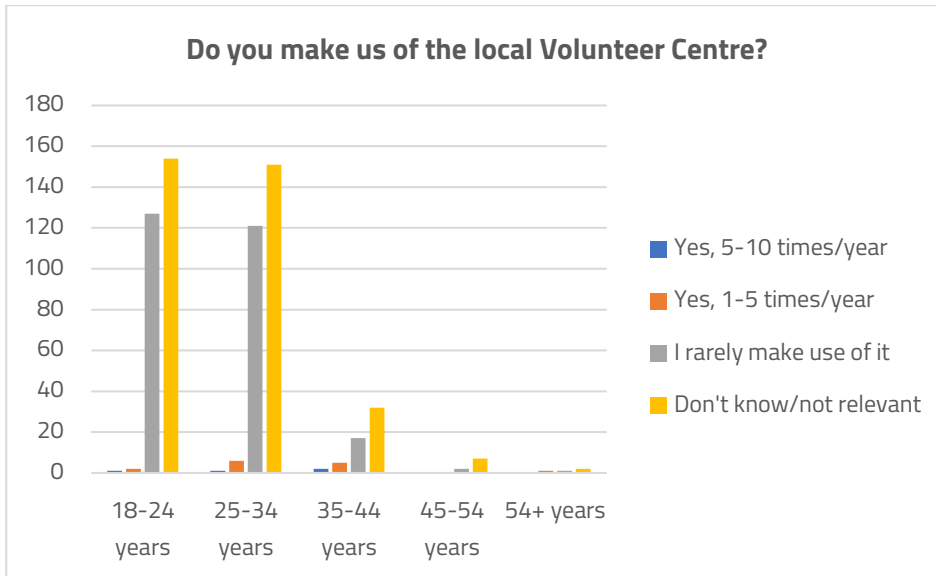


Figure 14. Volunteer Centre

Shopping

38% of the total number of respondents make use of the shopping opportunities in central Lyngby more than 10 times a year. 18 % of the total number of respondents answer 5- 10 times a year, 21 % answer 1-5 times a year, 16 % answer “I rarely make use of it” and 7 % answer “Don’t know/Not relevant” (figure 15).



Figure 15. Shopping

The Library

24% of the total number of respondents make use of the local library more than 10 times a year. 6% of the total number of respondents answer 5-10 times a year, 10 % answer 1-5 times a year, 35 % answer “I rarely make use of it” and 25% answer “Don’t know/Not relevant” (figure 16).

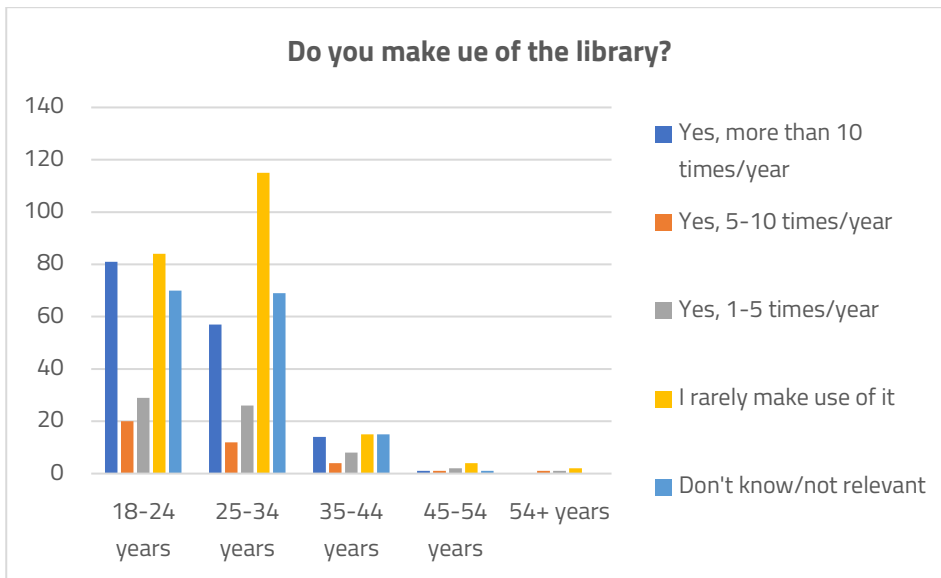


Figure 16. Library

Local fitness and swimming pool

17% of the total number of respondents make use of the local fitness and swimming pool more than 10 times a year. 5% of the total number of respondents answer 5-10 times a year, 7% answer 1-5 times a year, 40% answer "I rarely make use of it" and 31% answer "Don't know/Not relevant" (figure 17).

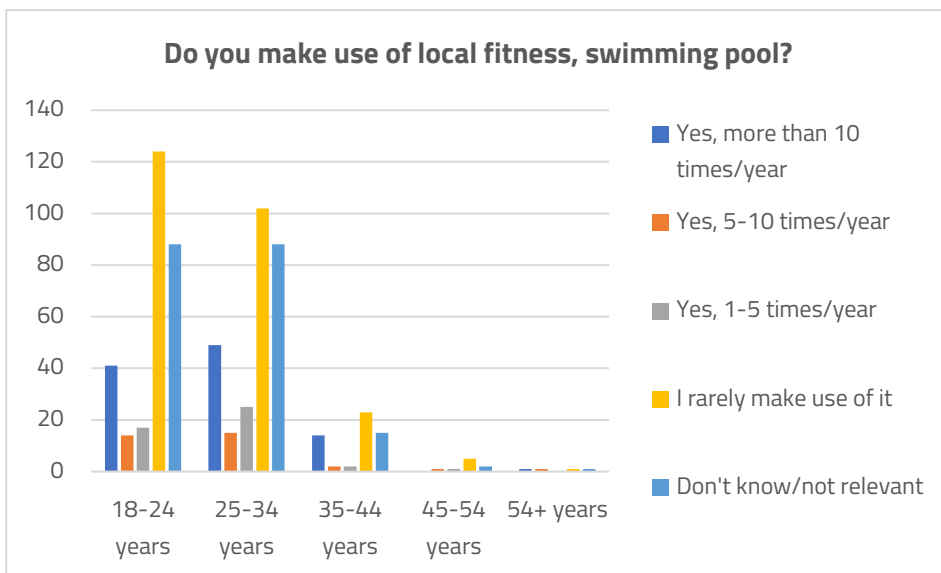


Figure 17. Fitness and Swimming pool

Restaurant, cafés, and bars

23% of the total number of respondents make use of the local restaurants, cafés, and bars more than 10 times a year. 19% of the total number of respondents answer 5-10 times a year, 24% answer 1-5 times a year, 24% answer "I rarely make use of it" and 10% answer "Don't know/Not relevant" (figure 18).

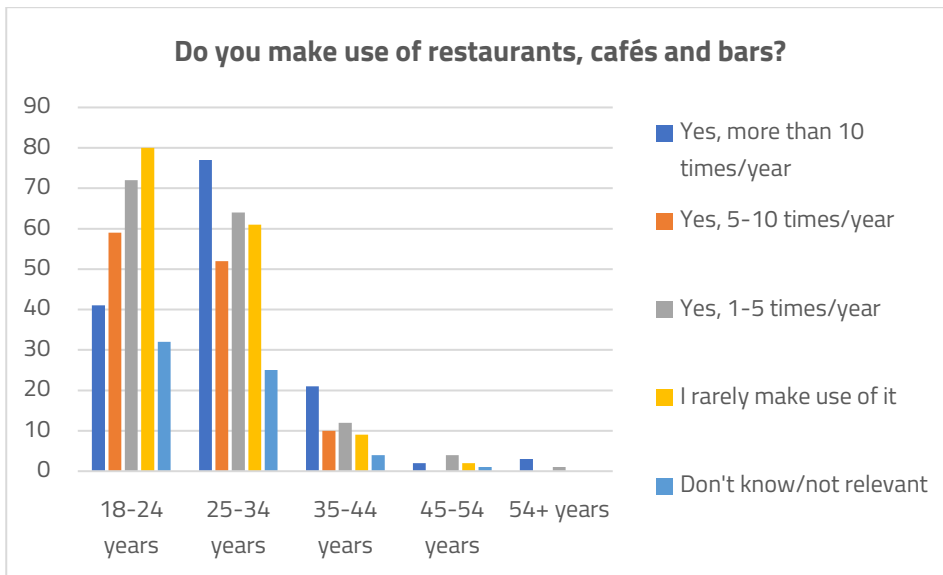


Figure 18. Restaurants, cafés and bars

Dyrehaven and other green areas

24% of the total number of respondents make use of Dyrehaven and other green areas more than 10 times a year. 16% of the total number of respondents answer 5-10 times a year, 28% answer 1-5 times a year, 18% answer "I rarely make use of it" and 14 % answer "Don't know/Not relevant" (figure 19).

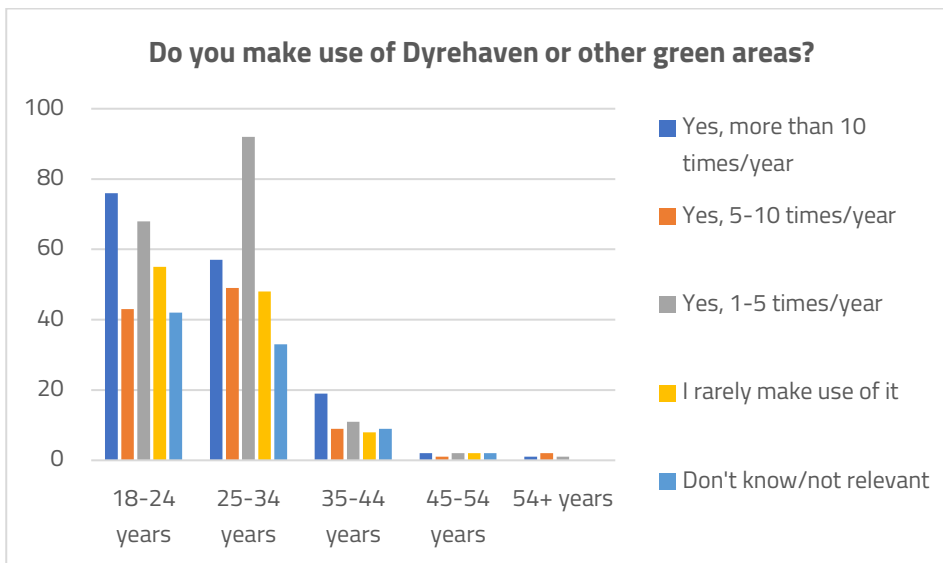


Figure 19. Dyrehaven and other green areas

Cultural institutions

6% of the total number of respondents make use of local cultural institutions such as cinema and museums more than 10 times a year. 11% of the total number of respondents answer 5-10 times a year, 30% answer 1-5 times a year, 35% answer "I rarely make use of it" and 19 % answer "Don't know/Not relevant" (figure 20).

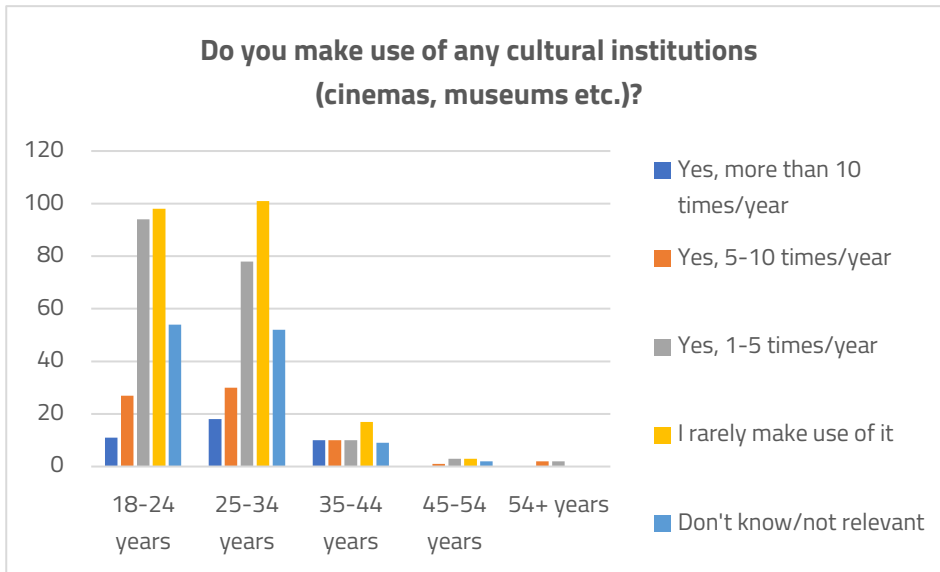


Figure 20. Cultural institutions

Sports club

12% of the total number of respondents make use of local sport club more than 10 times a year. 4% of the total number of respondents answer 5-10 times a year, 3% answer 1-5 times a year, 44% answer "I rarely make use of it" and 37% answer "Don't know/Not relevant" (figure 21).

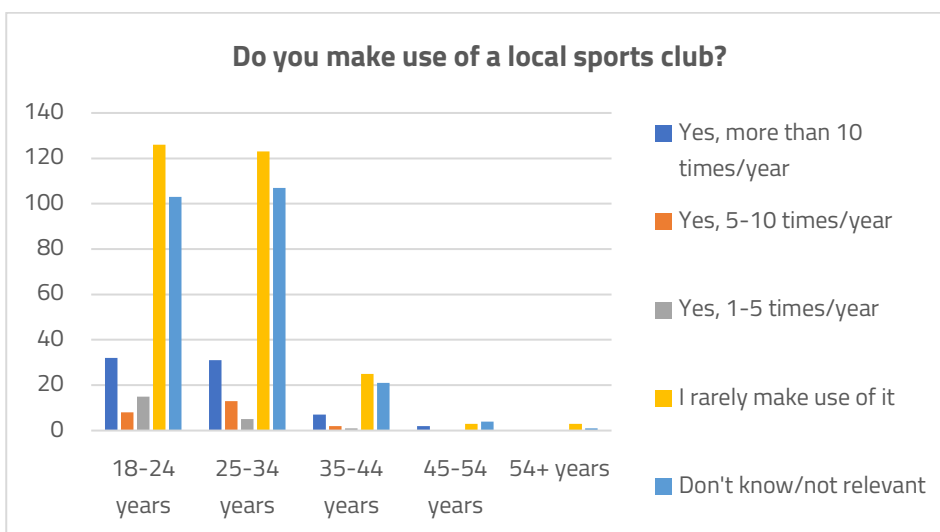


Figure 21. Sports club

Getting to know Danes

Approximately half (46%) of the 632 respondents across all age groups do not find it easy to get to know Danes, 28% are undecided, 20% find it easy and 6% answer "prefer not to answer/not relevant" (figure 22).

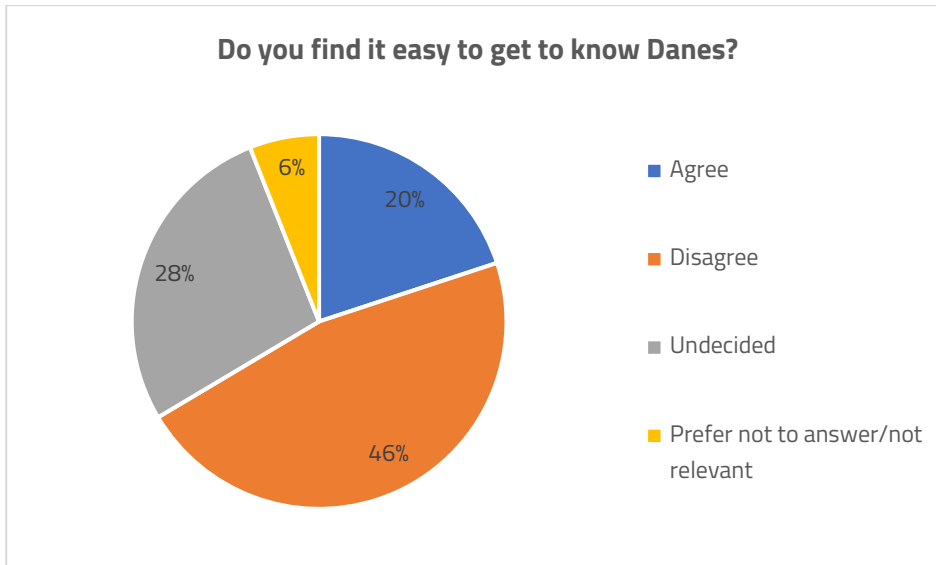


Figure 22. Getting to know Danes

	18-24 years	25-34 years	35-44 years	45-54 years	54+ years
Agree	22 %	17 %	23	22 %	25 %
Disagree	41 %	51 %	50 %	56 %	50 %
Undecided	33 %	24 %	20 %	11 %	25 %
Prefer not to answer/not relevant	4 %	8 %	7 %	11 %	0 %
Total number	284	279	56	9	4

Getting to know other internationals

When asking if it is easy to get to know other internationals, a large proportion of the respondents' answer "Agree". Especially the youngest age group, 18-24, find it easy to get to know other internationals (figure 23).

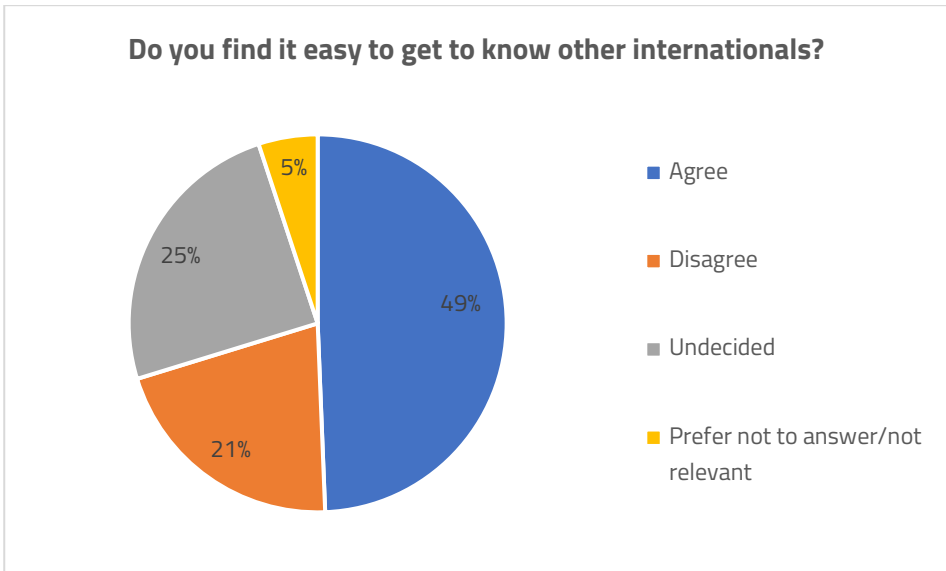


Figure 23. Getting to know other internationals

	18-24 years	25-34 years	35-44 years	45-54 years	54+ years
Agree	59 %	42 %	36 %	44 %	50 %
Disagree	15 %	24 %	36 %	34 %	25 %
Undecided	24 %	27 %	19 %	11 %	25 %
Prefer not to answer/not relevant	2 %	7 %	9 %	11 %	0 %
Total number	284	279	56	9	4

Finding events and activities in Lyngby

When asking about events and activities, specifically the ease of finding events and activities in Lyngby, the respondents split up in almost equal parts of agreeing, disagreeing, while a slightly larger part are undecided (figure 24).

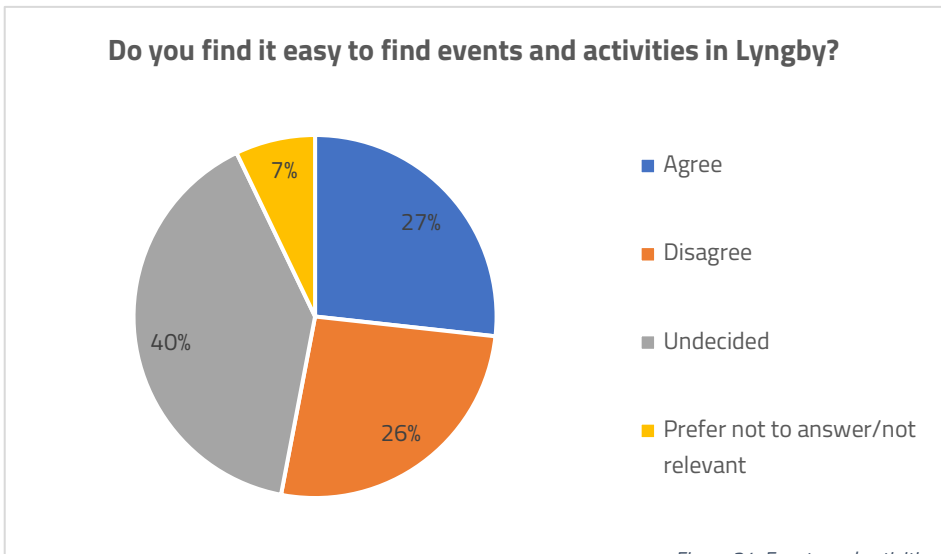


Figure 24. Events and activities

	18-24 years	25-34 years	35-44 years	45-54 years	54+ years
Agree	29 %	23 %	30 %	22 %	75 %
Disagree	23 %	30 %	25 %	22 %	25 %
Undecided	43 %	39 %	36 %	34 %	0 %
Prefer not to answer/not relevant	5 %	8 %	9 %	22 %	0 %
Total number	284	279	56	9	4

Approximately 80 % of the respondents either get information on news and activities via Facebook, friends, or colleagues. Very few make use of the local newspaper, Google and VisitLyngby (a site for local activities), and approximately 15 % do not find it relevant to get or find information on activities.

Student, Female, 18-24 year, single, India:

“Actually, I don’t know where to find news, but I am really interested in finding the Lyngby related news”

Expectations to stay, reasons for moving and the feeling of home

This section comes across the expectations to stay in Lyngby, reasons for moving and the feeling of home.

Expectations to stay in Lyngby

Of the 255 respondents living in Lyngby, many of the students answer that they do not expect to stay in Lyngby (76) or “Yes, at least the next year” (103). 15 of the respondents are planning to stay in Lyngby at least the next 3 years and 16 respondents at least the next 5 years. Those two groups are primarily employed people.

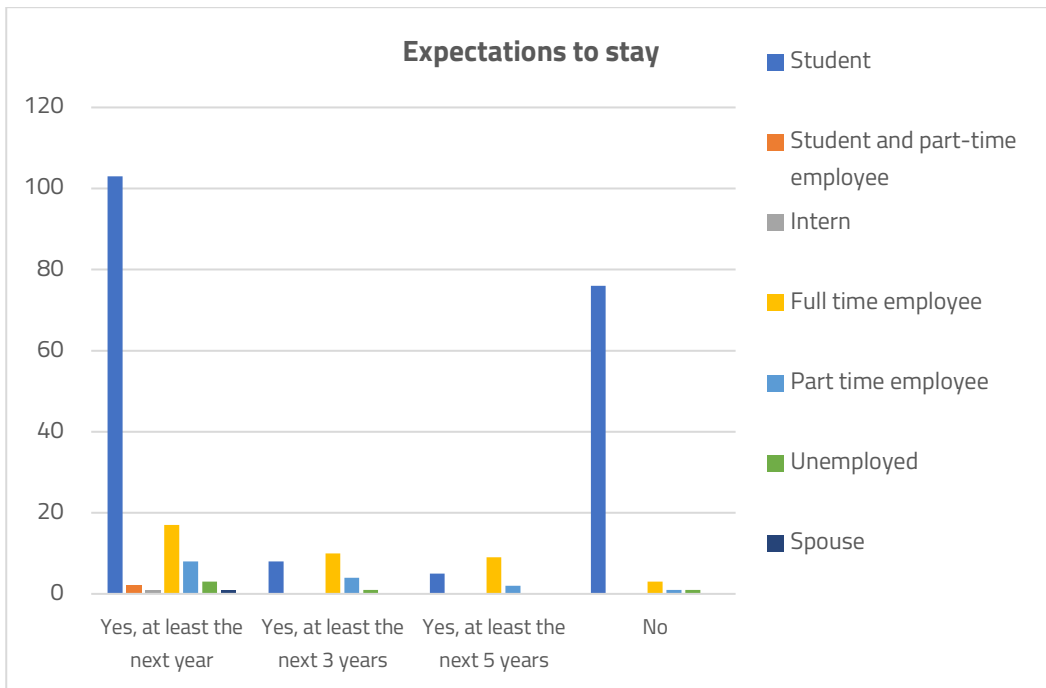


Figure 25. Expectations to stay

Reasons for moving from Lyngby

The respondents were asked about the reasons to move from Lyngby. Of the most stated reasons are job (34 %), end of exchange program (15 %), end of studies (14 %), and housing prices and housing opportunities (12 %).

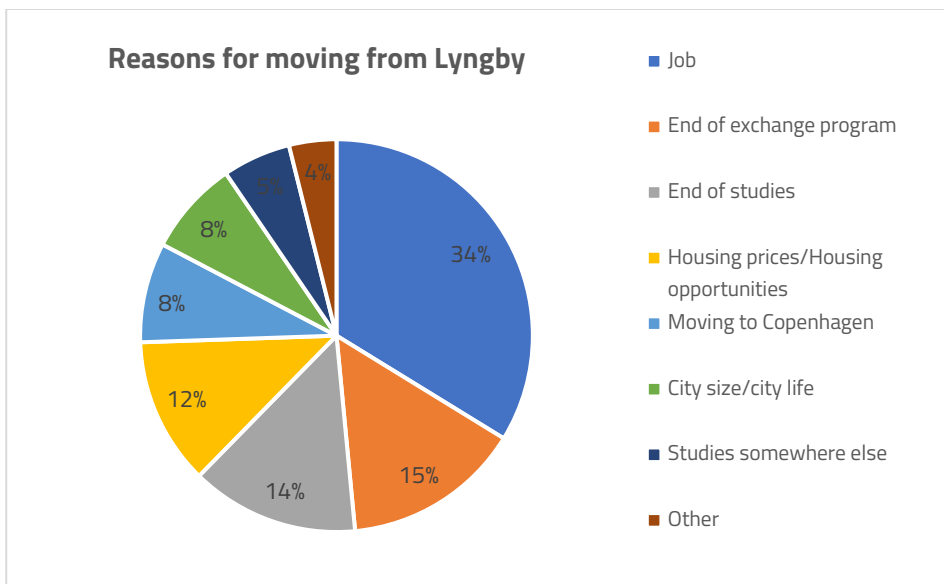


Figure 26. Reasons for moving

Some of the respondents have elaborated the reason for moving as following:

German, Male, 18-24, bachelor student at DTU, less than a year:

"It's not a big town"

Italian, Female, 25-34, exchange student at DTU, less than a year:

"I would love to stay in Lyngby but I was only allowed to stay for my ERASMUS semester at DTU. Maybe after I finished my study I will come back one day".

Taiwan, Male, 25-34 years, full time employee, 2-5 years in Lyngby, in a relationship:

"If Danish immigrant policy changes to be more harsh to international workers in the future".

Greece, Male, 54+, full time employee, 5-10 years in Lyngby, in a relationship:

"Retirement"

Serbia, Male, 25-34 years, full time employee, 2-5 years in Lyngby, in a relationship:

"Not enough night public transport in the night, not so much happening after 21"

Spain, Female, 18-24, student, 1-2 years in Lyngby:

"A job offer somewhere else in Denmark or Spain would make me rethink my current housing status. Also the end of the contract would make me move to another flat, but Lyngby is nice"

The feeling of home

Of the 632 respondents, 61% feel at home in Lyngby and 39 % of the respondents do not (figure 27).

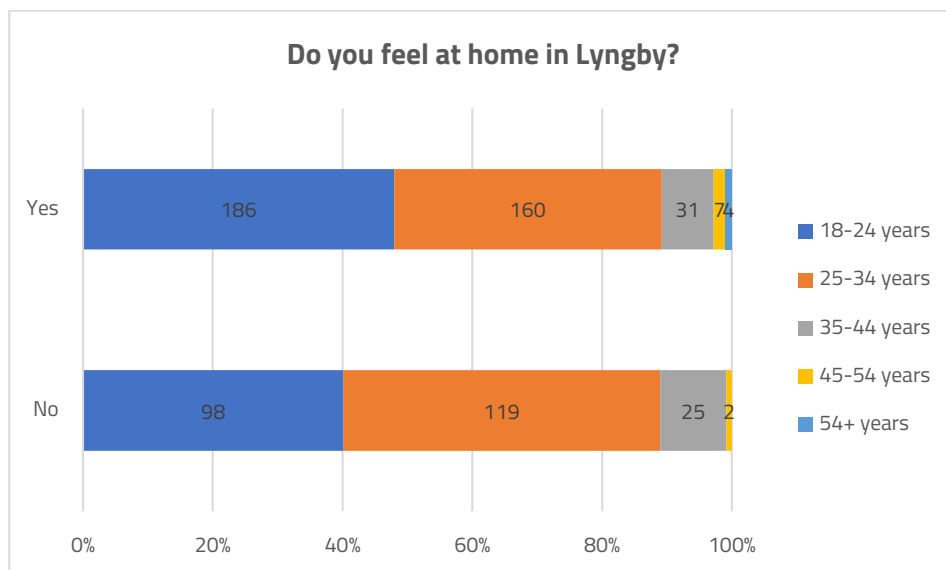


Figure 27. Feeling at home

Why do you feel at home?

Of the 388 respondents who feel at home in Lyngby, many of them express that they think Lyngby:

- Is a small town with short distances to everything
- Has many good shopping opportunities – shopping Centre and Lyngby Hovedgade
- Has peaceful, green nature
- Is where friends and social life is
- Nice residential areas
- Has good public transport
- Is safe, clean, and well organized
- not too busy but lively – people do not rush as much as in Copenhagen
- Is a nice, cosy, and welcoming city

Greece, Female, 25-34 years, Fulltime employee, single:

“It's a very cosy, sweet area that does not miss a lot. Lively, full of cafes and shops. I just feel it's more suitable for middle aged people and above, since there are not many bars, or places for nightlife, really few initiatives for expats. It would be lovely if this could change”.

Full time employee, 18-24 years, the Netherlands, male:

"I think Lyngby is a nice mix of not too busy but lively city and green areas. As I studied here, I have friends here and a good place to stay. I know my way around and have everything I need here, or otherwise Copenhagen just around the corner."

Why don't you feel at home?

Of the 244 respondents who do not feel at home in Lyngby, many of them express:

- Life is on campus and there it feels like home not in Lyngby.
- Difficult to find friends and Danes are impossible to approach and interact with
- More museums and leisure activities, bars, student cafés and cultural events
- Most of the activities in the city seem to be in Danish and difficult to find information
- The shops close quite early and after 6 it becomes a ghost town
- Not aware of places to socialize, join some clubs which are budget friendly, etc.
- Not easy at all to find a part-time job with only English as the language requirement.
- Living expenses too high
- The city is nice for starting a family and if you own a house, but not for young people.
- There is no student life in Lyngby. People from DTU prefer to stay there or go directly to Copenhagen if they have to leave.
- Need for more international activities – also movies or theatre in English
- Difficult to meet Danes. Meeting and knowing young Danes one on one basis like speed dating would be nice.
- No friends and the feeling of loneliness
- Cultural homogeneity, lack of student-friendly activities and places with good prices.
- Only feeling at home at the football matches of Lyngby BK

Male, student, Spain, 45-54 years:

"I would like to eventually work and live in Lyngby, but I have heard that accommodation is very expensive. I would appreciate if the kommune hosted events about life in the kommune geared towards DTU students (= potential future permanent residents). There could be events on housing, leisure, volunteering, etc".

Female, 25-34 years, fulltime employee, USA:

"I like and feel comfortable in Lyngby, but I have not explored the facilities available to citizens besides from cafes/shops etc. very much. I would like to participate more in the community, use sports facilities etc. and meet people but have not been sure how to do this and am more hesitant to do so, since I don't really know many people and am less likely to go explore new places by myself without a more formal invitation/structure".

Male, Iran, 25-34 years, Student:

Basically I have good feeling living in Lyngby and Denmark. But in order to have better feeling, it is very nice if we could get news and events easily in English.

Recommendations from one international to another

The respondents were asked in the survey if they are participating in leisure activities in Lyngby where other internationals are welcome to join. Below are the recommendations:

Sport

- Rugby at Lyngby Exiles Rugby
- Climbing at DTU
- Swimming club or the local football club
- Playing in Lyngby BK
- Part of a sports club at DTU (yoga, fitness, climbing, volleyball)
- Floorball club
- Local chess club
- Triathlon Group
- Star Dance Studio
- Martial Arts club

Culture etc.

- The Danish Movie Klub by Expat in Lyngby
- Lyngby Day in Autumn
- Cinema for expats
- International mothers group
- International Rotary Club
- Coding Pirates
- I am signed up for Elderlearn and find it great to meet the old Danish people.
- Career meeting Lyngby

Nature

- Lyngby Kanoklub
- Walking at Lyngby Sø
- I ride my bike on my own to discover new places.

Ideas for new activities

Below are the respondents' ideas for new activities and networking opportunities related to internationals in Lyngby:

Job

- Job search courses for accompanying spouses
- Assist international spouses with finding an internship or salary subsidy position
- Job search courses for accompanying spouses

Sport

- Underwater hockey club
- Womens' basket team
- Play cricket or soccer
- More information about social runs or social sports in Lyngby
- Gym activities

Places

- Cultural Center with an open and free stage
- A place where the students can go (studenterhus) which is not inside of the DTU campus

Events

- Event where I could meet musicians to create a band
- Activities for kids offers good networking opportunities
- Lyngby yearly flashmob
- Meeting group for international families with young children A weekend market for everybody in Lyngby
- Afternoon meetings for internationals and networking
- More information about sports clubs and how to get access to sports fields Such as Fastelavn
- Events (cooking sessions).
- More information about events going on in Lyngby in general
- Community Kitchen or similar

Welcoming offers

- Activities related to Danish Culture because it is hard to meet Danes
- Free language class
- An event covering the most important things to know when you arrive in Lyngby as an international e.g. places to go, the groups to join
- A welcome letter when you first register your CPR to Lyngby or register as a student (information about leisure activities and any permanent ones available and have this information in English and Danish to show inclusion

Learning Danish and meeting Danes

- Organising events on Danish holidays so we can get to know them! Such as Fastelavn
- Gardening (growing own food)
- More activities where internationals are paired with Danes would be better for integration purposes.
- Danish language practice cafe events can be arranged like in Copenhagen.
- Language exchange events in bars or cafeterias, where people can meet locals and internationals and practice different languages.
- Events where you can meet Danes
- International dinners or tandems, also with Danes

Culture and leisure

- Themed nights
- Trivia nights
- Cultural nights
- Movie nights
- Dinner clubs
- Live music, cheap cinema, bar
- Getting drinks/dinner
- Theater group
- Event at the library, but in English.
- A cultural festival
- Volunteering
- Gardening club