



POLITIET

Oslo politidistrikt

Side effects from open borders; begging seen from the Norwegian Police point of view.



**PÅ JOBB FOR EN
TRYGG HOVEDSTAD**



- Decriminalization of the law prohibiting begging in 2003.
- 14 days later the first Rumanian beggar was observed in Oslo. It is mostly Rumanians and Norwegians begging for money in Norway.
- They come as “tourists” and may stay in the country for three months.
- There is very little control; some Schengen countries have insufficient registration when entering countries.
- Norwegian rules states that you need NOK 500,- a day to stay in Norway.
- Travel route: Minibus or bus from Romania to Northern Europe.



- Their type of begging is more theatrical and many are more or less aggressive.
- We do not allow children as beggars.
- They are many more of them in numbers than Norwegian beggars.
- The weather has no visible impact on the numbers. Our cold winter does not stop them. However the numbers increase some in spring and summer.
- They may earn from NOK 150,- to 250,- a day.
- They sleep in houses/apartments rented by a Rumanian or outdoors.
- We have seen that they sleep under bridges, in parks and try to get in to shopping centers.



- They are organized in family groups or groups from the same geographical area/place.
- The police have no evidence of “trafficking” among beggars.
- Public pole stats; 6 of 10 want begging to be prohibited.
- We get a large number of complaints from the public concerning begging.
- Current laws are somewhat unclear in our opinion, and there is room for individual considerations.
- Oslo City council has sought a clarification of the law.
- The Ministry of Justice and the Police is resistant. Quote: “It is the discomfort by begging that bother us, but we cannot use the police for everything that are unpleasant.”



- The flow of people from Romania has increased heavily the last two years.
- The beggars are now in minority, criminal Rumanian groups commit pick pocketing and burglary from houses/apartments increases.
- Our experience is that the borderline between begging, pick-pocketing and shoplifting are beginning to disappear.
- The open borders suggest that we not yet have seen the peak of the flow of people. The prognoses from our national Crime Intelligence Unit are that it will still increase in the years to come.



- How to deal with this from the Police point of view?
- Our message; Do not give money to beggars. Buy =Oslo or donate to the Salvation Army. Cf. Budapest
- Begging is not illegal and will in general not provoke a reacting from us.
- Aggressive begging may be fined.
- Owners of shopping centers may refuse entrance.
- The public room in Norway is not regulated to hinder begging, we must live with the discomfort.





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