

Erasmus+ Mobility Report
University of Stavanger, Norway
Erasmus Mundus Master in Migration and Intercultural Relations

My Erasmus+ mobility semester at the University of Stavanger was part of the Erasmus Mundus European Master in Migration and Intercultural Relations (EMMIR). The preparation process was well organized by both the EMMIR consortium and the University of Stavanger. Before departure, I received detailed information regarding course registration, accommodation options, arrival procedures, and practical matters related to living in Norway like groceries, gym, house necessities, transportation and most importantly weather.

The application process was straightforward. Communication with the international offices of both institutions was efficient, starting from Norway partners' visit, detailed presentation of upcoming module – all the information provided helped me prepare the necessary documents in advance. The Learning Agreement was completed prior to departure, which facilitated course selection and future credit recognition. Although there were many administrative steps to complete, the support provided by university staff made the process manageable.

One aspect future students should consider is the high cost of living in Norway. Preparing a realistic budget before arrival is important, particularly regarding accommodation, food, and transportation expenses. Even with ERASMUS+ funding, the cost of living was close to unbearable at times, set up costs including furniture, bedding, internet router, dishes, basic house supplies were very high and not anticipated, my dormitory apartment came completely empty, I had to purchase everything.

Travel and Arrival

The journey to Stavanger was smooth, and Stavanger Airport is conveniently connected to the city through public transportation. However, since I arrived late in the evening, I had to take a cab, which was like everything else unreasonably expensive. Coming from Canada it was hard for me to comprehend the cost structure for certain things and justify the high cost.

My accommodation was at dormitory 2 mins walk away from our main campus. I did not have to use public transit often, but cost of it for students was one reasonable thing I remember from Norway. The public transportation system is reliable, and most university facilities are easily accessible. The orientation activities organized by the University of Stavanger helped international students become familiar with campus facilities, academic expectations, and student services.

Since we traveled all together as one group from my Germany cohort, the first days were particularly easy, we didn't require adjustment and explored the campus and city together. It was fun learning practical information about everyday life in Norway through engaging in on campus SIS house (Students' house) activities and attending local university library.

Accommodation

Accommodation was arranged through the student housing system associated with the university. I stayed at student housing in the Sørmarka area, which provided convenient access to campus and public transportation.

The accommodation was safe, and suitable for student life. However it was extremely disappointing not to see even necessities included with 3.5 months accommodation. I had to spend over 400 euros on internet router (which should be a given at university dorm), bedding, dishes, towels, chairs.

Future students should apply for accommodation as early as possible, as student housing is in high demand, and be prepared to pay additional cost for setting up your place for semester.

Studying at the University of Stavanger

The academic experience at the University of Stavanger was one of the highlights of my mobility semester. The university provides a supportive and inclusive learning environment, with approachable professors and well-structured courses.

My studies focused on themes related to migration, multiculturalism, childism, critical adoption studies, human rights, and family diversity. The courses complemented my broader EMMIR curriculum and contributed directly to the development of my master's research interests.

Teaching methods encouraged active participation, critical discussion, and independent research.

The smaller class sizes facilitated meaningful interaction between students and lecturers. I particularly appreciated the interdisciplinary nature of the courses, which brought together perspectives from sociology, anthropology, migration studies, political science, and human rights.

Academic support was readily available whenever needed. Professors were accessible during office hours and responsive to questions regarding assignments and research projects. Library resources and digital learning platforms were easy to use and supported independent study effectively.

I trust that Learning Agreement ensured that the courses completed in Stavanger would be recognized within the EMMIR programme, reducing uncertainty regarding academic requirements.

Everyday Life and Leisure Time

Life in Stavanger offered a unique opportunity to experience Norwegian culture and nature. The city combines a high quality of life with access to remarkable landscapes.

Outside my studies, I explored many parts of the Stavanger region and southwestern Norway. Some of the most memorable experiences included visiting coastal areas, hiking scenic trails, exploring fjords, and experiencing Norway's natural beauty. The accessibility of nature is one of the country's greatest strengths, and outdoor activities are an important part of everyday life.

The international student community was active and welcoming. Through both university events and informal gatherings, I met students from many different countries and cultural backgrounds. These interactions enriched my understanding of intercultural communication and complemented the themes explored in my academic studies.

Although Norway is one of the more expensive countries in Europe, student discounts and careful budgeting helped manage costs on some level. Public transportation, student services, and university facilities contributed positively to everyday life.

General Experience, Credit Transfer, and Conclusion

Overall, my Erasmus+ mobility semester at the University of Stavanger was an extremely valuable academic, professional, and personal experience. Academically, it allowed me to deepen my knowledge of migration, multiculturalism, human rights, and family diversity. The courses strengthened my analytical skills and supported the development of my master's research. Personally, living in Norway challenged me to adapt to a new environment, develop greater independence, and build relationships with people from diverse cultural backgrounds. The experience reinforced the importance of intercultural dialogue and international cooperation, values that are central to the EMMIR programme.

The Learning Agreement provided clarity from the outset, and I do not anticipate difficulties regarding recognition of completed coursework.

Recommendations for Future Students

Do:

- Start planning early.
- Apply for accommodation as soon as possible.
- Prepare a realistic budget for living expenses.
- Participate in orientation activities.
- Engage actively in class discussions.
- Take advantage of opportunities to explore Norway's nature and culture.
- Build connections with both international and local students.

Don't:

- Underestimate the cost of living.
- Delay administrative paperwork or Learning Agreement updates.
- Limit yourself only to your existing social circle.
- Miss opportunities to travel within the region and experience Norwegian culture.

In conclusion, I would highly recommend the University of Stavanger as an Erasmus+ destination. The university offers high-quality education, excellent student support, a welcoming international environment, and access to some of Norway's most beautiful natural landscapes. The semester significantly contributed to both my academic development and personal growth and will remain one of the most rewarding experiences of my studies.

Anastasiya Vedeneeva

EMMIR-13

University of Oldenburg