

## **Erasmus Mobility Experience Report - University of Stavanger, Norway**

This report details my experience as an Erasmus Mundus student in the European Masters in Migration and Intercultural Relations program at the University of Stavanger, Norway, during the second semester.

### **Travel and Arrival**

To maximize the Erasmus mobility grant and accommodate my bulky luggage, I opted for a budget-friendly road trip with friends. We traveled by Flixbus from Oldenburg, Germany, to Oslo, Norway's capital, then took a train to Stavanger. The entire journey cost less than 100 euros. Unfortunately, due to heavy winter conditions, our train was canceled, and we were rerouted by bus. Arriving from Oldenburg, a city with minimal snowfall, the sight of snow-covered Norway was breathtaking.

### **Accommodation**

The university efficiently arranged my accommodation.

### **Academics**

The academic program at the University of Stavanger was well-organized and structured. The courses were highly relevant, incorporating diverse activities and guest lectures. The semester was a collaborative effort between the Stavanger and Slovenian teams, fostering a productive and engaging learning environment. I found the module on Norwegian historical and contemporary immigration and emigration particularly fascinating due to my interest in historical migrations.

### **Everyday Life and Leisure**

While most of the semester was spent in winter, we took full advantage of the spring and summer towards the end. We embarked on numerous hikes and excursions, with Pulpit Rock being the undeniable highlight. Additionally, the city's location as a seafaring hub provides access to various islands. My personal recommendations are Lindøy and Vassøy, conveniently accessible with the monthly transportation pass that includes ferry travel.

Unfortunately, witnessing the Aurora Borealis in Stavanger is a rare occurrence, happening only once a year on average and purely dependent on luck. Despite Europe witnessing the Aurora this year, we were unlucky not to see it from Stavanger. However, determined to experience this natural wonder, we embarked on a separate trip to Tromsø. To maximize your chances of witnessing the Aurora, I recommend planning a trip further north and staying for at least three days.

### **Conclusion**

My time in Stavanger was an enriching and enjoyable experience. Despite the initial challenges of connecting with locals, I felt comfortable and welcomed in the city. The most captivating aspects of Norway were undoubtedly its stunning nature and friendly people. However, the high cost of living was a significant drawback. Stavanger's history as Norway's oil capital is fascinating, and I highly recommend visiting the Oil Museum.

### **Must-Do List**

- Have a date at breathtaking sunset on Lindøy Island during springtime.
- Conquer the iconic hikes of Pulpit Rock, Dalsnuten, and Mannofessen.

### **Be Aware**

- Norwegians have a distinct drinking culture, which might seem unusual for some. Be prepared.
- Pack for unpredictable weather conditions ( you can expect rain and snow anytime).

Overall, my Erasmus experience at the University of Stavanger was incredibly rewarding. I would eagerly return for another adventure!