

Erasmus Student Experience Report
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Erasmus Period: Summer Semester
University of Stavanger, Norway

Preparation (Planning, organisation, application to the host institution)

Before the exchange program, the online application form for the ERASMUS grant we applied for needed to be signed by the student, and advisors from the home and host universities. Therefore, following the information provided by the International Office, after filling out the application form, I sent it to the advisors of both universities for approval. This process was quite easy because both parties approved it very quickly. Additionally, the International Office of Oldenburg University was very supportive during this process; they promptly and clearly responded to all our questions via email. After completing the online application form, we were informed by the International Office of the home university about the documents that needed to be submitted as hard copies. Once I collected the necessary documents, I sent them and the application process was completed smoothly.

Travel and Arrival

Although there are several different modes of transportation such as trains and ferries from Germany to Norway, I chose to fly for convenience because there is a direct flight from Bremen to Stavanger. After arriving in Stavanger, reaching my dorm was quite easy thanks to the Flybusses, which go directly from the airport to the city centre. The existence of these buses and their direct route were truly lifesavers because transferring with luggage on regular buses would have been very difficult, and using a taxi in a place like Norway would have been too expensive for a student.

Accommodation

Finding accommodation in Stavanger was quite easy for me because the University of Stavanger was very helpful during this process. After applying, the university's office created to inform international students contacted us via email, explaining what we needed to do and sharing links that we could use to find accommodation. Since finding a private room in Norway is both expensive and difficult, my friends and I preferred to stay in the dormitories provided by the university for exchange and international students like us. The international office in

Stavanger offered us several types of dorm rooms, and we made our choice among them. The dorm rooms were generally nice and comfortable. Considering the economic situation in Stavanger, the prices were reasonable, typically ranging from 300 to 500 euros.

Studying at the host university (course, academic performance, support, credit transfer)

Since the university in Stavanger is located in a very central location, it was quite easy to get there from anywhere in the city. The lecturers were not only academically very competent but also very supportive and solution-oriented. Throughout our time studying at the University of Stavanger, they supported us academically by organizing many online and face-to-face seminars. They also organized many trips and visits to historical sites to help us discover Stavanger and learn about its history. Additionally, all necessary information was provided to us to take advantage of all the facilities available at the university. During this process, both our coordinators and all the staff at the University of Stavanger were very informative and helpful. From an academic perspective, I learned a lot from the professors who came from partner universities. They were all very knowledgeable in their fields and provided me with new perspectives. In these classes, we discussed many topics, made presentations, and wrote research papers. Thanks to the education I received at the University of Stavanger, I believe I have made significant progress academically compared to when I started. In short, it was a very educational, instructive process where I learned a lot and had a lot of fun socially.

Everyday life and leisure time

Stavanger, like other cities in Norway, was immersed in nature with breathtaking views. Famous for its green spaces, the city delighted me with its numerous lakes, ponds, and diverse wildlife. Witnessing herds of deer in the schoolyard during class, an experience rare in my home country, was truly enchanting for me. The city's small size and discounted tickets for students made traveling within the city quite easy. During my time in Stavanger, I participated in many nature hikes and tours, getting the chance to see many historical and natural sites.

Moreover, the city provided many opportunities for students. For instance, museums offered free entry on specific days, and there were free boat trips arranged for students. Weekly free waffle and pizza days for university students encouraged socializing and support. Additionally, the high number of international students made it easy to expand one's social circle by attending parties organized by them.

Initially daunting, living outside the university and communicating with locals turned out to be different from my expectations. Almost everyone in the city, including the elderly, spoke English fluently, which facilitated smooth interactions.

General experience, conclusion

Living in Stavanger was generally easy and comfortable; the academic life was quite fulfilling. I had some concerns about the weather before going, but they all disappeared once I arrived in Stavanger because the weather was much better than I expected. Instead of a cold climate, it was quite mild. The social life was very enjoyable. There were many historical and natural sites to see, and students were very active, organizing many events where we could socialize. The only negative thing I can mention is that Stavanger is quite expensive. However, the discounts offered to university students and some free activities helped to mitigate this negative aspect. Therefore, I recommend future students to follow these activities and participate in international student events. These events will be very productive as everyone can learn a lot from each other.