

Exchange Semester in Trondheim, Norway

Doing my semester abroad in Norway was the best decision I could have possibly made. NTNU and Trondheim itself made the past 6 months a great experience I wouldn't want to miss.

Arrival/Accommodation

I started my semester in the north already in the beginning of January, that's why I had to present my project in Liechtenstein already before Christmas Holidays- but after this rather stressful semester at home I was really looking forward to my exchange. After a rough landing (very very rough) in stormy and cold Norway on the 2nd of January I first experienced what winter up there meant: Darkness. Except 4 hours of daylight, it was mainly dark. Still the orientation week was a lot of fun and great to meet people.

I lived in the student village Moholt, which is also the biggest one in Trondheim. Living there was really great and I can recommend it, as the apartment, which I shared with 3 other people, was newly renovated and very close to uni. Moholt Studentby really works as a village itself and has an own library, shops, gym, volleyball court, laundry rooms, hairdresser etc. The flat was fully furnished, the only annoying thing was that my flatmates and me, we had to buy all the kitchen equipment, as the kitchen comes completely empty and also had to get rid of them by the end of the semester again.

Public Transport

The public transport system works very well and busses usually come every few minutes. As Moholt is a huge studentvillage there's a very good connection to the uni and the city center. The tickets are rather expensive, as everything in Norway, but if you're not willing to ride a bike in winter with probably -10 degrees you need one sooner or later.

The Uni - NTNU

NTNU is the biggest university in Norway with around 40.000 students. As it is so huge, also the organisation with the courses, records of grading, printing etc. is slightly more complicated. I could choose from a list of studios already before starting my semester there and I was very happy with my choice. In general the structure of the Architecture courses is very different. Students usually have just one big studio per semester, with a theory course related to it. My studio was quite experimental and we worked with all kinds of methods. The general task was to take part in a parallel assignment for the future urban development of the harbour area in Trondheim, along with three other architecture office. Our studio, 12 students, took part as one team, which was a very new experience for me - working together with so many people on one project. At the end of the semester we were building a floating pavillion out of wood in the fjord, which was hard work but also a lot of fun. I really liked that we were very free in the way we worked and that we were actually able to take part in a real competition with other architects. Besides

this studio and the theory course I also attended a Norwegian language course. It was an intense, weekly course in the beginning of the semester and actually helped me a lot in my norwegian skills. As the norwegian language is somehow a weird mixture between german and english, and a lot of people around me were constantly talking it, I was able to understand already quite a lot by the end of the semester.

Costs

I knew Norway was expensive before going there, but it was even more expensive than I expected. Especially food and alcohol is very pricy and there are a lot restrictions for alcohol consumption. Other than that, living in Moholt was not too expensive and in general you can spare a lot of costs when cooking at home rather than eating out. Flights to Norway are quite pricey, especially to Trondheim as you usually have a stopover in Oslo before you can reach any other european country. On the other hand you can get quite cheap domestic flights to really nice places in Norway, especially when you're under 26 there are special youth tickets which are often half the price.

Leisure Time

Compared to Liechtenstein I had much more free time in Trondheim. Although we had to be present for studio four days a week, we had a lot of time during the weekends to do fun stuff like cross-country skiing, looking for northern lights, cabin trips, barbecue etc. The atmosphere at uni was quite relaxed and our tutors they were on the same level as us students. Although the workload towards during the building period at the end of the semester was quite intense it was mostly about learning, trying new things and also have fun.

Trondheim, the city itself is packed with old warehouse buildings and typical scandinavian architecture. It's located directly by the fjord and is surrounded by beautiful nature. As norwegians are very sporty, you also have great possibilities as an exchange student to join all the hiking and cabin trips or go cross country skiing. In summer, when the days are long and it doesn't get dark anymore we often had barbecue next to the fjord and enjoyed having sunlight all night. We also used our free time during the semester to make some trips to other places in Norway, i.e. to Geiranger Fjord, Røros and Tromsø.



Trip to Tromsø



Summer in Trondheim



Winter in Trondheim

