

## Experience report study abroad semester

# How was it?

*The semester abroad at NTNU in Trondheim (Norway) is an experience I would not want to miss. During this time I met many inspiring people, got to know the culture of a foreign country and, above all, developed further. The city of Trondheim offers students everything they need and much more! It is characterized by a very modern university, beautiful cozy streets, a varied entertainment program and breathtaking nature in the immediate vicinity! Trondheim offers something for everyone!*

## 1. General information

Please do not mention any personal information (name, e-mail address, etc.) in the experience report.

I agree to the publication of the report and the attached photos:

Yes  No

Study program at EUF

*Educational Sciences*

Subject combination (if BABW)

*Special Needs Education/ Textile&Fashion*

Host country

*Norway*

Host university

*NTNU Trondheim*

Semester abroad (e.g. fall semester 2020/21)

*fall semester 2021/2022*

## 2. Your Experience Abroad

*At this point you can share the experience you made abroad. Sometimes it is not so easy to report on such experiences in such a compressed way. We have therefore prepared some questions to help you do this. At the end of the questionnaire, you will also find a free field for you to fill in, in which you are welcome to enter aspects that are not covered by any of these questions.*

**How did you prepare for the semester abroad?**

*My preparation started about a year earlier. I already decided at that time that I would like to go to Norway. I found out which partner universities are available and asked about them and the cities. In the HeSe 2020/2021 I took part in a Norwegian language course from the Language Centre of the EUF. In December I took the TOEFL test and applied for the Erasmus program at NTNU. In February I got the feedback that I could go to Trondheim. I continued to learn about the country and the culture. Around May I started looking for an apartment, which turned out to be very problematic during my semester. Normally, Erasmus students should be accommodated in the dormitories of the Norwegian student organisation SIT. However, the Corona pandemic made everything a bit difficult and so I had to look for accommodation on the private housing market. Especially if you are only staying for one semester, you should take care of an apartment early, as many landlords only rent their apartments for at least one year. Besides, Norway is basically a very expensive country, so I started saving as early as possible.*

**How did you establish social networks in your host country? Do you have any tips on how this can be achieved?**

*Before the beginning of the semester, the International Center of the NTNU opens a Facebook group in which you can exchange ideas, clarify questions and make first contacts. During my semester there were also Whatsapp groups for different occasions, such as hiking, kayaking, etc. published. Especially in the first weeks in Trondheim it was a great opportunity to meet new people and at the same time have great experiences. If the pandemic doesn't make a difference, the faculties also offer a colourful social program during orientation week, where you can meet many nice people. If the weather is good, many contacts can be made by going to the beach, where many students are always hanging out in the water, at the campfire or barbecue. The large student residence village of Moholt also offers a lot of opportunities to make contacts, even if you don't live there. Also the different campi offer a lot of cozy lounges, etc. Wherever you can find someone for a nice chat. Another great way to get to know people is to buy a membership of the sports club NTNUI and try out different sports or even join a team for the semester. Some spades also offer interesting trips over several days.*

Did you learn the local language, respectively how important did you think it was for your stay?

*Unfortunately, I only learned the most basic vocabulary during my semester abroad. Most Norwegians speak very good English. Basically, everyday life takes place in English, as both lectures and private life take place in English. If you want to learn Norwegian, you can take a course at the university (apply in time!). There you can also learn more about Norwegian culture and make new contacts.*

How was the study program at the partner university structured?  
(e.g. premises, workload, language of instruction, examination forms, accessibility)  
What intercultural encounters/competencies shaped your stay?

*Studying at the NTNU was characterized by a high degree of personal responsibility. However, I never felt left alone, but always received the necessary support, supervision and feedback from lecturers and fellow students. In the first half of the semester, a very intensive lecture phase took place in my courses. In the second half, a self-responsible research phase took place, in which the time was used only for independent work and writing of research papers. The exam form in my studies consisted mainly of the preparation of research papers and subsequent presentations of them. The university offers a huge selection of open-access workstations and well-equipped libraries on all campi. The online library is also very extensive. Only in the exam month of December should you go to the university early in order to get a place. Basically, it can also be said that there is a very pleasant relationship between lecturers and students on an equal footing. I experienced the university as very progressive and innovative. In addition, great importance is attached to the well-being of the students. Especially in the exam phase, the university tries to accommodate the students as much as possible with extended opening hours, motivation and relaxation courses and free breakfast and coffee.*

What was your daily life like where you were? (e.g. living, shopping, leisure, inclusion)

*My everyday life was shaped by an incredibly diverse range of activities, whether it be at university, in my leisure time or just at home in my apartment. I lived in a shared flat with 5 other girls from different countries and felt very quickly at home. The apartment was furnished, but we were able to refill our kitchen equipment very well by the free offer of ReStore. Otherwise, there is also the large second-hand shops of "Fretex" to buy everything possible cheaply. Basically, it is unfortunately true that Norway is a very expensive country. Food and consumer goods in particular are significantly more expensive than in Germany. Public transport is also comparatively expensive. Basically, however, most of Trondheim can also be reached on foot or by bike (note: there are some mountains:)). You really get everything you need in the city. Besides the university I had enough time to discover the city itself, the surroundings and also a lot of Norway. The sports club NTNUI and the student center SIT offer many sports*

*possibilities. You can try all kinds of indoor and outdoor sports, use different fitness centers and also take part in great tours.*

*An incredibly great offer is also the “koiene” of NTNUI. These are 26 cabins surrounded by nature in the Trondelag region. As an NTNUI member, these can be rented very cheaply. The huts have no electricity or running water and are heated with a small wood stove. Nevertheless, you have everything you need and as soon as you set out, it feels like a holiday in the wilderness.*

*As said, besides the university I had enough time to explore the country a bit and to make road trips to the fjords or to the far north. I was lucky to have my own car with me, it's very worth it. If this is not possible, you get a discount at SIXT as an NTNUI member. Tickets for long-distance trains are often affordable when you book in time. Trondheim is a great student city, which also has a colourful nightlife to offer. If the pandemic doesn't strike the balance, then you will find many students in the big red building, the “Studentersamfundet”, especially on weekends. There are several bars, clubs, a restaurant and a concert hall and the atmosphere is always very good. Otherwise, there are also a lot of cool bars.*

*This year the UKA festival took place. This is Norway's largest cultural festival and takes place every two years in autumn for three weeks. These weeks, the city is really an ongoing big party. Events take place all over the city around the clock. If you apply in time, you can help as a volunteer. What is special about UKA is that the festival is entirely organized by students on a voluntary basis.*

*When I wanted to go outdoors, it took less than 15 minutes and you were either on the beach or in Bymarke, a beautiful recreation area with great views of the fjord and the city.*

*I would say that Trondheim can be described as a city that makes it very easy to get there if you get involved with it. It is not too big and still offers a very large selection of everything possible. I found the lifestyle of the Norwegians to be very pleasant. Even if it often takes a little more commitment to get into closer contact with Norwegians, I really enjoyed the acquaintances. The NTNU is a great university that does a lot for its students and offers many opportunities! International Students in particular get a lot of great offers and support wherever they need it.*

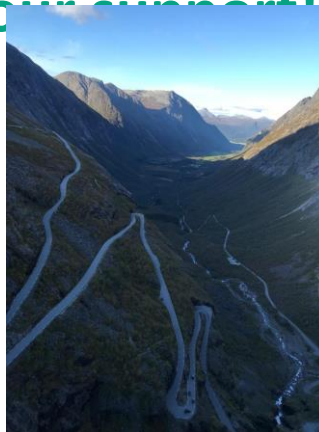
**Is there anything else you would like to share? (e.g. anecdotes, criticism, etc.)**

*Although this is most likely what you read and hear everywhere, I can only confirm it once again. My semester abroad was mainly shaped by the people I met. People who have accompanied me and inspired me, people with whom I have been able to share incredible experiences and some of whom will most certainly remain in my life for a very long time. As a tip I would pass on: Get to know many people!! At the introductory event and (initial) parties, at barbecues on the beach, during hikes or simply during a walk through the city.*

### 3. Photos

Finally, you can upload photos here, which visualize/represent your stay abroad well. If necessary, add a description. The following questions can help you choose the appropriate photos:

- Does the photo possibly reinforce prejudices or stereotypes about the country?
- Do you have the consensual consent of the persons depicted in the photos?
- "A picture is worth a thousand words!" What does your picture say about the country and your semester abroad?



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