

Field Report Innland Norway University (SS 2024)

I am studying international business (PO 2016) in my bachelor at the Trier University of Applied Sciences, and I went to Norway in my second semester abroad. I chose the Innland Norway University (INN) since I wanted to study in Scandinavia and I already had a great experience in Sweden in my first semester abroad.

Since university starts a bit earlier in Scandinavia the semester began on the 16th of January and ended on the 16th of June. The orientation day took place before the official start of the semester on the 8th of January and thereafter there were a lot of events in the following two weeks, planned by the student union to get to know the other internationals. I strongly recommend taking advantage of this time to everyone interested in going abroad in general since you can meet fellow international students, get to know the campus and city you study in, and take part in some fun welcoming activities.

1. Preparing for the semester abroad

After submitting your ranking of partner universities and thereafter being picked and nominated for one of them you will have to start filling out multiple forms. You will need a Learning Agreement (in the case of Lillehammer we used an online learning agreement (OLA)), the Grant Agreement, as well as multiple smaller documents thereafter.

Throughout this process you will be guided by Mrs Schätz- Al Mahamid and Mrs. Musch as well as the Innland Norway University.

After you have been fully admitted at INN you can start the search and application for student housing (more on that in part 3).

2. University

There was a big selection of English courses I could choose from in my field of study which is economy/international business. I had to get 18 ECTS for my semester, that is why I chose the following courses in the sector tourism and management:

- Nature-based tourism and eco-tourism (7.5 Credits)
- Snow Business (15 Credits)

It is also common to choose the Norwegian Language course.

Once you chose and got admitted to your courses you will be able to see your schedule in TimeEdit as well as on Canvas.

The nature-based tourism course consisted out of regular lectures as well as three small group presentations and a final exam.

The snow business course on the other hand consisted out of lectures about the history of skiing especially in Norway from our professor and guest lecturers. Additionally, we had weekly sight visits to many ski resorts in the greater Lillehammer area where we learned about their businesses and got chances to ski. Finally, the grade was determined by a final exam.

Most of the exams you will have to do with your laptop (either at the university or at home) using a tool called “safe exam browser”. In the beginning of the semester everybody must take part in a seminar where everything around the exams will be explained in greater detail, and you will find all information on the INN website.

Websites:

General Website	https://www.inn.no/english/about-inn-university/campus-lillehammer/
Canvas (Planner and lecture slides)	https://inn.instructure.com
TimeEdit (Planner)	https://cloud.timeedit.net/inn/web/student.html
Inspera (Exam portal)	https://inn.inspera.no
Studentweb (Exams overview)	https://fsweb.no/studentweb

3. Dorms

First and foremost, you will get more detailed information on all the dorms in the app “SINN Bolig” which is the landlord agency for all dorms in Lillehammer. In the app you can filter whether you want a private bathroom and/or private kitchen as well as many other factors. After choosing your favourite dorms you will also do your application through the app.

I lived in Vargstad which is located in the north of Lillehammer and has a bus stop right in front of the buildings. The bus will take you to campus in 5 minutes and to the central station/city centre in 15 minutes. I shared my kitchen with three other people but depending on the dorm you choose the amount of people can vary. In Lillehammer, Norwegian students and international students both live in the same dorms.

You will have the possibility to buy a bedding set when finalising your contract with SINN for about 50-60€ which will include a pillow, blanket, linen, curtains, etc. (you are not allowed to leave this in your room upon departure except for the curtains). Other than that, you will probably not have any kitchen supplies such as plates, cutlery, pots or pans.

4. What to do in Lillehammer?

Lillehammer is a rather small city about 2 hours north of Oslo. Since it is Norway there is plenty of beautiful nature all around. You can hike up to the mountain Ballbergkampen in the north of the city or stroll around by the ski jump and the forest behind it with a little stream and waterfalls.

Since the Winter Olympics took place in Lillehammer in 1994 you can still visit a lot of the venues such as the Ski Jump in Lillehammer, the Bob Track near Lillehammer, the ski resorts in Hafjell (beginners) and Kvitfjell (advanced), and the Birkebeineren Ski Stadium in Lillehammer (cross country skiing). Close to the ski Jump you will also find Kristins Hall where you can watch ice hockey games during the season. If you are interested in team sports, you can join a team from the university’s clubs (you will find more info on that during the orientation week).

In the winter you can also go ice skating on the lake Mjøsa next to the city (go over the bridge by the central station, on the other side of the lake go to the left). Another thing to do is going to a public sauna in winter as well as summer.

If you like being outdoors, you must check out BUA. It is a NPO which rents out everything from skies + equipment to ice skates, camping gear, bicycles, standup paddles, hiking boots, games and much more. You will have to create an account with a Norwegian phone number (you can buy a sim card at seven eleven for 5€) and then you will be able to rent items for a week at a time. They are located in the city centre close to the central station.

Concerning shopping, there are grocery stores such as Kiwi and Rema1000 around the city. Most of the stores in Norway are closed on Sundays except for the grocery store Joker in the city centre.

If you want to go out, there is karaoke night at Paddy's (Irish Pub) on Thursdays. Other than that, there are the pubs/clubs Nikkers and Brenneriet which are mainly open on Saturdays.

5. Traveling

Cities:

From Lillehammer you can easily reach Oslo by train (two hours south) and Trondheim by bus (five hours north). Sadly, the public transport routes are not as well established from east to west. Thus, to reach Bergen or Stavanger you will have to go by car. You can rent cars at multiple locations in the city (I rented at Hertz because I had a discount code from the Studentkortet app which you might find as well). If you want to travel further up north to the Lofoten or Tromsø it is easiest to go there by plane from Oslo. When flying with Norwegian airlines or SAS (Scandinavian airlines) you will also get a discount if you are under 26.

Nature:

Go to *Preikestolen* near Stavanger, it is a very popular hike so you may want to avoid it during the peak tourist seasons (June-August) but it is beautiful! The hike takes about 3-4 hours roundtrip. The *Besseggen* hike, which is not too far away from Lillehammer, is also popular. This hike is recommended for more experienced hikers and takes about 6-8 hours roundtrip. Another hike for experienced hikers is the *Trolltunga* hike situated between Bergen and Stavanger. This hike takes 8-12 hours but it can also be done as a guided tour with one overnight stay.

6. Apps

School:

Canvas: Platform where you can find your different courses and their contents

Studentbevis: Student card

MazeMap: Map of school (where the classrooms are)

Living:

SINN Bolig: Search, Application, Contract etc. for dorm apartments
appWash: Washing machines at dorms

Travel:

Omio: Compare prices when traveling (Train, Bus, Plane)
VY: Trains and long-distance busses in Norway
Entur: Busses in Lillehammer

Most of the time when booking a ticket, you can choose a student or youth discount.

Other:

Espresso House: Scandinavian Starbucks (can get discounts in the app)
TooGoodToGO: Leftover food from restaurants for cheaper prices
Studentkortet: Student discount app (similar to "Studentenrabatt" in GER)
Aurora: Northern lights tracker (more helpful when traveling in the north)

7. Conclusion

I loved my semester abroad in Lillehammer so much! I learned new things at the university, met so many lovely people from all over the world and gained a lot of wonderful experiences when traveling the country. I can only recommend spending your semester abroad here as well, even though you must be aware of the prices in Norway which are higher than in Germany. Nonetheless, in my opinion it is very much worth it coming here and learning new skills, getting more independent, and gaining all these experiences with new friends in a new culture!