

Erasmus Final Report – University of Inland Norway

During the winter semester 2025/26, I completed my Erasmus study period at the University of Inland Norway (INN), Campus Lillehammer. The semester at INN follows a different academic calendar than in Germany and ran from mid-August to mid-December. I spent this period as part of the fifth semester of my Bachelor's degree in Business Psychology.

My stay abroad served as a substitute for the mandatory practical project in my degree program. To fulfill the required 18 ECTS, I took two psychology courses: *Environmental Psychology* (10 ECTS) and *Health Psychology* (10 ECTS). In addition, I took a *Norwegian Language Course* (7.5 ECTS), which replaced the second language course of my Bachelor's program. I had no prior knowledge of Norwegian, so this course offered a personal opportunity to learn the basics of the language and gain deeper insight into Norwegian culture.

1. Courses and Academic Experience

INN offers a wide range of English-taught courses, which are clearly listed and well-explained on the university's website. All lecturers and students spoke excellent English, so international students did not experience any disadvantages in class or on campus. The psychology courses combined theoretical lectures with practical seminar sessions, creating a balanced and engaging learning environment. Course content was highly up-to-date, and many sessions included guest lectures or interactive elements.

In Environmental Psychology, students learned about the relationship between humans and their natural and built environment. The course included film seminars and a guest lecture by a climate activist, which added a unique and inspiring perspective. I also had the opportunity to volunteer at an environmental conference on campus. This allowed me to replace one examination component and gain practical insights into event organization.

Health Psychology was my favorite course and focused on psychological factors influencing health, illness, and health-related behavior. The combination of lectures and seminar discussions helped deepen my understanding of the subject and allowed for active participation.

The Norwegian language course was open to all international students and consisted of in-person classes, online sessions, and self-study units. I enjoyed the variety of teaching formats and was able to apply basic Norwegian phrases in everyday life. Although speaking Norwegian

is not necessary to get by in Norway, learning the language helped me better understand the culture. The exam for this course was an oral test, which I found very manageable.

INN offers several types of examinations, including school exams, home exams, essays, and oral exams. In my psychology courses, I completed school exams, which take place on campus using one's own laptop. Each exam lasted four hours and was more demanding than the exams I was used to in Trier. However, the overall workload during the semester was significantly lower, which gave me enough time to prepare thoroughly. Another advantage was the generous spacing between exams. Almost one month lay between my two school exams, so I did not experience a stressful, packed exam period but instead had enough time to study for each subject individually.

2. Application Process and Preparation

Preparing for the Erasmus stay was initially challenging, as it was difficult to find universities offering courses that could be recognized as a substitute for the practical project in Business Psychology. After extensive research and support from the International Office in Trier, I found suitable courses at INN and completed my Learning Agreement, which was approved by both institutions. Afterwards, I completed the required Erasmus documents. INN's preparation process was exceptionally well organized. All necessary information was provided in advance, and the International Office at INN held two Zoom meetings to explain important details and answer questions. Kine and Lisa from the International Office were always available, extremely friendly, and supportive throughout the entire semester. Their assistance significantly reduced my stress and helped me feel well prepared for my stay abroad.

3. Accommodation and Housing Experience

Finding accommodation in Lillehammer was remarkably easy. All international students are guaranteed a student housing offer through the company *SinnBolig*. Only twelve hours after registering, I received a housing offer in the student housing complex *Olympiaparken*. I lived in a single apartment located less than five minutes from the city center and about ten minutes by bus from campus. Many other student housing options also offer shared flats. I felt very comfortable in my apartment, although the kitchen was not equipped, so I had to purchase some kitchen utensils in Norway. Most international students lived in student housing, all of which were well connected by bus. This made it easy to meet up, socialize, and build a strong international community.

4. Costs of Living in Norway

INN does not charge tuition fees, which significantly reduced the financial burden. However, the cost of living in Norway is considerably higher than in Germany and the Erasmus grant alone is far from enough to cover everyday expenses. For groceries, I recommend shopping at Kiwi or Rema, which are noticeably cheaper than other supermarkets. I cooked most of my meals at home, as eating out is very expensive. For traveling, many student discounts are available, which helped reduce costs for trains, buses, and cultural activities.

5. Student Life in Lillehammer

Lillehammer offers a wide range of activities for students. At the beginning of the semester, the university organizes *Fadderuka*, a welcome week filled with daily events, parties, and social activities. This week was a great way to meet new people and feel integrated from the start.

Throughout the semester, INN hosted weekly events such as quizzes, bingo nights, movie evenings, paint-and-sip evenings and international evenings. The university also offers many student groups. I joined the LSI dance group, which was a fun and active way to meet people. Although the weekly schedule was not packed with lectures, I spent a lot of time on the beautiful campus, especially in the café *Stundeten*, where I also volunteered.

Lillehammer itself offers many outdoor activities: hiking in the surrounding mountains, swimming in the lake during late summer, and cross-country or alpine skiing in winter. While Lillehammer is not a major party city, there are several bars and clubs in the city center. Every Thursday, many students gather at the karaoke bar *Paddy's*, which became a weekly highlight.

6. Highlights of my Erasmus Stay

One of the biggest advantages of studying at INN was the flexible schedule and low number of mandatory classes, which allowed plenty of time for traveling. Lillehammer is only two hours north of Oslo, and cities like Bergen, Trondheim, and Hamar are easily accessible by train or bus. I also used long weekends to visit Sweden and Denmark. These trips were among the absolute highlights of my stay. Another unforgettable experience was the organized trip to Besseggen, where we completed a stunning day hike with professional mountain guides. Volunteering was also a major highlight. I worked at the Ski Jumping World Cup, which allowed me to experience a major winter sports event up close and even meet some athletes.

INN offers volunteering opportunities in winter sports every semester, and I highly recommend taking part.

I can highly recommend the University of Inland Norway to anyone planning an Erasmus semester abroad. The university is very well organized, the support for international students is great, and the courses are very rewarding. Lillehammer also offers a nice mix of beautiful nature, student life, and travel opportunities. I had an amazing time, learned a lot both academically and personally, and would choose INN again without any hesitation.