

Rapporter fra utbytte til Island 2024: **Kevin Hansen, Olav Hermann Stadheim, Espen Myklebust Haugen og Henrik Brekke Larsen, Universitetet i Stavanger, Norge**

Island:

The land of ice and fire is something you always hear people talk about and tell people to experience, now I got to experience the country firsthand. This was my trip to Iceland. As a student you are always busy with school work or managing the economy to make everything add up. That's why you might never have a chance to travel outside. For the first time I was actually able to do the exact opposite by using the student express mobility program to do an assignment and experience a new country for the first time. I was so happy when it was accepted and I had already planned some stuff to do the assignment and experience the country at the same time.

My first experience was learning how cold and stormy it can be when you have an island in the middle of the Atlantic ocean. It really felt like Norway, but just far away and that was different to some extent. The landscape was beautiful and the opportunities to see something new were there like the capital and the hot water source described as one of the 25 wonders. I met nice people wherever I went. I also discovered small things like food tastes, different names on the same products and how different the currency is.

My reason for going there was to try being an abroad reporter, going outside talking to people, learning how to communicate in English as a reporter. My task was making a case about something happening in Iceland that could be interesting for people in Norway to know about. That's why I wanted it to be a good case that involved something recently that I also would be fascinated about.

What I ended up doing was the volcano activity in Iceland. Vulcanos has always interested me, thinking back I would say I read about them a lot when I was little and now I had the chance to make something about it. Iceland is called the land of ice and fire, and it is fitting seeing how everything is cold, but having volcanoes 20 or 30 minutes away from where you are. How I was able to make the story about the volcano activity was talking to people on the streets, meeting an expert that could show me the activity with pictures and facts. The most part was trying to get some stories. This whole thing wouldn't be manageable sitting on a computer back home and you learn so much by going away from home-field.

In the end it was an enjoyable trip that gave something new. I got first hand experience on reporting outside of Norway as a journalist and that was really cool. I am really happy about getting the opportunity.

**Kevin Hansen, Universitetet i Stavanger, NORGE**

### **Nordplus and my schooltrip to Iceland**

Despite Iceland being a short flight away, I had never ventured to this unique country before. When the opportunity finally arose, my friends and I were immensely excited. And thanks to the generosity of the Nordplus organization, which offers scholarships for educational trips among Nordic countries, we finally had our chance.

My field of study is journalism, and the purpose of my journey was to make a news article in another country that would resonate in Norway. Iceland, with its recent volcanic eruptions near Grindavik and

the enduring challenges faced by the local population, became my subject of interest. Initially, the task seemed challenging. However, due to the kindness and hospitality of the Icelandic people, we all managed to do what we came for.

The trip had many highlights but going to the Blue Lagoon was something I'll never forget. The Blue Lagoon, offering a feeling of Iceland's volcanic activity and natural beauty. Bathing in its milky-blue waters, surrounded by snow and ice, was a moment that transcended any ordinary travel experience, making it an unforgettable part of our journey.

The cultural aspect of the trip was equally unforgettable. We engaged with local residents, who shared their stories of living with geological threats. Through these interactions, I gained insights into the Icelandic way of life, which is more than I wanted to get out of this trip.

All in all, this trip has not only been a milestone in my academic journey but also a personal voyage. Iceland, with its stark beauty and kind communities, has broadened my perspective on environmental journalism and the importance of telling stories that bridge local concerns with global relevance. The memories and lessons from this trip will undoubtedly influence my future endeavors in journalism. So again, thank you for the opportunity!

***Olav Hermann Stadheim, Universitetet i Stavanger, NORGE***

### **My first trip to Iceland**

My journey to Iceland, made possible by Nordplus, was an unforgettable dive into a landscape of cultural richness and natural beauty.

From the moment I stepped off the plane, Iceland presented itself as a land where every view is a postcard in the making. The true essence of my visit, however, was to delve deep into the community's perspectives on a current and pressing issue, the potential boycott of the Eurovision Song Contest.

With the possibility of a boycott, the assignment was to find a case that had a strong opinion about the topic. Also, conversations with Icelanders were enlightening, revealing a populace divided yet profoundly connected to the heart of Eurovision.

The discussions ranged from passionate support for the contest to thoughtful concerns over global issues that might warrant the boycott. These moments with the locals weren't just interviews; they were a window into the soul of Icelandic society.

The insights gained from these dialogues were integral to my reporting. They provided a nuanced understanding of how such an international event could resonate on a local level, influencing opinions and emotions.

It was great fun to be able to write an article in Iceland. It's always fun to be able to go to other countries to see and learn from other cultures. Especially when you can go with other classmates, which made the whole experience very nice, and something I will remember for the rest of my life.

Looking back on my trip, I'm really thankful for the whole experience. Getting to go to Iceland and get to know Icelandic people's stories was a great experience. It really opened my eyes, and I'm super glad I got to be there, to hear what Icelanders had to say about the whole Eurovision debate. I came back with an article that might be published for NRK.

***Espen Myklebust Haugen, Universitetet i Stavanger, NORGE***

### **Nordplus and my travel to Iceland**

Even though I'm Norwegian, I had never been to Iceland before. Therefore, I was eager to get to explore the land of ice and fire. As a student, the economy doesn't always allow a trip to another country. Thankfully, the Nordplus organization can grant a scholarship for a trip to another Nordic country, which made it possible for me to go to Reykjavík for five days.

Our assignment was to make a news article from another country that would be of interest to Norwegians. It was natural to make an article about the recent volcanic eruptions from the city of Grindavík. Even though it wasn't completely new, it's still an ongoing problem for the people of Grindavík.

One of the highlights of my trip was a visit to The Blue Lagoon, a geothermal spa located in a lava field just outside of Reykjavík. The blue waters were warm and inviting, the perfect solution to the chilly Icelandic weather. I spent hours soaking in the mineral-rich waters, surrounded by the stunning natural beauty of Iceland.

In addition to that, because of our assignment, I got to talk to a lot of the Icelandic people. It was very interesting to hear about the volcanic eruptions, and how it affected the people that lived in Grindavík, where it all happened.

As my time in Reykjavík drew to a close, I couldn't help but feel a sense of gratitude for the opportunity to experience this unique and beautiful country. From the city center of the capital of Reykjavík to the calm beauty of the countryside, I got a wonderful impression of Iceland.

***Henrik Brekke Larsen, Universitetet i Stavanger, NORGE***