

Erasmus Exchange Fall 2015 Corvinus University Budapest

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General Information

From september up to and including december 2015 I studied at the Corvinus University of Budapest in Hungary. Since I am an ESE student at the Erasmus University of Rotterdam I was enrolled in the economics faculty of Corvinus University.

One thing that confused me beforehand and you should know, is that all the exchange programs throughout Europe are called Erasmus, this is basically a name for everyone who goes on exchange abroad and has nothing to do with the name of the Erasmus University of Rotterdam.

Preparation

Luckily I have a friend who participated in the same exchange program with Corvinus University a few years before me. Therefore he could give me a lot of advice. Through him I contacted a landlord who helped me find a room. Because I was quite early I could choose out of many flats and therefore I had an excellent location to live.

In June 2015 the registration period for the courses at Corvinus University started, throughout their online software program you had to sign up for courses. There were many courses you could choose from, however all but one had to be listed at the economics faculty since I am an economics student.

Fortunately in order to stay in Hungary you don't have to arrange a visa. Normally after arriving in Budapest one should go to the immigration office to arrange a residence permit to study. However after entering Hungary you are allowed to stay there for 90 days without any permits, and if you leave the country and come back again, this 90 day period is extended with 90 days again.

I chose to do a few weekend trips and so I did not have to go to the immigration office.

Arrival

From the airport it's quite easy to reach the city center. First you have to take a bus as then the metro, there are many people who do this so you will easily find your way.

As mentioned before I arranged my room beforehand. However I chose to stay the first two nights in a hostel to meet new people. I stayed in the Wombats City Hostel which I definitely recommend. I arrived on a saturday night and immediately went out with people I had met in the hostel. A good way to start your exchange experience I think!

Because I arrived quite late compared to other students I had already taken care of my room beforehand. However there are a lot of students who already go to Budapest at the second and third week of August. Most of these students book a hostel for a few nights and hope to find Erasmus exchange students to live with. This is not only a good way to find new flatmates but also an excellent way to quickly meet new people.

The next Monday I went to the university to arrange some administrative matters. I had to go to the Erasmus coordinator to fill in some forms and register myself. This was all elaborately explained beforehand through many emails I received from Corvinus University. The ESN committee of Corvinus University arranged many introductory activities, such as free walking tours through the city and parties at night. There was even a fresh camp you could join, this involved a weekend of fun with around 200 Erasmus students.

Courses

I had to obtain 24 credits in Budapest. Most courses are worth 6 credits and therefore I did 4 courses. Sometimes when there are too few registrations for a course the university decides to cancel the course. The first week of September there is an add & drop period in which you can change some of the courses you would like participate in. Make sure to communicate this with both universities with your learning agreement.

As mentioned before I took 4 courses. They were named: International Financial Management, Health Policy and Finance, Organizational Theories and Public Policy Analysis: The argumentative approach.

Both the courses International Financial Management and Organizational Theories were quite similar to courses I had followed in the Netherlands. The first one covering mainly macroeconomic topics, whereas the second one was focused on business administration.

However the courses Health Policy and Finance and Public Policy Analysis were quite different than my field of studies which was interesting. The first course focussed on health care systems among countries and the different ways in which they were financed, whereas the second course focussed on public policy and politics and the theories behind many political policies. All four courses were really interesting. I used all four courses as electives.

However you must know that the level of the courses in general is lower than you are probably used to. The content itself is rather easy and the pace in which the content is discussed is significantly lower than I was used to. Furthermore we worked in small classes, around 25 people and had to do a lot of presentations which we're graded and were therefore part of your final grade.

Finances

Luckily Budapest is a relatively cheap city. However be careful, because everything is so cheap you tend to go out a lot, whether it's clubbing or for dinner. Of course this is easily affordable but since everything is so cheap I didn't look at my finances at all and in the end still spend quite some money. Compared to other cities it was not that much I think however.

	price per month
Rent including gas, electricity and water	350 euros
Food	150 euros
Nightlife	150 euros
Public transport	10 euros
Total	660 euros

These prices are in euros, in Hungary they use the Hungarian Forint (HUF). One euro is approximately 300 HUF. I did not buy a simcard in Hungary since I could use my dutch simcard. However most people took one and had to pay around 10 euros a month for this.

Daily life

I lived with two Italians, one guy and a girl, who were both really friendly and outgoing. They were both in Budapest also for an Erasmus exchange and therefore we had quite the same lifestyle. It was quite nice that they studied at another university than I did, which allowed me to meet a lot of new people besides the people from Corvinus University, throughout them.

Budapest is a great city for sightseeing, I was pleasantly surprised by the beauty of all the buildings. Unfortunately it was quite difficult to interact with Hungarian people, therefore I actually always hang out with international students, which is also part of the idea of an exchange experience I think.

One should know that Budapest has a great nightlife. The bars and clubs are really good and cheap compared to Dutch standards. As you probably already know besides studying going out and partying is a good way to spend your time on exchange. The great thing about Budapest is the price level. Going out whether its for dinner or clubbing is relatively cheap, a great advantage

Although the hungarian population may not be really open, it is really easy to settle in Budapest. At your university you will automatically meet a lot of people, and living with Erasmus students is definitely recommended, since you are all in the same situation and probably want to spend your time in the same way.



Corvinus University of Budapest



View from Pest side



Parliament of Budapest



View of the city