

Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München

In block 1 and 2 of 2015, I studied at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität (LMU) in Munich, Germany. The LMU is one of the oldest and second biggest university of Germany.

Preparation

As I am a citizen of the European Union, I do not need a student visa to study in Germany. On the website I read I had to meet the language requirement. Therefore, I took the TOEFL test. However, I also took courses in German, but I did not need a certificate for that.

I signed up for the German language and preparation course in September. During the application I also applied for the Studentenwerk housing, the student accommodation network of Munich. Unfortunately, I was not one of the happy few who got a room in a student accommodation. This message was sent in August during my holidays. Studentenwerk could not promise that every exchange student could get a room. Luckily, when I signed up for the language course, I can get a room for September only.

Upon arrival, I did not know that there is a serious housing problem in Munich. There is a high demand of student housing/real estate in general and there are limited building possibilities in this city. So, I recommend you to search for a room as soon as possible on the internet. On the housing website you should also be aware of scammers who offers rooms for prices that are too good to be true. The rent in popular neighbourhoods like around the university or in the city centre is at least approximately 500 euros a month.

Arrival

At the beginning of September, I arrived in Munich by train. I got a room for September only, so I had to search for a room for the remaining part of my stay in Munich. The International Office of the LMU was very helpful to find a room for me. Their help is also limited, but at the beginning of October I got a room just outside the city centre with good public transport. In this case I was lucky, some of the students who asked help at the International Office got a room in a town outside the city.

In the first week, I bought a prepaid sim card to keep the mobile phone costs low. You also have to register at the so called "Kreisverwaltungsreferat (KVR)" which is just like the registering in the municipality of Rotterdam at home. You could either go to the KVR with waiting time up to 2 hours or send it by post. I chose for the first one, just to be sure.

For the first month, you have to buy a public transport ticket. After that, when the semester started in October, you could buy a student public transport ticket, which covers the city of Munich and some towns around it.

In the first month, I took the language course and I recommend you also to do so. You will meet a lot of people and there is otherwise not a comparable Eureka week to get in touch with each other.

Courses

Be aware of the fact that the semester starts in October and ends in February. This means the timetables of ESE and LMU do not match and you have to choose courses ending earlier, stay longer or return to Munich for exams. Since the exam dates and even the courses are not published at the time of the application, I hoped that I could fix a good combination of courses.

German language course (6 ECTS)

This course I took in September. The level of the course is determined by a online test you have to do before arriving. You will learn German or improve it and it is recommend if you have not spoken German for a while and if you intend to take courses in German.

Spieltheorie (6 ECTS)

This course is from the economics faculty (VWL) and is in German, like most of the courses of this faculty. In the first two weeks it is easy, but it will get harder very soon. The course ends in February and I took the exam in Rotterdam after approval of the lecturer. This will cost you 50 euros per exam.

Empirische Ökonomie 1 (6 ECTS)

This course is also in German and is provided by the economics faculty. This course is about econometrics and is not that hard. However, this course ends already in November so the speed of teaching faster.

Risk Management (3 ECTS)

This course is provided by the business economics faculty (BWL). It is a finance course about options, risk, etcetera. This course uses the same book as the course Finance 1 of the ESE, but covers another part of the book. For the exam, I returned to Munich.

Competition and Strategy (3 ECTS)

This course is provided by the business economics faculty (BWL). It is a business related course about strategy and how to deal with it. It is a very interesting course. For the exam, I returned to Munich.

Finances

Munich is a more expensive city than Rotterdam. Being the wealthiest state of Germany in which Munich is located, the daily costs are higher than in the Netherlands. The rent I paid in the first month was 400 euros, after that I moved to a room located 30 minutes away by public transport from the university and I paid 450 euros a month. Groceries spendings were slightly higher than in the Netherlands. Every student also has to pay a mandatory fee for the public transport after 6pm and on weekends and services at he university which is not covered by the government (studying is basically free in Germany).

Public transport	220
University fee	60
Housing	1750
Groceries	800
Mobile phone	60
Sports	7,50
Travelling	500

Daily life

Munich is a very beautiful city. It is spacious and has a lot to offer. The biggest park "Englischer Garten" is the biggest one in Europe. During September I spend some days in this park. At the end of September there is also the infamous Oktoberfest. If you do not like that there is also the Christmas markets in December, which is found on several places in Munich. I also bought a sport card for only 7,50 euros which allows you to enter the sport facility of the TU München. I played football with other exchange students and there is also a lot of other sports to do. It is a beautiful accommodation and I recommend you to buy a sport card. You can also participate in sport tournaments by paying extra.

Munich is also very central in Europe. It is the perfect time to visit neighbouring countries during exchange, because the state of Bavaria in which Munich is located borders at Switzerland, Austria and the Czech Republic. So I visited these countries on one of the weekends. But there are also beautiful places in Bavaria itself and when you are travelling with 4 other people, you can go by train for 8 euros per person in Bavaria the whole day. This gives you the opportunity to go to other cities or go on hikes in the Alps.

If you do not want to go outside the city, there is a lot of museums to visit, like the Alte and the Neue Pinakothek or the BMW museum.