

Student report – Aarhus BSS

Introduction

I almost finished my master program by the time that I decided that I wanted to go on exchange. Therefore, I decided to extend my master. I ended up studying the first semester of the academic year 2016/2017 at Aarhus University in Denmark.

Preparation

I started my preparation of the exchange quite early. After receiving the nomination letter from the university, I received an information email with how and where to apply for the university. After that email, a lot of emails followed with clear instructions about when and how to arrange things. I also signed up for AU housing. They found a room for me, which saved me a lot of time (as it is hard to find a room in Aarhus on your own). A month before I left, I received the learning and grant agreement from our own university. I sent the documents to Aarhus University and they sent it back with the signs that I needed within a few days. Therefore, I was done with all the paper stuff before I went to Aarhus which was pleasant. Finally, I also signed up for a language course (Danish) which took place two weeks before the semester start.

Arrival

I arrived in Aarhus halfway August and I traveled to Aarhus by bus. The first thing you have to do upon arrival is to go to the international centre to check-in and to pick up your keys. I arrived in the evening, so I was not able to pick up my keys the same day. Luckily, my mentor was able to pick my keys up. He picked me up at the bus station in the evening and drove me to my home with all my suitcases, which was really kind of him. I have to mention that Aarhus University has a really good mentor program which ensures that every student gets a mentor. However, it should also be noted that not all mentors have the same degree of involvement.

The introduction week took place in the end of August (prior to the semester start). In this week we got to know our mentor better as well as our mentor group and the city. There were a lot of activities organized to get to know each other. As I already stated before, I was very lucky with my mentor and mentor group as we had contact during the semester as well and did quite a lot of things together.

Courses

I followed four courses which gave me 25 ECTS in total. All the courses were either 5 or 10 ECTS. The courses that I followed all started in September and lasted till the beginning of December. The Danish way of teaching is similar to the Dutch – you have lectures and/or tutorials. The content and the level of the courses are also similar. Examinations are a bit different in Denmark as it is common to have oral exams. However, you know already what kind of exam a course has when you choose the courses, which allows you to avoid oral exams if you want to. I had only one oral exam. Besides, I had to write three papers and one written exam which were spread over the months December and January. As I already stated before, I did this exchange because I wanted to experience how it was to study abroad. I

already had enough ECTS to graduate my master, so I was not able to incorporate the courses in my study program. Instead, I got an additional transcript with my results achieved in Denmark.

Marketing to Children and Youth (5ECTS) – This course aimed to give a thorough understanding of the benefits, challenges and requirements of marketing to children and young people. I had one lecture each week and we had to do a group presentation and we had to write a paper. In the end there was an oral exam which consisted of questions about your own exam paper and about the overall course material.

Employee Emotions, Attitudes and Behavior (5 ETCS) – This course aimed to gain theoretical and practical knowledge of employee emotions and attitudes, the factors that influence employee emotions and attitudes, and how employee emotions and attitudes impact various aspects of organizational life and performance. There was one tutorial of 3 hours each week. Besides, we had to do a lot of group work in this course. Group work consists of exercises during the tutorials and a small research project. We had to collect data which we needed to write our exam paper. We did the data collection in groups but we had to write the exam paper individual.

Economic Psychology (10 ETCS) – This course covers the fundamentals of human behaviour in economic contexts, from a social cognition perspective as well as from a judgment and decision-making perspective. For this course we had two lectures of two hours a week. The lectures were given by three different teachers. This has some advantages and disadvantages as in my opinion some were better than others. The final exam was a four hour written exam which consist of two hours multiple-choice and two hours open questions.

Aspects of Denmark (5 ETCS) - The aim of this course is to get to know a bit more about Denmark and the social, political, economic and cultural life there. For this course there was one lecture each week with a different professor each week. We had to write an exam paper for this course in the end of the semester.

Finances

I stayed in Denmark from 16/08/2016 till 27/01/2017 (so I had to pay six months of rent in total). Unfortunately, I only got 4 months of the Erasmus Grant and OV compensation as I initially agreed to stay till the end of December (I stayed longer due to a change in my courses).

Expenditures	Per month	Total
Rent room	350	2100
Rent bike	20	80
Phone costs	25	150
Food	250	1500
Parties/travelling	1200	1200

<i>Total</i>		<i>5030 euro</i>
--------------	--	------------------

Incomes	Per month	Total
Erasmus Grant	280	1120
OV compensation	99,66	400
Savings		3510
<i>Total</i>		<i>5030 euro</i>

Daily life

I wanted to go to a country that is save and similar to the Netherlands. And it turned out that Denmark is indeed a really nice country to life and overall, living in Denmark is similar as in the Netherlands. So for me, living in Denmark was an amazing experience. Aarhus in particular, has a lot of nice bars, clubs and beautiful places to offer. Besides, it is the European Capital of Culture in 2017.

Public transport is really good in Denmark. Busses are almost always on time and there are good connections between different cities in Denmark. It is also nice to bike in Denmark; a lot of people do this. At the same time, it is a good workout to take the bike as there are a lot of hills which makes biking a bit exhausting. Besides, I also had a gym membership at Fitness World. There are a lot of different locations spread over Denmark which enables you to go to the gym where and whenever you want. A lot of people had a gym membership so it was at the same time a nice social activity to go to the gym and an opportunity to meet new people. There are also a lot of different clubs were you can assign for as exchange student (running/football etc.). So I would definitely recommend becoming member of a club/choir etc. Furthermore, I also had a lot of contact with the exchange students living in my dorm. This was nice as we often ate together or went to parties. Besides, there is always an international night on Tuesday where almost all exchange students go to every week.

Finally, besides Aarhus, I have been exploring the rest of Denmark as well – I have been to Odense, Ebeltoft, Randers ,Copenhagen, Skagen and Legoland. Furthermore I have also made trips to other countries (Oslo, Stockholm and Barcelona) with people I met in Denmark which really added something to my experience as well.

Pictures:



Campus Aarhus University



International dinner (Everyone prepared a dish from his or her own country which was really nice! We did this a few times during the semester)