

Budapest; where intellectual growth, cultural beauty and nightlife adventures meet.

General info:

I signed up for an exchange to Budapest, Hungary and studied at the Corvinus University in the fall of 2016. I started the 29th of August with an introduction and I finished my last exam the 10th of December.

Preparation:

I barely had anything to do as for the preparation. I didn't need a visa, because The Netherlands (I am an original Dutchy btw) and Hungary are both part of the EU. I booked a hostel for two days and an extra 30 kg suitcase and went.

I recommend that you do **NOT** book a permanent accommodation in advance. Most of the houses in Budapest are in poor shape and you should really see the neighborhoods before moving in. I booked a hostel for the first two nights (casa de la musica, so cool!) and the second day I already found a place. I told people in the introduction class that I was still looking. A girl behind me tapped me on the shoulder and said: 'Hey I heard what you just said, I live a three-minute walk from here and there are still free rooms. Want to see the place?' I saw the place and felt like I caught a golden brick that fell from the sky, but it is just that easy to find a place. You should join Facebook-groups when you arrive such as: rent a room in Budapest. They post great places there.

Arrival:

When the plane landed, I had already spotted a future friend, who was also from The Netherlands and on exchange, by the way she took a selfie of her and the plane. She had researched that you can buy an all-around ticket for bus, tram and metro. This is true, but do not do that. First, get your student card! The price falls from 100 euros to 30. Cards from the EUR are not accepted, because they don't have an expiration date. Just get a ten-block of tickets (you need at least two to travel to the center, takes about an hour). Just pay by card directly, do not redraw money at the airport. In general, 1 euro is equal to 300 huf (Hungarian Florint). At the airport, you only get 265 florint for a euro. Never take money from the EUR-HUF atm's.

ESN organizes a week of parties the last week before classes. It is called Hostel Week. During Hostel Week, it is very easy to meet people at night and look for an apartment during the day. I couldn't make it last year and still regret it. ESN is very active in Budapest and throws the most amazing and fun activities. Add *Benö Corvin* on Facebook when you arrive to stay up to date.

Courses:

You will receive an email to sign up for the classes somewhere in the summer. Registration starts in the morning: be ready. The most exciting classes (*that don't start at 8 in the morning*) will be full within half an hour. I am not kidding. It is like concert tickets for Adele,

but with education. Afterwards, you are still allowed to switch between classes up to two weeks into classes. All my classes lasted 14 weeks. I took the following classes:

Cost Benefit Analysis – 6 cr.

One of those subjects you must be ready for to sign up. A lot of other exchange students follow this course. The subject is not difficult, but also not exciting. The course is mostly giving presentations about the costs and benefits of an assigned project that you expand over the block. You give four presentations in groups of three or four people (40%) and two tests (60%). The teacher is kind and lenient with grading. He gave the entire class a re-sit on the first midterm, because of the bad grades ~~or in my case: oversleeping~~.

Macroeconomics and Finance – 6 cr.

I expected a to gain a deeper understanding of the two or an interesting explanation of a connection between the two. I was wrong. It is literally macroeconomics and finance. If you are an econom(etr)ics student, this will just be repetitions of what you have already encountered. There is a midterm (20%) and a final test (80%). To conclude: easy credits.

Introduction to Game Theory – 6 cr.

My favorite course by far! The teacher is so good and motivating. Fun fact: he personally knows Prof. Nash. Basically, you look at grand problems between two parties with payoff matrices or/and game tree's. It doesn't take up much of your time, since there is no (obligatory) homework. There was a midterm (30%) and a final (70%). I recommend this course to everybody. Especially you, reading my student report-thing at the moment!

Macroeconomic Model Building – 6 cr.

This is the only course that was remotely challenging. It is taught by two young guys. They explain it well and quickly respond if you email them a question. You go deeper into the macroeconomical equations (utility function, consumption, production function, labor/capital supply/demand etc.) and learn to do solve it by hand, and to build a model in matlab that solves it for you. Matlab experience is not needed, but it does come in handy. There is homework a test every two weeks that count for your final grade.

Finances:

WHAT?	MONTHLY EXPENCES (EUROS)
RENT	280
G&W&L	40
GROCERIES	+ - 60 [1]
NIGHTLIFE & ALCHOL	100 [2]
TRANSPORT	30
TRIPS	80 [3]
TOTAL	590

Notes:

[1] There is a market hall next to the uni (Fovam Ter). It is as beautiful as it is cheap and very good quality. Don't hesitate to go there. These 60 euros don't include the times I went out for dinner.

[2] This is an ~~under~~estimation. As a girl, you get free entrance at the clubs in the weekend. Guys do have to pay (often 2000 huf=7 euro). It also depends on when and where you go.

[3] I went home for a weekend. I went by train to Bratislava (meh) and to Vienna (beautiful!)

Daily life:

Budapest is an amazing city with a horrifying, but intriguing background and I promise you that you will have a mesmerizing experience exploring the ins and outs of the city. The art and history is all around. Go to either (or both of) the ESN tours and the free walking tours so you can play the tour-guide and come across more culturally developed and smug than ever when your friends visit or you tell about your BP-adventures later. It would be a crime if you do not visit the thermal baths.

Public transport goes 24/7 and clearly organized. Download the BKK app to navigate anywhere you want to go.

My subjects where not time consuming at all, so I used my time to do other things: personally, I spend on average three or four nights a week partying. The night life of Budapest is addicting, and to be fair: Rotterdam is kind of a bummer now. My favorite bars were:

- Kupling (everything half price on Monday)
- Andersen pub (meter of ten small beers = 1200 huf, lot of Hungarian students also come here.)
- Place Bar (10 shots = 1800 huf, cocktail = 500 huf)
- BOB (don't remember the prices, but very pretty)
- Epic bar (cocktailbar, in the best street of BP: Gozsdu utca.)
- Habibi Shisha lounge (2000 for unlimited coals)

My favorite clubs were:

- Ötkert
- Hello Baby
- Morrisons 2
- Waterpark Aquaworld (only once, but so cool)

Other fun activities are:

- Museum in the Budacastle (900 huf)
- Ice skating in heroes square in December
- booking a beer bike
- Kiraly Thermal Bath (any bath is nice, but this was my favorite, 1800 huf)
- Escape rooms
- Cinemacity (only movie theatre that shows English films, 1250 huf)
- Classical concert in St. Michael Church

Of course, this list is shortened and very subjective. But it is still an accurate representation of my Buda-life and I recommend all of it. I am going back this summer to do it again and relive the adventure that still feels like yesterday!