

Experience report – EMLyon France

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General Information

For my last (not obligatory) semester - September to December 2016 - of my master I went to Lyon, France to study abroad. The university is a well-known French business university which in general has a very good reputation among French students and companies.

Lyon is a beautiful city located where the Rhône and Saône rivers converge into a single river. The city has an old city center called Vieux-Lyon where you can find many restaurants and bars. The main part of the city is located on the peninsula between the two rivers. The city is not that big as it is comparable in size to Rotterdam.

Personally, my exchange semester was a wonderful experience and I would not want to miss that semester although bureaucracy in France can sometime be troublesome process. But usually the fellow exchange students you will meet and trips you will do, will definitely outweigh those moments.

Preparation

About three to four month in advance I started looking for a shared apartment. However, this is not the easiest as many landlords would like to rent their rooms out for at least a year. Therefore, I joined many facebook groups trying to find a room which I could sublet. Luckily, I found a French student going on exchange during the exact same time. As EMLyon is not located in Lyon but in Ecully, a small city in the west of Lyon, I would try to find an apartment which is well connected to public transportation since the commuting will still take you 45 minutes. For the rent you need to consider 500€ on average. Further, some students decided to live next to the university in a student housing complex. However, I would not recommend it because you will not have any trains and busses going to Lyon after 11 o'clock and besides school everything else is happening in Lyon.

Besides looking for an apartment my preparation was very limited. Once the registration for courses is open, I selected them in advance.

Arrival

My arrival was very smooth since I organized my housing in advance. Some students stayed in airbnb rooms and then went to some house viewings. I would recommend to try to find a room in advance or to come to Lyon in advance and look for a room because once university starts you do not want to miss any student life or worry about where to sleep the next week. The university does not provide any introduction days, however meeting exchange students is very uncomplicated. We already had a facebook group where we exchanged information in advance. The mobile provider Free offers a cheap sim card deal which can be bought directly in the shop and cancelled monthly.

Course

As a master student I had to take at least 16 ECTS. All courses exchange students are allowed to take at EMLyon are electives. I choose the following courses:

COURSE	ECTS	SUBSCRIPTION
CROSSING CULTURAL BORDER	5	This seminar aims at developing relational, cultural and communicational competencies. It helps developing abilities to better decrypt different stakeholders 'point of view and interests and better prepare strategic Action Plans.
STRATEGIC CHANGE MANAGEMENT	5	To develop students' ability to understand organizations in order to develop efficient change programs. Students are encouraged to explore their own preferences in matters of organizational change and consider alternative perspectives. Furthermore, the objective of this course is to enable the acquisition of analytical tools and models which facilitate a structured and ethical approach to business transformations.
DECIDING	5	Classical decision theory (discrete choice, choice under uncertainty, game theory basics), the different decision-making biases and heuristics; over the course of the semester, students read through and discuss Thinking, Fast and Slow, a classic book written by and relating the research of Nobel prize winner psychologist Daniel Kahneman.
FINANCIAL MACROECONOMICS	2.5	This course explores the relationship between the macro-economy and the financial system. After introducing National Income Accounting, Balance of Payments Accounting, and the interest rate matrix, we will examine the economic functions of the financial system: banks, "shadow"-banks and insurance companies inter alia. We then turn to monetary policy: the demand for money, how central banks operate, how money is created, the interbank market, how interest rates are determined. We will also study the determination of exchange rates and their implications for macroeconomic policy and financial asset prices.

The selection and enrolment process will be in advance and sometime it is a bit tricky to choose non-conflicting courses. Mrs Guo was the exchange coordinator and she seemed to be not so well-organized or the whole process at EMLyon. But in the end I was able until November to drop and change courses even after she signed the learning agreement. In general course are easier than at Erasmus University and also the English level of teachers can be improved.

Finances

Overall, I would describe Lyon as more expensive than Rotterdam. For rent you need to calculate approximately 500€ The monthly subscription for the public transportation is 30€ Prices in the supermarkets are probably similar to Rotterdam. However, going out to the bar, restaurant and club is costlier and usually during an exchange semester you mostly explore the city life and hardly stay at home. A pint beer will be around 7€ in a pub. All in all, I estimate my monthly cost to be around 1200-1500€

Daily Life

Lyon is a very beautiful city with a lot of possibilities to explore the French culture. For example, it is known for its delicious cuisine and close to good wine regions. Further, it is close to Marseille, Nice and Annecy which are lovely places in the summer. Getting to know other students is no problem. After the first day I already met friends with who you hang and go out almost every day.