

Exchange autumn 2016 Gothenburg

In the autumn semester of 2016 I went to Gothenburg in Sweden. It is a wonderful place. If you want to do an exchange in Scandinavia I can highly recommend Gothenburg to you! If you don't want to do an exchange in Scandinavia: reconsider. You will have the best time of your life here.

I studied at the University of Gothenburg at the Business, Economics and Law faculty, better known as Handles. One of the best things of this university is the location in the middle of the city center. After your classes you can easily go for a fika in Haga (drinking coffee and eating sweets) or go to Jarntorget for afterwork (buying one beer and getting a delicious meal for free on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays in Kings Head). Since Sweden is an expensive country and you probably will travel a lot, a free meal is one of the better things that can happen to you.

The preparation before you go to Sweden is really easy. The Erasmus School of Economics nominates you and when the university of Gothenburg accepts you, you need to do some paperwork. They will email you with the things you need to do before you are able to go to Sweden. You need to send them some personal information and make sure your Learning Agreement of your Erasmus Grant is accepted. The university takes care of your insurance during your stay in Sweden. After a while you can apply for housing and select your courses. Dutch students must not forget to request a refund for the months you don't use your public transport card in the Netherlands.

There is a really big chance that you get housing from the university although they don't guarantee it. For housing I recommend to apply for Helmutstro or Olofshojd. These are the housing accommodations nearest to the city center and more important the most cozy. Olofshojd is the biggest accommodation of all. You live in a campus with 1000 other students. You will share your kitchen with 4 -8 students and have your own bathroom. All the parties are at Olofshojd and most likely all your friends will live here. In the first weeks Olofshojd will be the place where you will probably meet your new friends. There is a 'pizza place', a gym, a study room, a pingpong room, bbq place, laundry rooms and a sauna. Olofshojd is really the place where it all happens. Helmustro is on a five minutes walking distance from Olofshojd. In Helmustro you have your own kitchen. There is also a shared kitchen you can hire. This is really useful when it gets colder outside and you still want to hang out with your friends. In Olofshojd and

Helmustro you have a free shop. Here you can pick up blankets, pillows and other useful things for free when you arrive. The exchange students before you leave it there for you.

The university has arrival days. I recommend arriving on one of these days. Students from the university will pick you up at the airport with a bus. You can already meet new people and it is also cheaper than taking a cab or the regular bus. The students of the pick up service take you to the location where you can sign your housing contract, get your keys and get all the information needed. You also get a welcome package with a simcard and coupons for Liseberg and other things to do in Gothenburg. Liseberg is the attraction park in the middle of the city center. Every month the university gives you free data for your telephone on this simcard.

Handles (the Business, Economy and Law faculty) has plenty of introduction activities to get to know the other exchange students. They have a final banquet, international dinner, chilling in the park, treasure hunt and a pub-crawl for example. Again, I would recommend you to join all the activities and become a member of the student union.

The courses I took were 'Marketing trends', 'The Swedish model in the labour market' and 'The Swedish model and equality: family policy and gender relations'. All three courses were 7,5 ECTS and for my minor. The exams were papers and take home exams. In Handles they really focus on group work. Your classes will be with maximum 50 other students. The courses were really easy but they were interesting. Especially the course Marketing trends was really interesting since it was focusing on the new tools in marketing, like digitalization and sustainability. I recommend you to take the easy courses in the first semester (the first cycle courses) since you will be busy making new friends and getting to know the city.

Daily life in Sweden is expensive compared to the Netherlands, but it is way cheaper than Denmark and Norway. Sweden is the cheap option if you want to go to Scandinavia for your exchange. Although, don't be surprised if you have to pay 7 euros for a beer in a club and 5 euros in a bar. There are some student bars with beer for 3 euros. Eating out is around the same price as in the Netherlands. Since I was living in Olofshojd my rent was cheap, around 375 euros each month. Public transport is really well organized in Sweden and you pay 120 euros for a 3-month card. The trams go on a frequent basis and they are always on time. Supermarkets are also more expensive than in the Netherlands. Going out in Gothenburg is nice, but for the most clubs you have to

pay an entrance fee around 10 euros and for some clubs you have to be over 21. Every Wednesday there is a Handlespub at the university, which is a party with cheap beers (2 euros) and a free entrance if you are a member of the student union.

I spend the most money on trips. Gothenburg is located on a 3-hour drive from Copenhagen, Oslo and Stockholm. You can fly for 16 euros to Poland, the fjords in Norway are close by and you have to go to Lapland to see the Northern Lights. Overall, Gothenburg is an amazing place and I can only recommend you to go to Sweden! I always thought in the Netherlands everything is well organized, but I have to admit, Sweden has things better organized.