

2016 Exchange to Københavns Universitet

I spent my exchange at the University of Copenhagen in Denmark from the beginning of September to the end of December. This report will give you an impression of how the exchange was for me and what I needed to arrange before, during and after the mobility period.

Preparation

Before leaving on exchange, I needed to arrange some practical things. First, I had to choose three destinations. My first choice was Copenhagen and luckily I got this first choice. I was interested in Denmark, because I had never been to the Nordic countries and Denmark was not that far away, so friends and family could easily visit me. Moreover, the University of Copenhagen has a quite good reputation compared to all the European universities.

Once I got accepted to the university, I had to find a place to stay. During my application, I could choose the option for the help to find a room in Copenhagen from an organization of the university called UCPH Housing Foundation. I can recommend to choose this option, because it would be very hard to find a room otherwise, although this is an expensive choice, but Copenhagen suffers from a lack of rooms for students. A downside to this organization is that you need to pay for the given period the room is available even though you are not there anymore, but you can ask for shortening of your contract. They will make your room available in the booking system at the time you want to leave your room and new exchange students could book your room. They cannot guarantee you that they can find a new tenant for the room, but you can count on the fact that your room will be booked because of the lack of rooms in Copenhagen. Another downside is that you cannot see the room where you booked the room. You can find some pictures at the website of Housing Foundation, but that is it. Last, I had the option to get buddy or mentor during the application. I chose this option, but I did not do a lot with her, because we were both very busy. I heard from some people that they did a lot with their mentor. They helped them upon their arrival and other things related to the university.

Arrival

I went to Copenhagen by car with my parents, but it is very easy to arrive in Copenhagen by airplane. There are trains at the airport and a direct metro to the city center. When I came in Copenhagen, I had to pick up my keys, but I was one day earlier than my contract said. I went to the office of Housing Foundation to ask for the keys a day earlier. If you want your keys earlier than planned, I can recommend you to go to the office instead of emailing the office. In my case, it was possible to pick up the keys a day earlier because it was a new building, but I did not sleep in my room already. I just wanted to leave my luggage in my room. Also, I can recommend you to get a bike as the city is very accessible by bike. I rented my bike at my residence, but there are several bikes shop who sell bikes and even want to buy it at your departure. Before you leave to Copenhagen, make sure that you have the required documents with you for registration of living in Denmark. It would take some time to arrange everything, so you better start immediately when you arrive.

Courses

I needed to get 24 ECTS, which 12 ECTS had to be economic related courses and the other 12 ECTS were free to choose. I decided to take all the course at the Department of Economics at the faculty of Social

Sciences. I took four courses, each 7.5 ECTS. So, I had 30 ECTS at the end. 6 ECTS more than I needed, but you do not have a choice. I choose the courses The Danish Welfare System, Health Economics, The Economics of the European Union and ICT-Applied.

The Danish Welfare System

This course was especially for exchange students. I found it interesting because it was about something specific in Denmark. The course is given by a very nice professor who was very enthusiastic about his country and the course. It was not a course with a lot of work load. But, the classes were always at 8 o'clock twice a week. For this reason, I did not go that often and it was not compulsory. At the end, we had a take-home exam. We had to write a paper about two questions.

Health Economics

This course was my favorite. This course is taught by a young enthusiastic teacher who made nice contact with his students. We had some workshops during the course and you needed to active during the lectures by giving a presentation during the course. Health Economics was a master course and I went to all the lecturers, but I do not think it was more difficult than any other course I took because it was my favorite course. At the end, there was a final exam, but it was not that difficult if you were well prepared.

The Economics of the European Union

This course had a very boring teacher, but the subject was interesting. As the course name says, it was about the economics of the European Union. We had two assignments which had to be sufficient if you wanted to make the final exam, but it was not difficult to pass these assignments. Moreover, the final exam was not that hard, if you were well prepared.

ICT-Applied

Last, this course was very easy to pass. There was no final exam, only assignments. The assignments were once in the two weeks and you had a week to finish the assignment in groups of three. It was interesting though, because I already knew some programming, but this was programming another kind of programming, in Excel and web design. The lecturers were a bit boring, because you need to practice programming.

Finance

Be aware, you are going to the Nordic countries, so everything is more expensive than in the Netherlands. I got a shared room which costs around €600,-. Some of my friends had a room alone and they paid around €800,-. I had €600,- euro left to pay the rest of the month, like food, cloths, parties and metro. As I told before, it was possible to rent a bike at my residence for four months which costs me €60,-. This is not possible at every residence. Most of my friends had a bike for around €150,- euro at a bike shop. There are a lot of bike shops and you can sell your bike at one of the bike shops at your departure. For grocery shopping, you need to make sure to find the cheapest supermarket. For example, Aldi, Fakta or Netto. Everybody says that alcohol in the Nordic countries is very expensive, but I do not think is that much more in Denmark compared to the Netherlands. We are used to student prices for beers in the Netherlands, but I do not think that is much more in Denmark. For example, there is a bar

called Peder Oxe, where I went every Wednesday and the beers were 15DKK until 0.00. 15DKK is around €2,- and €2,50.

Daily life

Compared to my daily life in Rotterdam, I had less lectures in Copenhagen, even no tutorials. After my lecturers, I studied a bit with friends or hanged out with friends. Once, I had some friends over from the Netherlands, but I also did a trip to Stockholm during the fall break and I went to Bergen, Norway, to visit a friend. I missed a couple of lecturers, but it was not a problem. Going to Norway and Sweden was a good opportunity to see something of the other Scandinavian countries. Most of the time in the weekend, I went out with friends for some beers. There are a lot of nice place to get some beers, but most of the time, we started at home and finished in the city center. There is also a bar at the city campus of the University of Copenhagen which was very nice to party.

Danish people speak very good English, so it is easy getting in touch with them though they are not very open. Copenhagen is a very nice and organized city to live. It is not that big. At least, it does not feel that big. Everything is easy to reach by bike or by public transport. If you want to go on exchange to one of the Scandinavian countries I can recommend you to go Copenhagen.