

Studying in Maribor, Slovenia

General information:

I studied at University of Maribor during the winter semester 2013/2014. Maribor is the second large city of Slovenia. I returned back to the Netherlands by the 24th of January, however, if necessary for your studies all exams and requirements could be fulfilled by the end of December.

Preparation:

After your normal Erasmus application for studying abroad, you don't need so much extra preparation.

Concerning a visa; officially you have to visit the immigration office in Maribor during the semester to obtain residence permit to be allowed to stay longer than 3 months in the country. I enrolled myself for it but I never took my residence permit card, it was not necessary. Also I would have had a good argument in the fact that I left the country several times during the semester, so I didn't have a consecutive stay of 3 months.

As soon as you are accepted as exchange student you will be added to some mailing list of all internationals, combined with a facebook-page where all participating exchange students of that particular semester will be invited to. On the facebook-page I met a French guy and someone from the Netherlands. The guy from French was one week earlier then us in Maribor. He visited some apartments and he chose one. Finding a house is not too difficult in Slovenia, there is plenty of offer.

Arrival:

I went in the beginning of the semester from The Netherlands to Maribor, Slovenia by car. In the holidays I went back to Holland by plane, you could move yourself from Maribor to the airport in Ljubljana by GoOpti. This shuttle bus service could bring you from every airport/big city to another around Slovenia. This form of transportation is very cheap.

The first few days that you are in Maribor, you need to arrange a few things. The University of Maribor itself organised a welcome meeting with some useful information, but most of the activities are organised by ESN. I really recommend joining these activities, especially in the beginning, because it is a great way to meet new people and to get to know the places to be in Maribor. You will receive a bag with some information from the university. ESN will be gave you a Slovenian sim card and an ESN card. The university explained something about student coupons, they tell you where you could get them en how to use. This are coupons that give you discount in restaurants, you can spend 22 coupons each month, at a maximum of 2 per day. Slovenia is the only country with this system and it is amazing, it saves you a lot of money.

Courses:

All the courses were not that hard. The teachers are using PowerPoint presentations so it is easy to follow. Per course they give you lecture of 1.5 hours each week. I will use my courses as exemption from obligatory courses. In the part below the description of the courses I took.

Principles of Economics (ECTS6)

Business Economics acquaints the students with the fundamental terms and concepts of market economy and the basic principle of micro-economy, the principle of optimization and balance. It provides the insight into economic growth and economic policies which promote growth and stability.

Open Economy Macroeconomics (ECTS6)

The aim of the subject is to introduce the parameter of an open economy into the discussion on the national economy. An important part of the subject is also devoted to the issues of international economic integration as experienced in the EU. With the help of most common uses theories and

models in the field the subject should help the students to discuss and participate with the solving of economics and business problems as offset in the national economic development.

Human Resource Management (ECTS6)

The basic aim is to acquaint the students with the foundations of HRM. In the part the student acquires the knowledge about the basic understandings of HRM as well as about competitive challenges in the environment and their impact on the HRM. In the second part the student is acquainted with the manners of learning and motivating of employees in work settings. In the third part the particular activities of the HRM are discussed.

Business English II (ECTS3)

The description of this course on the internet didn't match with the reality. The teacher ask you questions sometimes and you have to do one exercise in all the weeks. To finish this course you have to make a paper and discuss it with the teacher. At the end you must answer two questions in written.

Corporate Finance II (ECTS5)

The purpose of this course is to acquaint students with the most important concepts in the field of corporate finance and financial management. The obtained knowledge is important to take on the most demanding tasks in finance and work as CFO of the company, but obtained knowledge is also useful to all CEO and management since understanding of finance, financial processes and financial environment is directly related to more or less all corporate processes and decisions made in every company or institution.

Finances:

Maribor is certainly a city in which you can go as cheap or as expensive as you prefer. The prices are approximately 50% lower as compared to Rotterdam for pubs/restaurants. The prices are the same for groceries and clothes. It is quite hard to make an estimation of the total costs. I did not really keep track of my expenditures, however, if I have to make up a list I would say the following budget would definitely be sufficient to join in every evening or event you like:

Costs include:

Plane return ticket	€130
Rent (month)	€250
Books, materials, and field trip	€170
Food (month)	€125
Pubs/restaurants (month)	€400
Trips to Budapest, Ljubljana and Zagreb	€700
Phone	€10
Study cost (month)	€180
Health insurance (month)	€120

About €1100 per month.

Income:

Erasmus grant (month)	€220
Loan government (month)	€720
Healthcare grant (month)	€80
Parents (month)	€250
Savings	€500

About €1270 per month

However, as I mentioned before: you can live much cheaper and much more expensive, it is all on you. Some apartments only cost you 120 per month. Some cooked with big groups daily to cut the costs, whereas other ordered sushi or ate in restaurants almost daily. When you only drink beer when partying, costs will be much lower as well.

Daily life:

The daily life in Maribor is really nice. It is quite different from the Dutch culture. I really recommend to go to the Piramide. Here, you will have a beautiful view over Maribor. You could come over here through the hills and the park by hiking. In the introduction weeks ESN organises the Slovenian trip. You should join them, you see a lot of Slovenia directly. Also, the first few months, when the weather is still nice, it is fun to go to the National park of Croatia. ESN organises special discounts for students in clubs. Usually, you pay around €3 for a drink, but with the discount you pay 50% less. Finally, I really recommend to travel a lot and see many cities near to Maribor, such as Budapest and Zagreb. For example, Budapest is three hours by car. My experience in Maribor was amazing and I can recommend everyone to go to Maribor to have an amazing time for themselves!