- study period in 1st semester:
- start date study abroad: 25th August 2014 end date: 20th February 2015
- period of classes: from 1st September 2014 until December 2014
- examination period: from December 2014 until February 2015.
- did you follow a language course: no.

Courses completed at the host university:

- 1. Drafting Commercial Contracts
- 2. Advanced Intellectual Property Law
- 3. Private International Law

My host university, and my host country, has been Aarhus University in the small but lovely Nordic country Denmark. My field of studies is Law, and my study period was the 1st semester (Autumn/Winter) of the academic year 2014-2015.

Before commencing the classes in Aarhus, there is an introduction week for all new international students. During this week, there are a diverse range of activities available in order to not only get to know other people, but also to get acquainted with the Aarhus University's facilities (faculties, canteens, libraries, and so on), the Danish culture, and to arrange all necessary documents for your stay in Denmark. You need to arrange a residence permit, whether you are a European Union citizen or not, if you plan in staying more than 3 months in the country. The University will help you register and do everything needed during this introduction week, so I strongly recommend attending it. It will also help you feel more at ease to start your life in Scandinavia.

The application process for Aarhus University is relatively easy: all the necessary steps are clearly stated and clearly explained, and the contact with Aarhus University is incredibly approachable and accessible. You generally receive a response immediately or within few hours, and they are always ready to find solutions to the problems you might encounter. When applying for studying at the Aarhus University, there is a possibility to apply for housing at the same time, and the University will look for a room for you. You will then have 3 choices: either a cheaper rent, either a private bathroom or being near the University. My recommendation would be the following: if your budget is not that high, then perhaps the best option is a cheaper rent. Even though you might end up further from the University, several students will be in the same boat and at some point you will get used to it – Aarhus might be as big as Groningen (but consider that there are 'hills' in Aarhus that make cycling a little bit harder). I would disregard from the beginning the private bathroom option – sharing facilities with other students will generally be something you can easily get accustomed to, and will help you get out of your comfort zone. There are different types of housing – I was given a room at the Teknisk Kollegium, which was located just 7 minutes walking from the city centre. Kollegiums have an interesting social life, especially since international and Danish students live together. Then there are some international residences, like the ones in Brabrant, which are the biggest and most students are international ones. It is a bit far from the University and the city centre, but it is famous for its amusing social life.

During the application process you will also be asked if you want a mentor at your arrival in Denmark. I highly recommend applying for the mentor program (this is done just with one email introducing yourself, telling a bit about your interests and what do you study), as your mentor will be the first person to welcome you in your new home country. Your mentor will help you get your key for the room and perhaps accompany you to the International Centre to register, as well as help you how to arrive to your place. Usually a mentor will also help you with any other practical issues or to attend social events so that you start getting used to your novel life. Not all mentors are the same, but if you are lucky you might even gain a new friend, too, like I did.

Regarding the choice of courses, there are around 20 law courses available in English, most of them at a Master level. At this stage, I would recommend to take a maximum of 4 courses, although 3 of 10 ECTS each would be the ideal. The courses I chose were Drafting Commercial Contracts, Advanced Intellectual Property Law and Private International Law. The courses are truly interesting, and I found the acquired knowledge to be very useful, even in my daily life (such as the Intellectual Property Law one). Danish teachers are generally close to their students, and will always be ready to help you. The approach to lecturers is informal; therefore the contact can be made easily as they are very approachable. Classes are mixed with exchange and Danish students, and there is high possibility to have certain same fellow students in more than one course. The Danish level of education can be compared to that of the Dutch one – pretty decent level, and there is usually interaction between teachers and students so that students can obtain an active role during the classes. This allowed us to put into practice our knowledge and not just learning theory, which made the learning process even more compelling. A considerable amount of exams are oral and last for about 20 minutes. In some courses, such as Drafting Commercial Contracts and Private International Law, you knew the topics that would go to the exam in advance (you would have a list of 10 – 11 subjects, for example), for which you would have to prepare a short presentation. At the exam, you would have different papers, you picked one and you would talk about that topic for the first 5- 10 minutes, while the teacher would ask you questions about it. Then he may or may not ask you about a second topic. Depending on your level, the teacher will try to help you go to the right direction: if you had difficulties in answering, then he would try to ask you easier questions, if you were very good, then he would ask you more difficult ones. Some courses will also include writing a term paper or essays, so it is important to read the description of each potential subject in the Aarhus Course Catalogue, in which you can find all courses available with their respective description. I strongly recommend preparing exams in advance because the courses at a Master level generally require a high amount of work. This is not discouraging, as the content and the knowledge acquired is very enriching, and it is possible to combine a good social life with a good educational parcours with a good organization.

From the beginning of the academic year, the City Council of Aarhus provides with a free Danish language course that if you complete it, it will give you 3 ECTS. Completing it implies attending 80% of the classes. Generally, however, Denmark is similar to The Netherlands in that most Danes speak English fluently as well and, therefore, learning Danish might be more of a personal choice.

As for finances, it is undeniable that Denmark is an expensive country (yes, more than The Netherlands). Even though there is no additional cost to host university (education in Denmark is free), the books might be a little bit expensive. What will determine your monthly cost will certainly be your rent. Food is relatively not too expensive, however public transport, museums or social life is. My estimated monthly cost was about 600-700 euros, taking into account that I had a cheap rent (260 euros) and a solid social life.

In a more personal note, I would like to encourage new exchange students to not fear the apparent coldness of Danes. In fact, Danes are very warm, social, welcoming and approachable people. It is important to make the first step and show interest in them, so it is a good exercise to get rid of shyness if you have any. Also, for exchange students there is a special night event every Tuesday at the *Studenterhus* (the Student House) that will allow you expand your social life and enjoy even more your stay in Aarhus. In general, Aarhus is a very lively and charming city; its museums are particularly special (as ARoS, the Steno Museum, or Den Gamle By/The Old Village), and its colourful and small houses are genuinely captivating. It is easy to feel at home in a country that has the equivalent of the Dutch *gezellig* in its own language: *hyggeligt*.