

## **Report Form Exchange Period Abroad 2017-2018**

To which foreign university did you go: Trinity College Dublin

Country: Ireland

- study period in 1st semester
- start date study abroad: 20/09/2017 end date: 20/12/2017
- period of classes: from 20/09/2017 until 20/12/2017
- examination period: N/A all examinations were essays
- did you follow a language course: no

Courses completed at the host university:

1. Jurisprudence
2. Legal and Economic Aspects of Competition Policy
3. Family Law

I attended Trinity College Dublin for the duration of my Erasmus Exchange period. I am a law student and therefore I became a part of the Trinity law faculty. The University offered a range of subjects but when it came down to actually selecting subjects it appeared that preference was given to their home students as I was told there were some courses I had picked that I was unable to follow as they were full. In the end I studied Family Law, Jurisprudence and Legal and Economic Aspects of Competition Policy. Trinity College is known as being a very old and prestigious university but I was unimpressed by the level of organisation exhibited by the university. Very little support was provided to exchange students and the university did little to help integration with Irish students, for the most part we were left to fumble about on our own until we managed to figure things out. The courses themselves were of quite a difficult level and the lectures expect a very high level of competence in essay writing and research. All courses were conducted in English. As a one semester exchange student, it meant that I missed the only examination period (which is in June) and therefore instead of exams I had to complete a certain number of essays. The essays were not always relevant to the lectures and classes so the motivation to keep attending irrelevant classes was difficult to maintain. Personally, I did not find it easy to make friends with Irish people or to become integrated into the University life, most of my friends were fellow Erasmus students or people I met through work. Communication from Trinity College before, during and after my Erasmus was poor and I often had to wait weeks to get the adequate response from lecturers or coordinators.

Dublin itself is a much more expensive city to live in than people assume. The price of living there is very high and managing expenses can be difficult for someone used to the relatively low prices in Groningen. This meant that it was necessary for me to find a part time job in order to keep being able to live. I eventually found work with a temp agency and ended up working several nights a week at the Guinness Storehouse. I didn't mind working and met several interesting people that I became friends with through work, the only drawback is the Irish tax system which taxes you 40% of your earnings until you are able to apply for the Personal Public Service Number, which is available to all Europeans but the application time is quite lengthy, you are then able to claim back your tax but this also takes time.

Public transport is a problem in Dublin, the tram/train network is very limited and busses are the most common form of transport. The bus network is also far from extensive and is expensive to use, even as a student it will cost you €20 per week. There is no public transport after 11.30pm on most days although there are some night busses on a Friday and Saturday

night which also cost more. Taxi's are exceptionally expensive with a 15 minute ride costing up to €35.

There is a housing crisis in Dublin at the moment which has been ongoing for the last few years which has led to many Irish students choosing to still live at home because they cannot afford to move out. As an Erasmus student, you don't have that option. The university offers one recommendation for Erasmus students called Binary Hub but it is very expensive and spots are limited, I was not able to secure a spot and had to find my own accommodation. The university did not offer me any assistance with this. Rent in Dublin is extortionate. If you want to live in the centre then you need to be prepared to pay €1500-2000 a month for a nice place, if you're willing to live in a run-down place and share a then still be prepared to pay at least €750. I eventually ended up living in a homestay situation where I paid €200 per week but this also included some food expenses.

Overall Ireland was not all bad, the Irish people are great and the city can be a lot of fun. There is a vibrant night life and a lot of Irish culture to explore but you need to be prepared to afford the costs of living there. Trinity College is also not a bad university but considering its world ranking I expected more.

