

Study Report National University of Galway, Ireland

Period: 3th September – 21th December 2018

First of all, I want to say that I had a great time in Ireland. The country has a lot of beautiful nature and the Irish culture is something you have to explore. Yes, I was really surprised! People are so kind, for example my landlady was always willing to drive my roommates and me to another cheaper supermarket (Aldi/Lidl). Namely, the supermarket close to our house was a little bit more expensive than we are used to in the Netherlands. But if you buy your groceries at the Aldi or Lidl, it amounts the same price. In addition, beers for €1,- as we know in Groningen, will not be provided in Galway. A pint costs mostly €5,-, but believe me the whole atmosphere makes it worth it.

Housing

Housing is a bit more expensive than in Groningen. I was very lucky, because I lived in a house with three other Erasmus students and I had a double bedroom. I only paid €450,- excluding electricity and oil. I think it was a good price for the room I had. So if you want to study in Galway inform the international office for my contact details and maybe I can help you with a room, because finding a room is difficult. Two weeks before I went to Galway I found this room, but it was really difficult. I found this room via the website of the university, the searching engine for housing, so use this website! In the case you haven't found anything, you can go to the international housing office of the university in Galway. I heard that they can help you really well.

Transport

My place was close to the city centre which was quite ideal. I did not have a bike, but I always walked to everything. Galway is not a really big city so, mostly you can walk. I also know some students who used a bike, but they lived a bit further from the city centre, so in that case it is nice to have a bike. Actually, I have never used public transport in Galway. If you want to go to another city (e.g. Dublin/Belfast), there are a lot of possibilities to travel by bus.

Costs

I think my average costs per month were €500,- for rent and €150,- for groceries and drinks. And I think I spend €50,- every month to trips. So €700,- each month in total.

Clubs & societies

In the first days of your arrival, you have to attend the introduction programme. The university explains everything: which courses you can choose, how you can sign up for those courses, what the possibilities are to become a member of a (sport)club, etc.

Part of the introduction programme is meeting all the sport clubs and societies. There are a lot of possibilities! I was a member of the mountaineering club, they made every Sunday a hike in a national park and it was only 10 euro each time. I can strongly recommend that. Nearly for every sport there exists a club.

Study programme

After the introduction programme you can choose your courses. I chose for the following courses:

1. Irish legal system: I shall recommend that, because it gives you a view how the Irish legal system works and that can help you with your other courses. Besides that, it is not a really difficult course.
2. Media law: for this course I had to learn a lot of cases, which was okay. It was not the most easy course, but it was okay.

3. Health law & policy: I can also recommend this one, it is not difficult, but quite interesting. The Irish health system is not the best one, so there are a lot of complications, this makes it interesting.
4. International protection of human rights: in Groningen I had never had a course about human rights, so this made it really interesting for me. It was interesting to exactly know the role of the UN in relation to human rights.
5. Internet technology law: I think this was the most difficult course for me whereas I did the IT-law bachelor. If you don't have affinity with IT-law, I shouldn't recommend it to take this course.
6. Banking law: to be honest, this course was not really interesting to me. However, I learned a lot of it. I chose this course, because you had to write two papers instead of an exam. So for the other 5 courses I had to write an exam and 5 exams was okay, but still a lot. So if you can manage it to choose more courses wherefore you have to write papers, I can recommend it.

The exams in Galway are totally different than in Groningen. Mostly you got five or eight questions, but you only have to answer three questions. For every course I had two hour lectures, so 12 hours each week. That was okay. In the beginning it was really hard for me to understand everything but this became easier as I attended more lectures. You can also attend a language course if you like, it is for free and useful.

If you are still doubting: Ireland is an amazing country. As I already said the nature and culture is something which you have to explore. Every pub is original and has its own live music. There are a lot of students in the city which is kind of the same as in Groningen. Besides that, the university provides so much possibilities to explore (other) cultures, sports or anything else. You will definitely have a great time!