

Exchange experience Jagiellonian University, Krakow Fall 2018

Your study programme

In general, I found the study programme and the courses offered at the University of a much higher level than I expected. I took more credits than I had to because there were so many courses than I found interesting. Although the lectures were always extremely interesting I found that the exams were not necessarily challenging. However, because the extremely interesting I definitely left having learnt a lot! Most of the law exams were structures in a similar way to the exams in Groningen. Open questions based on cases and laws. There were a few multiple choice and essay exams but I only had 2 of those. Of course there were many subjects that had different levels. There were a few Polish law courses given in English and I heard from other students that those ended up being extremely easy. In the end I spent more time going to lectures that I do in Groningen because you are taking 6/7 subjects at the same time, and we only have 2 usually. However, there was not a lot of reading assigned so other than the lectures I did not spend a lot of time studying.

Language

There are Polish language courses available to Erasmus students but you have to pay 700 zloty for one semester of classes. However, the University also offers other language courses for free (German, French, Spanish, Italian). I decided to take one of those classes because we don't get ECTS for a language class and Polish is a very difficult language to learn! I didn't feel like I was missing anything by not taking Polish classes because you pick up the simple phrases quickly. But, I heard that the Polish classes were useful for some people! I ended up taking a German class because that is a language I have wanted to learn for a while and it was free! I would definitely recommend this if you've wanted to learn a language.

Finance and other conditions

Poland has the zloty instead of the Euro and I always kept in mind 1eur=4zloty. In general life in Poland is **much** cheaper than in Groningen. This is especially with going out for food, drinks, grocery shopping. The rent was often similar to Groningen, especially if deciding to live in the city center. When arriving it was possible to get a semester tram ticket, which I would definitely recommend although not everyone did it. That cost about 40 euros.

The application procedure was extremely straightforward and the international office of the Jagiellonian was extremely helpful in everything

Preparation and contacts with the faculty abroad

Housing

There are multiple options for finding housing in Krakow, which is much easier than in Groningen. First of all, the university has dorms. You have to sign up for the dorms via the university system. These dorms are extremely cheap, but they are located relatively outside the city and don't have the best facilities. However, if you are on a strict budget it is quite good. There are also private dorms but I would absolutely not recommend those. They are much more expensive but also far outside the city. I personally found an apartment via a renting agency with 2 other Erasmus students and that is what most people I know did. Via facebook there are a lot of apartments being rented out.

Guidance / reception at host university

One of the highlights of my exchange was the introduction week because it was a super easy way to get to know other Erasmus students. This was organized by the ESN office. In the first few days we had to go to the campus where we were welcomed by the International office to finish our paperwork, and also by ESN where we received our entrance bracelets and could sign up for extra activities. It was extremely helpful that this was done at the same time and at the same place, it made everything much easier. The international office generally replied to emails very quickly and they were nearly always open and available to answer any questions.

The majority of the social events for the Erasmus students were organized by ESN. They organized around 2 parties per week, and also had deals with certain clubs that entrance was free for Erasmus on certain days. This was really nice because this meant that you would nearly always find other Erasmus students.

During the introduction ceremony they also told us that there was also a programme for students that were experiencing culture shock. Although I don't know anyone who used it, it was nice knowing that it was there.

Culture, free time and travelling

Other

I had a great time exploring Eastern and central Europe while I was in Poland. The travels are cheap so it's really easy to visit new places every weekend! The city of Krakow is also filled with museums, cool galleries, and other attractions so there's always something new to try and visit.