

## **Erasmus Student Report Aarhus University, Autumn 2019**

### **Study Program**

Aarhus University has a good selection of courses available to students. The courses offered are at a master level, however, don't let this make you second guess studying in Aarhus. I can confidently say that most of courses are either on the same level as, or even easier, than those offered in the LLB program of the University of Groningen. Nevertheless, you must pick your courses with care and pay attention to the examination style. For my courses, I took the 10 credit courses of Law of the EU Internal Market, International Commercial Arbitration and International and European Intellectual Property Law. I must note that completing the application procedure and choosing your courses on that platform is not enough to guarantee a spot in the courses that you chose. Somehow, my course selection was altered, and I was given a second list of courses to choose from because the other courses had filled up. This was unfortunate for me as I never intended to take International Commercial Arbitration or International and European Intellectual Property Law.

On the specifics regarding the courses I chose, the Law of the EU Internal Market is a course I would highly recommend. The curriculum is well-structured, the course is a more in-depth look into what has previously been discussed in classes in Groningen. The content of the course is mostly about the four freedoms in the internal market and the examination style is a paper. Next, International Commercial Arbitration is also a course I would confidently recommend. This course was also clear and concise and not too challenging despite being at master level. The content of the course was mainly concerned with cases relating to arbitration, definitions relating to arbitration and general concepts in arbitration. It must be noted that the Danish system of education also has oral examinations. These are 20-minute exams where you are expected to pick a piece of paper which has a topic from one of the weeks written on it. You are expected to explain this topic and the professor is free to ask you questions as well as to lead you into other topics discussed in class. This was slightly nerve-wrecking as a first-timer, but the professors are extremely helpful and ask questions that do not hinder you but help you and provide guidance. International Commercial Arbitration had an oral examination style. Lastly, I took the class International and European Intellectual Property Law. I would not recommend taking this class to ERASMUS students from the Groningen LLB program. In the Danish system, this course can only be taken by those who are already on their 7<sup>th</sup> Semester (only master level students)! My class-mates already had a foundation in this topic as they had previously taken Danish patent law or copyright law. However, I had no experience in the field of intellectual property law and I felt that I struggled in comparison to others. The content was an in-depth analysis of patent law, copyright law and trademark law. Furthermore, the examination style is much more intense than the other two courses I took. For this program, you are expected to write a paper, orally defend the paper and then also have an oral examination in a random topic studied during the semester. Furthermore, the course has group-work (though non-mandatory) throughout the semester. This course, overall, was more challenging than the others. If you are interested in this field and have prior experience, then I would recommend this course as the professor is very lovely and highly motivated. The grading scale in the Danish system of education ranges from a -3 to a 12. Though this might be confusing at first, there is a lot of information available on the university website explaining the grading scale. Additionally, it must be noted that it is very rare to fail a course in the University of Aarhus. All of the exchange students I knew passed their classes. Additionally, I heard from my friends that the course Drafting of Commercial Contracts was the best one they had taken, everybody loved the

professor and the content of the course and I wish I had the opportunity to take it, so I recommend this course.

### **Language**

Much like the Netherlands, almost everyone in Denmark has a very high level of English. There were no issues relating to language in Denmark because the classes were taught in English and everyone I encountered spoke great English. Furthermore, if you are interested in learning Danish, you can pay for classes at the university. There are also social activities like 'Danish Rap Class' offered by the student house (which is a small building located on campus that is a social hub for students which organises activities, parties and has a bar).

### **Finance and Other Conditions**

Denmark is generally more expensive than the Netherlands. The estimated costs per month would be around 1000 Euros. I lived in a dorm provided by the Aarhus University Housing Office, which was both cheaper and in a much better condition than most of the places in Groningen. In Euros, I paid around 370 inclusive for my accommodation. Groceries are slightly more expensive in Denmark, certain items like coffee or self-care products (shampoo etc...) are much more expensive there. Eating outside is very expensive, where going to get a pizza at a place similar to Pasta Fabriek will cost you 17-20 euros. Drinks at a bar will cost around the same as they do in the Drie Gezusters but beers at the 'Friday bars' are much cheaper, probably 2 Euros in most places. I will explain what Friday bars are later in this report. Transportation by bus or by tram will cost you around 3 Euros per trip, however you can register for a monthly card where you can pay 50 Euros and use it as many times as you like. Almost everyone travels by bicycle and you can rent a monthly Swapfiets there just like here! Transportation by train, for example from Copenhagen Airport to Aarhus, costs about 50 Euros. Sometimes, there are 'Orange Tickets' on the trains which are discounted tickets that cost much less but you have to check online and book in advance. Flixbus, which is generally cheaper, is also an option. As a non-EU student, I had to apply for a Visa and residence permit to go to Denmark and this cost me 255 Euros to apply into Denmark and then about 300 Euros to apply from Turkey (you have to pay twice for a Danish Visa, once into Denmark and once again in your home-country, but this might be different in your country).

### **Preparation and Contacts**

Aarhus University has an 'International Centre' which is extremely helpful. They respond to your emails and questions without delay. The administrative process is very much monitored and guided by the staff at the University and they send you emails explaining everything you need to do prior to your arrival. They will email you about your course selection, your student card, your introduction week and so on. There is not much you can prepare for unless you have to apply for a visa as a non-EU student. You should also sort out your housing before you get there, however this is not a problem because the University has their own housing office and everything functions smoothly.

### **Housing**

Aarhus University has a housing office which is extremely helpful to international students. The housing offered by the university is always in great condition (from what I have experienced in my own dorms and the living situations of my friends who were also on their exchange). I chose accommodation with a shared kitchen and bathroom in the dormitory style but you can also chose to live in a shared house instead of a dorm. They have options for private studios as well, however, I would recommend going for something shared because of

the social life. I was very lucky because I got placed in the University Park Dorms which are on campus. Aarhus University was so different to what I expected because of the campus lifestyle. There is a beautiful park, most of the faculties (law included) are placed inside and around this park and some of the dorms are also there. Overall, I had a very positive experience in the University Park Dorms and I lived with 14 Danish students (each dorm floor has a designated 'exchange student' room). They have an incredible dorm culture with parties and traditions that have been there for 100s of years. Furthermore, you get to interact with many Danish students whereas those in other dorms mostly interact with other ERASMUS students. The halls, toilets and showers are cleaned professionally but the students are responsible for the kitchen (which is usually very big and clean depending on who you live with). It must be noted that you should check the location of where your housing is because some exchange students ended up very far outside of the city. Furthermore, when you move into a room in Denmark you will have to pay a 3-month deposit and the rent of your first month, so be prepared for this cost!

### **Guidance and Reception**

I unfortunately did not attend the introduction week. However, I heard that they separate you into groups of 5 or more from your own faculty prior to your arrival. You have a Danish buddy who is there to help you with whatever you need and there are several activities where you can socialise and interact with other exchange students. These activities include food, drinks, parties and games. If you need assistance you can always go to the international office or contact your exchange coordinator, they are very helpful.

### **Culture, Free-time and Travelling**

Overall, the ERASMUS student life in Aarhus is extremely well-organised and busy. As I previously mentioned, there is a campus culture at Aarhus University. On Fridays, the faculties on campus turn into bars. These bars open at 3 pm and close at 2 am, they are run by student volunteers and are extremely cheap. The dorms I stayed in also had their own bar called Eforen on campus. There is also the 'Studentarhus' which is on campus, the previously mentioned 'social hub' for international students. They organise many events, usually on Tuesdays and it is always busy. I think that the social life in Aarhus was the best part about my entire ERASMUS experience.

The city of Aarhus is so wonderful. There is city life with lots of shopping, bars and cute cafes. There is also nature, a big forest that you can go through which leads you to the sea. The Danish go winter swimming (usually naked) in the sea, which is definitely an experience to try while you are there. There is also a deer park, where you can go to feed wild deer and you can also rent an area for a bonfire in the forest. There are also several museums, concerts and cultural activities that you can find through Facebook events. I think that the city is very well rounded.

You can travel within Denmark (to go to Skagen for example, or Legoland, Copenhagen etc...) and you can travel to other Scandinavian countries pretty easily from Aarhus. Aarhus has an airport (Billund) but it flies to select destinations and is usually pretty expensive if you do not book in advance. Usually, travelling outside of the country involves transport to Copenhagen airport (which takes about 3 hours) but it can be done. The ERASMUS team sometimes organises different trips, so you should keep an eye on the Facebook page.

### **Other**

I loved my exchange experience in Aarhus University and I highly recommend it!