

## **Study Report National University of Galway, Ireland, Autumn semester 2019-2020**

Going to Galway as an exchange student could not have been any better. The country is beautiful, the city is amazing, and the people are the nicest people I have ever encountered. Galway is a small student city and offers more or less the same type of environment as Groningen. If you are not looking for a big city and would rather have that smaller city vibe and a nature filled experience, then Galway is the right place for you.

### **Housing:**

During my exchange I stayed at the student accommodation offered by the university themselves. I stayed in Corrib Village which was only a year old when I stayed there hence, I was the second tenant to live in my room. I had my own bedroom and toilet/bathroom, however shared a kitchen with 4 other girls. When you apply, they take into consideration where you are from, and I was placed with 4 other Erasmus students. From other students I heard they had also been placed with Erasmus students. As I was living in the new facility the rent was rather expensive, being a bit more than 800€ per month. If you however choose the older facility, then the rent will be significantly lower. One thing to note is that accommodation is very hard to get in Galway, and therefore when the university opens up registration for their student accommodation, be ready! If you are not looking for the accommodation offered by the university, then I recommend you look for alternatives as soon as possible. In Galway many students stay in hostels, and I can strongly recommend that if you do not mind sharing a room with other people.

### **Transport:**

The bike culture is not the same in Galway as in Groningen. Therefore, if you live close enough, walking is the best option. I lived about 20-25 minutes away from the city center, and 10 minutes away from the main campus. My friends and I would walk pretty much everywhere. Even when going out on nights out, walking is the best way to go from A to B. Bus and Taxi fees are more or less the same as in Groningen.

### **Costs:**

One thing I was not prepared for was how expensive Ireland is. The rent was a bit more than 800€ per month and food costs were the same as Groningen. Food and drink costs vary from person to person, but I would say that you will be spending more or less the same amount of money in Galway as you do in Groningen. However, buying drinks out in Galway is more expensive than drinks in Groningen, be careful!

### **When you arrive:**

You do not choose the courses you will take before arriving in Galway. You will have an introduction when you arrive to the university together with all other international students, and here everything will be explained how the system works and you will receive a list of the classes you can take. Therefore, other than setting up your Outlook email, you do not have to do anything before arriving Galway. Once you get the list of classes I believe you have two-three weeks to decide on classes and attend as many as you want in order to make sure you like the class or not.

You will also be invited to attend an introduction to all the clubs you can sign up for. There are many amazing clubs, and I signed up for a lot however none of them aligned with my class schedule and therefore I did not get the chance to be part of a club, but they were very welcoming to international students.

**Study program:**

You have to choose courses that in total will give 30 ECTS. Each course is worth 5 ECTS. Out of the 30 ECTS you are allowed to have 5 ECTS that are non-law. This means that out of the six subjects you will be choosing, you are allowed to choose one non-law course. I did not do this, and I regret not doing so. The reason is that for the law courses, they are all exam based, meaning in December you will have 6 exams. If you choose another course, you can not only try a course from a completely different faculty, but you can also look at the examination method. This is obviously fully your own choice, and as mentioned, I did 6 exams in the end and managed to get good grades in all subjects.

**The courses I chose:**

- **Company Law** – I have never studied company law before and therefore chose it because I would like to know more. It is exam based so you prepare for the exam from the beginning and otherwise do the assigned homework.
- **Commercial Law** – This was also a subject I was interested in as I have never had it before. The same professor who taught Company Law also taught this class, so you only had the exam at the end of the semester and otherwise homework during the semester.
- **Irish Legal System** – I chose this to get a better understanding of the Irish system as most classes only deal with Irish law. Therefore, it was nice to get some background information you could use in the other classes too.
- **International Protection of Human Rights** – This course was interesting if you have a specific interest for human rights. The professor for this course was amazing and I can recommend this subject if you are interested in learning more about Human Rights.
- **Constitutional Law** – The subject discussed the Irish constitution in depth. It was not the most exciting subject in my opinion, but at the same time I am glad I took it as it gave me more understanding of the Irish legal system.
- **Health Law and Policy** – I am personally very interested in health law and therefore chose this course. There is a lot of information in each class but if you are interested you will not have a problem keeping up with the classes. This subject was 2,5 law ECTS and 2,5 non-law ECTS. I would recommend choosing another subject that was fully non-law ECTS so that you could try and coordinate your schedule with one less exam.

**Exam:**

The exams in Galway are very different from exams in Groningen. In Galway an exam lasts for two hours, and you are presented six questions. From these questions you only choose three to answer. The professors prepare you a lot for the exams, and if you prepare what they tell you to do, then you will have no problem passing with good grades.

All in all, Galway was such a good experience and I am very happy I ended up choosing Ireland. I did not know what to expect when I arrived, but it exceeded all expectations and I can recommend it to anyone who is not seeking the big city life. The night life, the social life, the academics were all amazing.