

University of *Ljubljana*



Final Report

Exchange Semester Ljubljana

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Final Report: Erasmus+ Exchange Semester Ljubljana 2014/2015

In the winter semester 2014/2015 I studied at the University of Ljubljana. To be exact, at the Faculty of Economics (FELU). I decided to study in Slovenia because I have always been fascinated by the Slovenian culture and people. Furthermore, the FELU has a very good reputation in Europe.



Before you go- Preparation

The first step is to apply for an Erasmus+ exchange semester at the University of Klagenfurt. You can do that online via the ZEUS system. After filling in some general information you need to upload your CV, Letter of Motivation and Transcript of Records. If you get nominated by the Erasmus coordinator, as a second step, you have to apply to the University of Ljubljana. This is done online as well on the university homepage. Important here is that you have to prove that you have English skills on the B2 level or higher. The third step is that you get your Letter of Acceptance via mail send to your home address. In addition, you also get information about life in Ljubljana, housing and the university. The fourth and final step is to register online at the Faculty of Economics. This step is crucial because otherwise you will not get your login data for the Student-Net where you can register for classes. Class registration takes place before you go. At the FELU there are many courses in English to choose from, both for the Bachelor and Master level. So there are enough places in classes for everyone. However, if you have to or want to take a particular course, be quick. Places are limited and there is a 'first come, first serve' principal in place. A big disadvantage at the FELU is that you cannot see the course schedule. That means that you choose courses although you do not know when exactly

they will take place. In case there are overlaps, however, FELU allows you to change courses during the Orientation Week.

Housing

After you get your acceptance letter from the University of Ljubljana it is time to look for housing opportunities. There are basically two options you can choose from: Private Housing or Student Dorms. Living on your own or sharing a flat with someone else is a good possibility for those who do not want to stay in a student dorm. But be aware, although prices in general are a little bit lower in Slovenia than Austria, private housing is by no means cheap (€200 and up). Therefore, check prices before or opt for a bed in a student dorm. I stayed in the student dorm D in Bežigrad, which is situated next to the Faculty of Economics. In Dorm D many exchange students from all around the globe are placed so it is very easy to get to know new people and make new friends. Basically, in Bežigrad you share an apartment with 3 other people. You have a small kitchen and bathroom and share your room with one other person. The biggest advantage of staying in a dorm, in my opinion, is the price. The rent is approximately €100/month, which is very cheap. Another dorm, that I can recommend, is called Rozna Dolina. Many of my friends stayed there because it is very close to the city center and many exchange students stayed there as well.

Subsidized Student Meals

Every student in Slovenia is entitled to get subsidized student meals in various restaurants in Ljubljana and other cities in Slovenia. Each student gets a coupon for a subsidized meal for every working day there is in a particular month. So this means that you can use five coupons a week mostly. It depends on the restaurant, but mostly every student meal includes soup, salad, main dish and desert. You have to get used to eating a lot in Slovenia because the portions are really big and in my experience it is not easy to finish a whole student meal by yourself. The subsidized price you pay for such a meal depends on the restaurant but mostly it is around 2-4 €.

Courses at the FELU

Courses at the FELU in general are worth more ECTS than in Klagenfurt, which means that the workload for each class is bigger. At the FELU most bachelor classes are worth 6 ECTS and master classes between 7-10 ECTS. This means that you cannot take as many different courses

as in Klagenfurt during the course of one semester. To be exact, the FELU only allows you to register for courses worth a total of 30 ECTS. As I am a student of the Master Program International Management I was not able to choose freely among all courses. The reason for this was that I had to fulfill certain criteria from my curriculum during my exchange semester. Therefore, I decided to take only one Master class and two Bachelor classes that are in line with my curriculum. Namely, Transnational Management, Marketing Communication and Socio-Economic Development and Contemporary Slovenia.

Transnational Management

The Transnational Management course is a Master course and worth 8 ECTS. It is a blocked course which means that it is not held throughout the semester. In my case the classes started in the beginning of October and ended in the middle of November. During that time, however, you have multiple sessions per week. In general, the course explains the history, strategic orientation, organizational structure, and management practices of multinational organizations. In addition, it is dealt with cultural issues and leadership challenges. In order to pass the course, one had to fulfill several requirements: Reading papers before class, active participation during lectures was appreciated, a written individual assignment, a course project paper and presentation and a final exam. I really enjoyed this course not only because of the two highly qualified and knowledgeable professors but also because we had to do a group project with a real company. We worked together with Danfoss Trata, which is a subsidiary from Danfoss situated in Denmark. For the final exam we had to analyze a case study according to the material covered in class. All in all the course was brilliant, although the workload was very high at times.

Marketing Communication

Marketing Communication is a Bachelor course and worth 6 ECTS. The course is split into a lecture and a seminar. During the lecture theoretical knowledge was given and during seminars practical knowledge was acquired. Major topics of the course were the development of integrated marketing communication strategies and assessment of effectiveness and efficiency of their implementation. The lecture and seminar was held together on one day per week and lasted 4h. Requirements to pass the course were active participation, a mid-term and final exam, a mid-term and final presentation and a group paper. In this course we had to work with a company called Donat Mg. Our task was to design an integrated marketing

campaign for selected countries. What I really liked about this course was the structure. During lectures all essential information on one topic was given. Then during seminars (held on the same day) guest lecturers from various companies were invited to show how they use these theoretical concepts in their companies.

Socio-Economic Development and Contemporary Slovenia

The last course I took was called Socio-Economic Development and Contemporary Slovenia and was a Bachelor course worth 6 ECTS. The course deals with the economic and political history of Slovenia and gives students a better understanding of the present political, economic and cultural situation of Slovenia in contemporary Europe. Requirements for this course were an individual paper and a final exam. The lecture was held once a week and lasted for 2-3 hours. The professor who taught this course had a wide knowledge and was very enthusiastic about his topic. One minor disadvantage of the course is that for someone that grew up in Austria there is a lot of repetition of what one already knows about Slovenia. Although I learned many new things, in some lectures no information that I did not know already was given.

Transportation inside Ljubljana

Getting around in Ljubljana is easy. There are regular buses that can take you everywhere inside Ljubljana. Monthly bus passes are available for students and only cost around €20. However, if you only take the bus occasionally you can buy a prepaid Urbana card at kiosks. A single ride with the prepaid card costs €1,20. Ljubljana can also be explored by bicycle as the city is not too big. Used bicycles can be bought for around €20-30. Another interesting way to get around is by using the Bikelj system (<http://en.bikelj.si/>). Throughout Ljubljana there are many bicycle terminals where you can simply borrow a bike, drive around and bring it back to another terminal. The only thing you have to do is to subscribe. It costs €3 for an annual subscription.

Leisure

The Student Organization (ŠOU) and International Office inform you by email about trips, events and most importantly parties. Trips are offered on a regular basis and are done with a big bus. Therefore, prices are relatively low. Trips usually last around 2-7 days. Destinations that were offered this year include Belgium, Budapest and South Europe. However, if you do

not like bus trips very much, it is very easy to rent a car. There are special prices for students which are very affordable. Destinations that can easily be reached by car are Udine, Venice, Piran, Maribor, Zagreb and the Croatian coast. Small events are also organized by the International office. For example, evenings where students present their home country to other international students. Furthermore, during your Orientation Week an international evening is organized where every student brings their favorite food and drinks from their home country and shares with others not only the food but also information about their culture. Parties are organized regularly and you will get informed by the Student Office. They even send you a weekly newsletter with all important parties that take place.

Conclusion

To sum up, I really enjoyed my stay in Ljubljana. I had a wonderful semester abroad and can highly recommend the Faculty of Economics of the University of Ljubljana to others. The teachers are excellent and the classes are structured very well. Apart from the academic knowledge, I also gained important knowledge for my life. I made many new friends from different countries and improved my intercultural communication skills. Furthermore, I got to know Slovenian lifestyle and culture. In conclusion, I believe that this experience has made me stronger as a person as well as more aware of cultural differences.



International Dinner during the Orientation Week