

Erfahrungsbericht Auslandstudienaufenthalt: 2020 /2021

Experience Report Semester Abroad 2020 / 2021

Preparation

I had the chance to write my master thesis with the University of Nova Gorica in Ljubljana so I spent a semester abroad in Slovenia. Since I am a student of an international master program, I needed to specialise in a certain field and the University of Nova Gorica with a certain lecture offered me the supervision of my master thesis. This is the reason why it is very important to consider the courses and specialisation of an university for the preparation of going abroad. When I took the decision to go to Slovenia I informed myself about the University of Nova Gorica and what I have to keep in mind when I move there and what they have to offer besides the supervision of my master thesis. In the end, it was necessary to get registered if ones plans to stay longer than three months and it was a good idea to visit the international office at the university of get an idea about the university and its activities. Furthermore, it is also good to plan accommodation ahead of the stay abroad since prices can be expensive in the city centre.

Arrival

I arrived in Ljubljana by train, which was very comfortable but took quite a long time. It is always good to book tickets at least one month before, since international train tickets can be very expensive (around 100 Euro one way). However, during the pandemic it was not easy to travel and I had to provide a negative COVID-19 test in order to be able to enter the country and to self-quarantine for 10 days. Luckily, I was able to rent a student apartment which was quite fair and comfortable. The city has a lot of offers for student accommodations. In general, the city is very nice and people are friendly so if you are looking for something you can always ask people around.

Housing

As mentioned above, prices can be quite high if ones is not looking for housing early enough. I would recommend to look for student accommodations as the private market is always a bit harder especially if you plan to just stay for a short period of time. However, I heard from friends who shared an apartment that this is also a great option especially if you are planning to go with some fellow students and if you share the price for an apartment prices are also quite cheap. In any way, the university is offering some help if you look for some accommodation and you can also keep in contact with the international office for more information.

Studies

My studies were okay, however, supervision for my master thesis was quite weak. Maybe because of COVID-19 or because of full agendas I just had a few meetings with my supervisor, which was very short and only partially supportive. Nevertheless, the university staff and people working in the international office were super nice and helped me a lot with all requests and questions I had. Unfortunately, the university was nearly closed during my time in Ljubljana, since the pandemic shut down most of the student life.

Every Day Life

Ljubljana is a beautiful city! It has an amazing castle to discover and a scenic river the *Ljubljanica*. As a funny fact, freshman students jump in the river in summer for the start of their studies. I did not figure out if this is a known ritual or just some students having fun. I would strongly recommend to get a bicycle in order to be more mobile and to discover the city even more (I heard about a cheap flea market on Sundays where it is possible to buy one if you don't have one). It is also interesting to know that there is an alternative district (Metelkova), which also does great work by supporting refugees. Moreover, the city has great offers for students! There are various options for food and activities that are especially cheap for students, thus, I would recommend to get an Slovenian student card as they often do not accept foreign students card. Unfortunately, during COVID-19 many things were closed and only partially opened again at the end of my stay, so my experience was a bit limited in this regard.

Conclusion

If you have the opportunity to study abroad at the University of Nova Gorica, I would strongly recommend using this chance. Ljubljana is an amazing city and there is plenty to discover. Nevertheless, should you intend to write your master thesis, be aware of the specialisation of the university and pick a supervisor that you think is really supporting you (especially if you never wrote a thesis or have difficulties with academic work). Do be open to new experiences and you will find a lot of great stuff there. Do not go abroad during COVID-19 if you are not intending to do something special in Ljubljana. It is not easy to be in a foreign country during times of pandemic, so consider if you really want to go although things might be closed.