

# The Experience Report

Time period: 02.02.2017-16.06.2017

Host University: Hanze University of Applied Sciences (Netherlands)

## Preparation

The preparation was very easy, I received a lot of support from the University of Oldenburg regarding the documents I needed to send to Hanze and the dates I should start. Also from Hanze, I received the login, calendar and welcoming day information in advance so it was very easy to plan my moving date.

## Travel and Arrival

Since I was living in Oldenburg and moving to Groningen, that was only two hours away from bus, the moving was very easy. I had another friend from Oldenburg that came with me so we could manage to find our way in the city and the new house in which both of us lived together.

## Accommodation

It was very handy to have had the opportunity to go to Brussels for the Eurec opening days in which I met people that were already living in Groningen. This way, when I had to move, I contacted one of them that gave me the contact of another student that needed to move to Athens. I stayed with his room and my friend from Oldenburg stayed with one of the other rooms.

The house was very nice, clean and big with a living room kitchen, garden with a barbecue, 2 bathrooms (one with shower) and 5 rooms. We were 5 people in total and we had a very good relationship. Also it was super interesting that we had different nationalities and we could exchange a lot of experiences and also learn some expressions and culture from the other countries. At first it was me (Brazil), Yannick (Ivory Coast/ Germany), Michelle (Germany), Ploy and Caesar (Thailand) and in the end the Thai people were replaced by 2 chinese (Jovia and Taoran) and our relationship was even better with this last combination of people.

We split the house duties and always tried to eat together. The environment was great!

## Staying at the host university

The facilities of the host institution were very nice. We usually had classes in a new building called The Energy Academy which is a renewable building. It was very easy to access, we had plenty of microwaves, cafeteria and also supermarket nearby if we needed to grab something for lunch or snack.

The nice thing was that we could use the building of both universities Hanze and RUJ. That made life easier for studying and doing group work.

The classes were very well and the University had a different system than Oldenburg. It works with modules, so after 1 month the module finished (with exams, reports or other assignments) and we started a new one. The only problem is that sometimes the assignments of one module overlapped the ones of the other one overloading the work.

Most of the teachers were accessible and willing to help and solve our doubts. The schedule organization, however, was not my favourite since it changed too much and it was very hard to plan

ourselves with classes, assignments, free days and working days. That is something that, in my opinion, should be taken care making it more fixed.

## Everyday life and leisure time

My accommodation was in a biking distance from university so it was very easy to reach. I biked everywhere in Groningen and the city is impressively prepared for that. Everyone bikes and the paths are very good for this.

The sports facilities from university were very good so I could join courses such as: Zumba, yoga, pilates, etc for an accessible price. I tried to go as much as I could and it helped me to balance the academic work with some leisure time. Besides that, coming home and talking to the people in the house made everything easier. As stated before, we always tried to have dinner together or just sitting down for some tea and chat. It was important to be surrounded by such great people that made my stay unforgettable. Since the weather warmed up, we could also enjoy our barbecue with friends or go to the "city beach" or lake to have a good time.

Besides that, since our group was small (10 people) we always tried to do things together either going to another city or just having dinner and going out for some drinks. The city has a great atmosphere, a lot of students and many different places to eat, drink and dance. We had a blast! Also, the transportation system in the Netherlands is easy to use and you can find cheap tickets so I was able to visit many different cities during the weekends or when I received some visits from Brazil.

Since I was very close to Germany, I could also come sometimes to Oldenburg to visit the friends that are part of PPRE program and stayed and also had some friends that came for a day or weekend trip to Groningen.

I absolutely loved the Tulip park, the street markets, eating stroopwaffels everywhere I was and having the best French fries I have ever eaten in my life.

## General Experience

My General experience was great. The country is very organized and a very good place to live especially considering safety. Another thing that impressed me is how the cities are cleaned and how it is easy to get around since everyone speaks English.

The university had some ups and downs, some modules were very good and others not so good, but in general it was a good course. The bonding with the friends was great since we were a small group and always tried to do things together. The possibility to meet people from Oldenburg was also a very nice factor. I miss that city!

The accommodation, city life and biking were also things that called my attention and made my stay much easier. I am currently living in Delft now and I am glad to be able to continue here in the Netherlands.

It was definitely a great decision to come to the Netherlands!