



EXPERIENCE REPORT FOR THE EXCHANGE SEMESTER/ ERFAHRUNGSBERICHT ZUM AUSLANDSSTUDIUM

Please send the complete report per e-mail to erasmus.outgoing@hu-berlin.de

1. When, where and for how long have you been an Erasmus student?

I was an erasmus student in Tallinn from January until June 2018

2. LAND UND LANDESTYPISCHES/The country and its characteristics *Please describe the region, in which you were as Erasmus student (surroundings, traditions, people, etc.)*

I was an Erasmus student in Tallinn University, in the capital city of Estonia. The city is small, only around 300,000 people, of which around half are ethnic Russians. The Summer Semester actually starts in February, which is the coldest month of the Estonian year. In February and March, the temperature was usually between –15 and –25 degrees. There were few hours of sunlight and it snowed a couple of times a week.

Estonians are pretty reserved, but nice people. On Erasmus programs it's generally difficult to meet locals because of the massive amount of international students there. The Estonian language is extremely difficult and it's generally easier to learn and use Russian there.

Tallinn is more expensive than Berlin in every way. Not much, but I would not expecting it to be so expensive. It is beside the sea and the Estonian coast is very beautiful, but there are no mountains in the country at all. Hiking is lovely but usually it is in bogs, forests or beside the sea.

3. FACHLICHE BETREUUNG/ Academic advising *Did you get help from the partner University during your exchange stay? Were there Incoming programs? What did you think about the courses offered by the partner university? How did it work with your Learning Agreement (could you take all the courses you wanted?)*

There was an orientation week when we first arrived, which was quite good. We were given all of our university access etc... The courses that I completed were good, but only one was a Master course. There are very few History courses offered in English, so I had no choice actually. But the Professor, Karsten Brüggermann, is very helpful and passionate. He's a cool dude. The LA system is totally crazy and super hard to understand. I would rather that we had more information as to how it works and what we have to do. For example, when we receive the email in relation to what we submit, there should be links or attachments to each document.

4. SPRACHKOMPETENZ/Language Proficiency *Did you take part in preparing language courses at the University? In which language did you study at the partner university? Did you improve your language skills during your exchange stay?*



All of my courses were taught in English. I studied some Russian when I was there, but only to a basic level. Estonian language courses are also offered, although everybody in Estonia speaks English and nobody expects you to speak Estonian as it is so difficult.

5. WEITEREMPFEHLUNG/Recommendation *Would you recommend this partner university? Please explain why or why not.*

There are a number of reasons why I would recommend this university. It's small and in the centre of the city. Easy to get to. It's very new and well equipped, with cloakrooms and cafeterias and all that type of thing. The faculties are very small, however, and there is not much choice for courses. The best thing about the University and Estonia in general is that everything is digital. It's very easy to check grades, access papers and resources etc... Much better than the system in Germany.

6. VERPFLEGUNG AN DER HOCHSCHULE/Food at the University

Food was great and cheap! Options of vegetarians and vegans in the Astra building. There was a whole canteen dedicated to vegetarian and vegan food. Usually 2,50 for a big plate of food. Coffee was also super cheap, 80c for a huge cup of filter coffee.

7. ÖFFENTLICHE VERKEHRSMITTEL/ Public transport *Do you use public transport? How expensive is it? Is it recommendable to have a bike?*

If you get a residency permit, transport is free. Which is amazing. It's so cold in winter that it's necessary to use public transport, or your hands and face will freeze. The trams are great and busses go everywhere. Public transport stops at around midnight, but the Taxify service is very cheap and easy to use. Don't use a bike. Too dangerous in the snow.

8. WOHNEN/Living *How did you find your room/Apartment/flatshare? How is the price-performance-ratio?*

The only advice I would give is to arrive in Tallinn 1-2 weeks before the start of the semester, and go looking then. There are many apartments available all the time. But the differences in quality and cost are massive. Go see for yourself. If you pay more than 400 per month for a room in an WG, you're being ripped off. Facebook housing groups are the best place to search for apartments.

9.KULTUR UND FREIZEIT/ Culture and Leisure time *Which cultural options of the city did you use? How are the prizes for museums, galleries, sport events, bars and restaurants?*

There's actually lots of sick museums in Tallinn. KUMU is the contemporary Art Gallery. It's brilliant and I can definitely recommend it.

The Seaplane Harbour is cool, about Tallinn's maritime History, but you can get inside a submarine which is pretty cool. There are not many amazing bars in Tallinn, but Sveta club is great and it's located in Telliskivi which is a super nice area of the city. Rost is the best café, hands down. Best coffee and best pastries in the city. Probably one of the best things in



Tallinn is the Supernova Kino, which is connected with the uni. They have free movie screenings nearly every day. I went there maybe 12 times in 4 months. KUMU often have free screenings as well. For film, Tallinn is a good city.

10. AUSLANDSFINANZIERUNG/Financial situation *How much did you spend per month?*

More than expected. I paid 250 per month for rent and needed MINIMUM 450 on top of that, without travelling outside of Estonia. It's expensive for food and beer is more expensive than Germany. It's illegal to drink beer in the streets but nobody cares, so that's a cheap option.

UNTERSCHRIFT/Signature

Yes, I agree with the publication of my report on Humboldt's Online platform and the Moodle group for the European History Master (which is accessible for the European History students and the coordinators)

Berlin 01.07.2018 Paul Tobin _____
Location/Date/Name