

## Personal Report

### University Gent, Winter Term 2018/19, 1 Semester International Finance, Fachbereich 3, Frankfurt

#### Language

**Which language did you use? How did you communicate with your fellow students?**

English, English.

#### Accommodation

**Did the host university arrange for accommodation?**

Yes in a dormitory.

**How high were your overall monthly costs for accommodation (in Euro)?**

350€

**How would you describe the quality of your accommodation?**

Good.

**How well was the accommodation situated? How long did it take you on average to reach the partner university (in minutes)?**

I rented a private room, because the university dorms were fully booked. It took me 20 minutes with the bike or 30 minutes with the tram to the university.

**Which web sites, forums, Facebook pages, contacts, etc. can you recommend for looking for accommodation?**

Facebook group: Samenhuizen/Co-renting, kotagent.be

**Where have you been accommodated (name of dormitory, location, part of town, etc.)? And how would you describe the surroundings of your accommodation (shopping facilities, distance to the city center, nightlife, etc.)?**

In a private room in a shared flat in the suburbs (Wondelgem) 20-30 minutes from the city center (Korenmarkt). There have been supermarkets (Aldi, Lidl, Delhaize) within 5 minutes reach.

## Arrival at the Partner University and Orientation

### Which is the best arrival time?

One or two weeks before the semester start. I would recommend going there in the summer semester because the weather in Belgium during autumn and winter is quite harsh (rainy, windy).

### How did you organize your arrival? Was the extent of the orientation program sufficient? What activities can you recommend? Were all important questions answered? What did you have to find out yourself? How fast were you able to get in contact with the domestic students? How were the services for exchange students?

I came by train 2 weeks before the semester start. There have been a lot of welcome activities such as parties and get-to-know events for international studies as well as a buddy program with domestic students.

## Living Abroad

### Compared to Frankfurt, how high was the cost of living abroad?

Lower, it cost about 75%

### What additional expenses did you have during your semester abroad? How far were you able to travel with your semester ticket? How was your student life off-campus? How were the Mensa's/ student cafeterias? What types of meals were served? How much did the meals cost? How were the libraries? Was their use free? Did the university provide computer workplaces/ computer pools? Was Wi-Fi available on-campus? Were you able to use study rooms? Were you able to rent separate rooms for studying? Did the university provide a sports program? Was this free of charge?

You definitely have to rent a bike. I rented one from a private company (Swapfiets 15 Euros/month) but you can also rent one from university, which is cheaper, but you have to be quick to get one. Public transportation is not that comfortable as the tram moves very slow and buses drive frequently (you won't be provided with a semester ticket and have to pay extra for a ticket).

Gent offers an immense quantity of bars, restaurants and pubs which offer everything from Belgian Beer to Asian food. The universities faculties are spread around the whole city. You can choose between different libraries and pc pools with free Wi-Fi everywhere. The university offers both paid and unpaid sports program in variety of different sports.

## Studying at the Host University

**How would you describe the academic standard of classes compared to Frankfurt?**

A little bit more challenging.

**Did you experience any difference in teaching methods/ class structure? Which were the difference regarding your expectations and your experiences at the partner university? What surprised you, what should newly arriving students know? How were the student services? Was the fact, that you were an exchange student taken into account (by professors or other staff)? If so, how? How were difficulties, which you or other exchange students may have met, handled by the partner university?**

The class sizes are larger (100-300 students) and the courses are thus less interactive. Most of the lectures have been aware that there are a lot of exchange students in class and addressed them separately when it came to organizational matters.

## Final Remarks

**What should future exchange students know/ do/ avoid? How would you overall rate your exchange experience? In what ways have you benefitted academically, personally, linguistically for your future career?**

If you have to gain 30 credit points and you are in your bachelor programmer, you have to be aware that most of the modules on bachelor level (you can also choose appropriate master courses with more credits, which will be much harder) count only for 3 credit points, that means you have to take a lot of courses from different study programs which are not coordinated concerning time and workload. That can result in very packed schedule (you will have project works in almost all courses) and a stressful exam period (I had to take 3 of my 8 exams on two days).

I would rate my overall experience as challenging in terms of the workload but pleasing in terms of the quality of the lectures (also a lot of different guest speakers: entrepreneurs, consultants, EU representatives etc.). So I conclude with saying that I benefitted from the experience personally. And I think I'm now better prepared to adapt to living and studying abroad in the future.