

Personal Report

Malmö University, SoSe 2022, 1 Semester FB4 – Social Work: transnational - Bachelor

Language

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

I used English the whole time at university and to communicate with other international students. Unfortunately, I did not learn Swedish because the language classes overlapped with my other classes at one point and then I could not follow the language classes anymore.

How well were you able to follow classes linguistically at the partner institution? Did the partner university provide language classes?

I could follow classes very well. The University provided language classes during the semester.

Accommodation

Did the host university arrange for accommodation? How would you describe the quality of your accommodation?

Yes, they provided a dorm but I was very lucky to get one because they don't have enough rooms in the dormitory for everyone. The quality was very good and during summer holidays we could stay in the dorms for free. The housing office tried to arrange a lot for us students in the dormitory, organized some events, and definitely tried their best to let us feel comfortable!

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

500€

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

It was very well located. It took me about 15 minutes to bike to the university or to the city center. A large selection of supermarkets was right nearby. The area is very quiet but the dormitory is not, since there are living a lot of students who are into parties.

Which websites, forums, Facebook pages, contacts, etc. can you recommend for looking for accommodation?

I can't recommend a lot because I only used the website from the university and was lucky to get a student housing room. They recommend home pages on their housing website.

Where have you been accommodated (name of dormitory, location, part of town, etc.)?

I have been accommodated in the student housing 'Rönnen' in Värnhem which is not far from the city center. There are plenty of shopping facilities nearby and all the nice areas, as well as parks, are about 10-15 minutes away by bike. Bars are nearby, too. In general, everything in Malmö is reachable by bike, I loved that! I decided to buy a cheap bicycle on Facebook Marketplace and sold it afterward but a lot of my friends used "Malmö by bike" during the whole semester. Both are quite cheap and everything will be explained in the introduction week.

Arrival at the Partner University and Orientation

Which is the best arrival time?

I think the best arrival time is in January in Spring Semester because then you first have cold winter months, then everything turns green and at the end, there are some summer days and Midsummer. In addition, I would definitely recommend arriving for the orientation program because you can get a lot of information there and already meet internationals.

How did you organize your arrival? 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?

The extent of the orientation program was definitely sufficient. Most information for my arrival was given before but some things I had to find out on my own. Therefore, the internet and especially the website of the host university helped a lot. Moreover, it was very easy to get in touch with other students. I already meet a lot of them during the orientation program and then, especially in the student housing. Unfortunately, it was very hard to get in touch with domestic students because most of the students in the student housing were international students. Also, the classes for international students are separated from domestic students. But getting in touch with so many people from different countries was very nice and I did not feel like I was missing out on anything.

Living Abroad

Compared to Frankfurt, how high was the cost of living abroad? What additional expenses did you have during your semester abroad?

About 200% higher than in Frankfurt. In order to save money, I can recommend the supermarkets Lucu Food and Abdos which are nearby Rönnen Student Housing. Then, I can also recommend Facebook Marketplace and all the Second-Hand stores! There are plenty of Second-Hand stores in Malmö and they have a lot of things. The Björka Secondhand Heleneholm is my favorite one! But during the orientation week, this information will be given to the internationals.

How far were you able to travel with your semester ticket? How were the libraries? Was their use free? Did the university provide computer workplaces/ computer pools? Was Wi-Fi available on-campus? Did the university provide a sports program? Was this free of charge?

Unfortunately, we did not have a semester ticket for public transport but we had a discount on trains and buses in Sweden. The cafeterias are very expensive and I would recommend living the Swedish microwave life because a microwave can be found on every floor of the university. Furthermore, the library was very big and had a lot of space to study in a calm and comfortable atmosphere. They have a silent area and also offer special group work rooms. Plenty of computers are free to use and Wi-Fi was available everywhere at the university. Unfortunately, the university does not have a sports program. I went to the Nordic Wellness gym and I can definitely recommend it! They are not too expensive, they have a lot of studios around Malmö (one studio is nearby the student housing) and they have plenty of nice classes.

Studying at the Host University

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

Less 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?

The class structure and teaching methods were very different compared to those I experienced at the university in Frankfurt and it was very interesting to experience that. Actually, I expected a more challenging and stressful uni-life and more difficult assignments but it turned out that it was easier than I expected. Also, it surprised me that I had a lot of free time and off days. The student services were very good and the professors took into account that I am an exchange student. The fact that only international students participated in the classes is already one hint for that.

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, and linguistically for your future career?

I would rate my exchange experience with an 8 (out of 10) and I definitely benefited from it. Personally, I learned a lot myself, for example how to be more independent and responsible and how to cope with difficult situations. Academically and linguistically, I definitely improved my English and communication skills as well as my openness toward other cultures. I met so many nice people, experienced a lot while traveling, got to know a different study program, and learned a lot myself. Everything I experienced abroad, I would not have experienced at home!