

## Personal Report

### **Bogazici University, Wintersemester 2018/19, 1 Semester Business Information Systems, Fachbereich 2, Frankfurt**

#### **Language**

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

I used English during the exchange program. I also started learning Turkish and Korean through the partner university's language courses.

#### **Accommodation**

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

No, unfortunately not.

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

150€

**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)?**

The apartment was located in the center of the city. It took me 15 minutes to reach the university.

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

Facebook group Bogazici housing, Airbnb is more expensive but safer, you don't have to worry about scammers.

**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?)**

It was a private apartment and near shopping centers, cinemas, restaurants. It took me around 5 minutes to reach the metro station Levent on foot. All restaurants were open till

3a.m and offered many cuisines (traditionally Turkish, Chinese, Japanese, Italian etc.). I lived with 3 other Turkish students who were very open-minded, friendly and kind.

## **Arrival at the Partner University and Orientation**

### **Which is the best arrival time?**

September-October because the weather is rather mild, not so cold (it's really cold during December, January, you may feel colder than in Germany because of the air moisture and there's even snow) and not so hot. You should travel on this month.

### **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 flew from Frankfurt to Istanbul and my Airbnb host picked me up at the airport, else you can take the train. Sometimes train is faster because Istanbul is always crowded and many people drive cars. The orientation program covered most of the basic information, but I also have to ask domestic students for more detailed information. Bogazici has 3 campuses, each of which is very huge, moreover the school doesn't offer any map, so it was confusing at first to find classrooms. The domestic students are kind and friendly and always to make friend with international students maybe to improve their English speaking skills.

When you don't speak Turkish, you should register for buddy program. You have to apply for residence permit to stay more than 3 months in Turkey which requires a lot of documents. The university staffs outside who work at international office as well as the officials at administrative office such as department of immigration or tax office don't speak English.

## **Living Abroad**

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

Lower, it cost around 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 mensas/ 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?**

I got discounted tickets only for public transportation inside Istanbul. There were many student clubs at the partner university, which normally organize meetings once per week. The university even offered cinema, students had the opportunity to watch new movies for low prices. The foods were really cheap, it costed around 50cents to eat at mensa but still healthy and nourishing. We could use the library for free and also borrow books. Wifi was available on-campus, the partner university also used eduroam so we must not configure the

wifi, could directly use FRA-UAS account. There were lots of quiet and spacious study rooms in each campus, some were open 24/7. The university offered many student activities like language courses, student clubs, cinema, sports etc. They were free or charged only little.

## 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?**

There were many kinds of exams like homework, review paper, quiz, midterm, final etc. Therefore, the students must always only concentrate on studying and had no time for part-time jobs. If not you would be overwhelmed, feel boring and eventually fail the exams. The teachers checked attendance and participation during classes. The problem for exchange students were the teachers and the domestic students sometimes discussed with each other in Turkish.

## 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?**

They should prepare the domestic language skills and basic understanding about the country. Motivation is also important if you want to not only gain intercultural experiences but also academically improve yourselves. People would think exchange semester is chilling and just going to party and travel. I would like to balance both sides. The projects I did during the exchange program in Istanbul will definitely help me to determine my future working fields. After 5 months in Istanbul, I not only learned about other cultures but also gained more experiences in working in an international team. Those are the experiences I could barely receive by myself in my home country.