

**Fachbereich Wirtschaftswissenschaften Nürnberg
FAU Erlangen-Nürnberg
Erfahrungsbericht Auslandsstudium**

Studiengang an der WISO: IBS
Gastuniversität: Rijksuniversiteit Groningen
Gastland: Niederlands
Studiengang an der Gastuniversität: International Business
Aufenthaltszeitraum (*Semester und Jahr*): Wintersemester 2013/2014

Themenbereiche:

1. Bewerbung und Auswahlverfahren an der FAU

Going through the turbulent application process turned out to be a fraction of the worry people had warned me of. Once you have a vague idea of what you are searching for in terms of type of experience, type of destination and language preferences finding a fitting university runs quite smoothly.

Following my fairly glitsch-free application for my University in Groningen, I was chosen for an interview for which I didn't feel I needed to prepare very much for. I think the questions asked during my interview were very fitting and only further enthused me to embark on this curious adventure. For any future applicants I would only advise people to not worry about interview questions: if you are passionate about where you want to go and feel you have a set of reasons you stand behind for applying for your chosen destination, you should have no problem making this clear to your interviewers.

2. Bewerbung / Anmeldung an der Gastuniversität

Thankfully, I did not have to do very much on this end. Due to a very good relationship between the FAU and the RUG, this went very well. Upon arriving in Groningen I had the general Erasmus papers to fill and other than that, the RUG has a phenomenal and very intuitive homepage that led me through every step I needed to go through for course selection, course sign up and further things such as housing, banking etc. The RUG proved to be an amazing coordinated university that really swept me off my feet. Never have I felt more looked after and had such a supportive University staff concentrated on making things as easy and understandable for me as possible. It was amazing to experience such helpful people. I greatly appreciated it.

3. Vorbereitung auf das Auslandsstudium

To be honest, I did not put a lot of effort or thought into prep time for my semester abroad. Perhaps this is because I generally already feel comfortable in central Europe and was not faced with a large culture shock.

4. Anreise / Visum

As an EU resident, I did not face and VISA issues.

5. Unterkunftsmöglichkeiten (Wohnheim, privat)

Finding housing was on the one hand extremely frustrating, but on the other hand went very smoothly and generated very little effort. This might come across a bit conflicting but I will lay it out to make more sense of that claim.

All foreign students are advised to live in dorm living style which is very easy to coordinate from abroad because you aren't faced with having to deal with real estate agents or apartment viewings. Foremost the benefit of dorm housing was a no-worry arrival in Groningen: knowing my room was waiting for me. This part of the housing was what comes across as effortless.

However the downside was that in order to have access to dorm housing a fee of 275 euros had to be paid purely in registration costs, in addition to ridiculously high rent. The rooms and housing in general was very unsanitary, old, unrenovated, and generally needed a great deal of work. Additionally dealing with the Housing Office might be the single most unnerving thing I have ever done. They are rude, unorganized and inconsiderate to the living situation of a student and foreign student in particular. Despite my ability to speak to them in Dutch which generally got a few extra points in the bureaucratic section, dealing with them was intolerable. If you like going without heating for weeks on end, having 2 washing machines and 1 dryer for 300 people and constant filth, the Housing Office is the place for you. If you do not feel addressed by this description, I would advise you to stay away.

I tolerated it and to be honest, I would probably choose to do it again. I made some of the best memories complaining and living in such an entertaining atmosphere. If you can handle bad living conditions for too much money and can laugh about it, I am sure you will make the best of it. Especially because private housing is very hard to find.

6. Einschreibung an der Gastuniversität

I touched on this in a previous section, this went very smoothly and enjoyably. There is always a certain amount of time necessary to adjust to a new interface for your university life (we all adjust to the new Facebook and eventually it is fine and we get over it). Generally it went well, as stated previously, the RUG had a very intuitive system and the employees there—whether professors or administrative staff—were all extremely helpful and willing to help a great deal.

7. Fachliche und administrative Betreuung an der Gastuniversität (Fachstudienberater, Buddy-Programme, studentische Initiativen, etc.)

It was amazing to experience the helpfulness of professors at this fairly prestigious and big school. Whenever approached, professors addressed me with kindness, assistance and my name (even in classes of up to 300 enrolled students). It is safe to say I felt well cared for and felt very comfortable speaking with professors or professors' assistants.

8. Lehrveranstaltungen / Stundenplan an der Gastuniversität

My courses consisted of a hybrid of mandatory attendance and free choice attendance. I also had 2 courses which had tutorials with up to 12 people in the tutorial. I was on a first name basis with my tutor, completely trusted them and felt they had my best interest at heart. It was a wonderful setup. All of my courses had grade checking throughout the quarter i.e. grades could be achieved in the

courses of the quarter. I enjoyed this setup because it kept students engaged throughout the duration of the course rather than driving students towards a „crash-learning-technique“.

9. Sprachkurse an der Gastuniversität (kostenlos, kostenpflichtig)

I did not attend nor look into language courses.

10. Ausstattung der Gastuniversität (Bibliothek, Computerräume, etc.)

The campus/library/facilities of the RUG were amazing. They were all new, beautifully built and offered anything a student could need including a super market on campus. I never struggled to find a spot in the most gorgeous library ever, which was a very motivating aspect of studying.

11. Freizeitangebote

Because Groningen is such an international hotspot for students, there is a huge demand for organized events for international students. Thankfully, student organizations deliver anything a foreign student could ask for. The supply of activities/outings/daytrips/weekendtrips offered is nearly overwhelming and very much encourages and supports the interaction between foreign exchange students.

Additionally, there is also a large cultural and athletic selection of courses. I myself engaged in at least 4 athletic courses per quarter and did a semester's worth of improv comedy at the city's cultural center. Through this I gained a great deal of contact with Dutch students which was a very nice contrast to my majority of foreign exchange students.

12. Stadt (Sehenswürdigkeiten, Feste, Museen, etc.)

Groningen is small, but offers a grand selection of attractions for visitors. Endless cute cafes, the beautiful canals throughout the city and the cliché lined brickstone houses are just the beginning. The city is cute, welcoming and offers a great backdrop for a wild and interesting semester abroad.

The city is a bit alternative so there was always an abundance of alternative music and art festivals.

13. Geld-Abheben, Handy, Jobben

Banks are present everywhere across the city and the first day I arrived an exchange assistant gave me a SIM card for my phone. These aspects both went very smoothly. I did not attempt to find a job.

14. Wichtige Ansprechpartner und Links

If I had questions I directly contact the help desk at my University which then directed me to whoever was the correct contact person.

15. Sonstiges

It was a wonderful, exhilarating experience I will always treasure. Groningen was amazing. I recommend it to anyone.

Danke für Ihr Engagement!