Travel Log

Denmark, Copenhagen. Copenhagen Business School (CBS)

Erasmus 2016 fall

Arno Zours

My name is Arno Zours. I am a 21 years old Business and Management student at Corvinus University of Budapest. In the fall of 2016, I got the chance to go to Copenhagen Business School for one semester as an Erasmus exchange student. In this paper I am going to write about my experiences in Denmark, and what I think could be useful for people who go to Copenhagen to study.

At the beginning I was very reluctant whether I should go on an exchange semester or not. For this reason I did not really prepare much in time, everything was to the very last minute. I arrived on the 28th of August, in Copenhagen which was just 1 day before the introduction week started. On the Intro week we had a few hours long “lectures” on general knowledge about Denmark, and the University itself, how we can get around campus, where we can print etc., pretty general stuff. In order to take part in social activities organized by CBS, we had to buy a social package, which meant that for the first week, every evening you had a program.

I am very glad I did purchase the package, because first of all the programs were very fun, and worth the money, and secondly those were the events where I was able to really make some new friends and connect with people. The programs included sightseeing, comedy night, party, fancy dinner, etc. I would really recommend everybody who participates in the program to definitely go to these events.

The first few weeks were really busy. Meeting a lot of new people, seeing and experiencing the city for the first time, getting a feel for how the next few months would look like. Going out almost every day and trying to do as many things as possible was really helpful to completely forget about things that some would might fear could happen before making a decision of moving somewhere new.

A few weeks into the semester, I realized that I have to study as well. Especially, because I took 2 first quarter courses and 2 second quarter courses. This meant that on October 19th I had my first
exam, of Financial Accounting, and my second on the 27th of International Economics. I really enjoyed both courses, because I felt that they can be really useful for the future in any business related field. Both exams went down as I planned them to go, not harder, not easier. 1 week in mid/late October is usually a fall break at CBS, but since I had the exam on the 27th, I did not really had one. After the first 2 exams, my other 2 courses started, Entrepreneurship and Innovation in a global perspective, and Sports Economics. For both of these courses I have to write a 10-15 pages long paper. Generally at CBS, you can only have 4 courses one semester and 1 course usually has 1 lecture weekly and 1 seminar every other week. I enjoyed that it was not mandatory to attend any classes, and they gave the freedom to study whenever one would. I believe it is a good method. Despite the fact that I did not had to go to all my classes I attend at least 80% of them, and other people in my courses as well. I realized that at CBS one has to read a lot, and be prepared for classes, otherwise, I did not make much sense to attend.

Grades are important and your academic life, however, on the other hand on an exchange semester one has to make the most out of it. Take as many memories and experiences with as you can. That is what everybody told me at the beginning as well. They told us to absorb as much as possible, to see as much as possible, because it only last 4 months. It was so great to be surrounded with people who had the same mindset, who also knew they are only here for a limited amount of time, so everyone I met wanted to act like this, not just me.

Due to these reasons, and also because most people, arrived only by themselves, making friends has never been easier. At CBS there were around 800 incoming exchange student in the fall of 2016. Everybody I met was open and wanted to know more about me, wanted to get to know me. I have made at least 10 good friends but met even more interesting/fun people and hopefully one day I get to see them again.

Generally life in Copenhagen is expensive. Anybody who decides to go there has to be prepared financially as well. The housing situation is out of hands, and demand is increasing every year for rooms/flats/dorms. My suggestions is to start as early as possible with the search for accommodation, because then you do not have to worry about that anymore and can only focus on other things. I lived in Valby which is a 15 minutes bike ride from CBS and 20-25 from the city center. I was satisfied with the location where I lived. However, if I would go back I would
definitely try to live in either Vesterbro or Norrebro. These are the areas which are just in between CBS and city center, so you can get everywhere in 10 minutes with a bike.

Copenhagen is a biking city. Everybody bikes, all the time, no matter what the weather is, and I strongly suggest anybody considering moving to Copenhagen, to buy/rent a bike as soon as they arrive. Since there are no real hills in Denmark, everything is flat, biking is not really exhausting and in 30 minutes most you can get anywhere in the city. Furthermore, if you are tired of biking, the S-train is a prefect alternative, because you can take your bike on the S-train for free. Public transportation is also an option, but it is way more expensive and usually slower than bicycling.

The city itself has a lot to offer. Beautiful buildings, landscapes, the sea. My personal favorite was the Church of Our Saviour, it is a Church where you can walk up to the top and have an amazing view of the whole city.

Regarding the Danish people and the citizens of Copenhagen, I can only say good things. Everybody I encountered, strangers in the supermarket, waiters/waitresses, everybody spoke perfect English and most of them completely accent free so it was really easy to communicate with everybody. Additionally, they try to make you feel like home and not like you would be a foreigner for not speaking Danish.

Nightlife in Copenhagen is very good as well. However, on Sunday to Wednesday it can get pretty hard to find anything open. From Thursday on, nightlife starts, and most people go out. You can find many bars in the city center, although, most students will not drink in bars because of the prices. There are many clubs in Copenhagen as well, some with entrance fee, some without. In Vesterbro, at the Meatpacking district you can find many great places to have fun.

My time in Copenhagen and at Copenhagen Business School, has been nothing but amazing, I have experienced so much, made so many great memories, have tried so many new things while being there. Luckily I made amazing friends while studying there who I could share these experiences with. I am incredibly grateful that I got this opportunity and that I took it, and made the most out of it.

All in all, I can only say good things about Copenhagen and CBS, because my time has truly been unforgettable, and I suggest anybody who is considering a move there, to not hesitate, and go for it. During my 4 months I have not only had experienced a completely new lifestyle, I also
made friends for life, have seen a different culture, but I also got to know myself better, which for me was the most useful takeaway from this exchange semester.

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If I can be of help for anybody who wants to know a little more about Copenhagen, CBS, or anything regarding Erasmus. Please do not hesitate to contact me.

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