My Erasmus+ semester in Copenhagen
Travel Log Frank Schulleri, Spring Term 2017

Before spending an entire semester there, I knew Copenhagen only from my stay in the city during Distortion festival 2015, which shaped my expectations with regard to the city, the prices, the culture, as well as to a certain degree, the people. When I returned to Copenhagen for my exchange semester, most of those expectations were satisfied. The city was still as perfectly maintained and designed as the first time I experienced it, the prices were still high, the culture was still a mix of the Scandinavian and the German culture, and the people, well, those were still very friendly, helpful and sporty, but not as warm as I experienced them to be during the festival. After a while however, I realized that actually Danish people are rather distanced and cold to strangers. It really takes time to get closer to them to actually develop a friendship. As soon as they celebrate and drink alcohol however, this changes, and suddenly you’ll find yourself being hugged by a Dane.

Living in Copenhagen is expensive. It starts already with accommodation, which because of the scarcity of available apartments/rooms is very expensive. You should plan with paying between 4,000 and 6,000 DKK (≈ 550 – 800€) per room per month. Living costs are similarly high. Regarding food and beverages, the cheapest way is too cook for yourself. Besides lower-priced supermarkets (e.g. Netto, Kiwi, Fakta), you can also use one of the vast amount of food sharing opportunities such as the weekly food sharing events (communicated via Facebook) or smartphone apps such as Too Good To Go (TGTG), which in order to fight the issue of food waste resell or give away food for free, or Heaps Drinks. Another option is to use one of the university canteens, which for instance in case of Copenhagen Business School (CBS) offer warm lunch menus starting from 24 DKK (≈ 3€) on. The easiest and cheapest way to get around Copenhagen is the bike. The city has a very well established and maintained bike lane network, which makes it convenient and easy to get from A to B, no matter where in the city. Finding a bike is rather easy. Personally, I found that buying one priced between 500 and 700 DKK (≈ 70 – 100€) is the best option. If you want to use public transport, such as bus, metro, and S-train, it is worth to buy the so called Rejsekort, a frequent traveler card, which allows you to travel at discounted fares.

Being a student is great in Copenhagen. Not only do you get discounts and special offers at many occasions, but also you have access to the great facilities of the universities, such as CBS for instance, which maintains 5 buildings, equipped with printers of the university-own printer network, academic books store, gym, canteens, several reading rooms and libraries.
All in all, I enjoyed my time in Copenhagen very much. I spent a lot of time outside, being active in sports and making new friendships. I felt myself much more balanced than in the cities I’ve ever lived before. The only thing that constantly caused me a headache was the high living costs. Especially if you do not have the capacity to work and earn money besides your study program, paying 35 DKK (≈ 5€) for a cappuccino or 50 DKK (≈ 7€) for a beer will hurt you every single time. I therefore recommend to start saving money as soon as you decide to go to Copenhagen for an exchange.

Budapest, July 10, 2017