My Erasmus Exchange semester 2018-2019 KEDGE, France

I have spent the last year living in France, more specifically in Bordeaux. The following paper will summarize my experiences and some important information that you need to consider before moving there. It is important to mention that my experience in France, as a Hungarian was amazing, but there are a few things that I wish to know before moving there. In this essay I am going to write about the School (classes), the official housing assistance, France and Bordeaux in general, food and the cost of living there alongside with few tips and tricks ;)

School: The school building is modern 6 storey building, with elevators. I had 8 classes each semester, classes here are not as hard as at CORVINUS, you do not need to worry about it. People can come in late, however you can skip only 2 classes. The schedule of your classes are different because they are not fixed, they are changing weekly and I needed some time to adapt. A “hard” day is from 8:00 until 18:45, with breaks, obviously, however, you do not need to learn at home and the homework is super easy, not time-consuming at all. The grading is different as well. Only the top 10% receives a grade A, which is challenging, however with hard work you can overcome it, easily.

Housing: It is extremely difficult to find housing in Bordeaux, therefore I suggest you to start looking as soon as possible. It is important to keep in mind that old houses in the center can be super cold during the winter and heating is expensive!

The school is very helpful regarding housing. They have a special website, where they connect you with landlords. I received housing through KEDGE’s special website. There is DOMOFRANCE a privately owned company, operating a student residence, on the campus of KEDGE. The price that I paid was 440 euro, however its super old and the heating is electric, so the electric bill will be around 100-120 euro in a month, easily.

France in general: People are helpful, however French people’s English is not their strongpoint. Throughout Bordeaux it is super difficult to find an English menu in any restaurant, but the people are super helpful and the “language barriers” can lead to some super funny conversations. Stores are closed on Sunday and there are a lot of protests, when the trams and buses are not operating, therefore I suggest you to find a flat close to KEDGE, however a
disadvantage of living close to KEDGE is that trams and buses only operate until 0:00, therefore when there is a party, you need to walk a lot.

Costs: Rents are usually between 400-600 euros in a month, but you must consider the heating as well, since I was paying an additional 100 euro for the heating. Public transport is 30 euro monthly, however there are annual passes, which are cheaper obviously. I hate cooking, so I ate a lot of fast food. The price for a menu in a KFC or a Taco place (or anything fast) is usually between 6-10 euros. Supermarkets are cheap in my opinion. Surprisingly there are REAL discounts where you can purchase for example cocktail tomatoes (250g), apples (4 pieces) etc. for 1 euro. Usually food for 2-3 days costs 20 euros in a supermarket. In most of the supermarkets there are Discount Cards so you can save an additional 5% of your total Bill. Kedge has a Dining hall where you can eat “homemade” warm food daily, they also have a Starbucks café next to it, as well as multiple vending machines, so you will not be hungry. Important side note is that a beer is usually 6-8 euro, so be careful!

Additional help /tricks

One huge suggestion from me, is that YOU SHOULD APPLY FOR CAF (HOUSING ASSISTANCE IN FRANCE). YOU WILL APPLY THROUGH THE OFFICIAL WEBSITE WHICH IS COMPLETELY FRENCH, HOWEVER SCHOOL’S OFFICIALS FROM KEDGE, ARE GOING TO ORGANIZE WORKSHOPS IN ORDER TO HELP FOR APPLICANTS. IT WAS SUPER USEFULL SINCE I RECEIVED 150 EURO FOR BASICALLY NOTHING. YOU JUST NEED TO HAVE A BIRTH CERTIFICATE (Translated to French), AND EU HEALTH INSURANCE CARD

The school’s student association namely Melting Potets organize regular trips and activities such as museum visits, vineyard tours, parties etc., therefore you should subscribe to them which only costs 10 euros and they will pick you up at the airport, plus help you to create a French bank account, which is a must, in order to receive the CAF housing assistance.

Overall I travelled a lot, Paris is super close with train (3-4 hours), plus Archachon bay is beautiful, with the Pilat du Dune I highly suggest to visit those places! I hope you found my quick “guide” helpful, I wish you the best and do not worry about the courses, they are MUCH easier than in CORVINUS!