“One semester at the university of Göttingen, Germany”

From April to July 2018 I studied at the university of Gottingen, a small lovely city in the hear of Germany. Here I have attended the following classes: Methodology seminar (10 CFU), research track “Europe in the wider world” (10 CFU), for which I have taken Essential of Global Health and Religion, Society and Politics in the Middle East, Intensive Program (5CFU) which took place in Krakow, Poland and Eurocompetence II—Project Management (5 CFU). Particularly the latter was incredibly enriching and stimulating: we have been taught about the various phases of the project cycle, and guided step by step to the final part of the class: the implementation of our own group project. Eventually I have achieved successfully 30 CFU. In parallel, I attended a language class (French) which was offered by the language center, free of charge.

Overall, the quality of education was good, especially for the courses Methodology, project Management and Global health. The university facilities were exceptional: the library was not only an extremely welcoming environment for concentrating, but was also provided with a rich catalogue of academic sources. The canteen was huge, affordable and vegan friendly, and all in all the university facilities good.

The sending institution reception was available, reliable and helpful in any moment, just like the international bureau. In October we starting receiving rich information about the program and we received precious guidance to find accommodation in Gottingen—which may be very hard. We received a leaflet with all the needed information (how to get a bike, where to eat, information about surroundings etc) to get around the city and the university. In the first wee we got introduced to the campus, we received our student card (with it we could travel for free by train the region of Lower Saxony) and we had a welcome dinner at an African restaurant.
I found Gottingen a nice and quiet city. The university renders the urban vibe dynamic, vibrant and international, with students coming not only from different European countries, but from different areas of the world. Despite some communication and language barriers (not everybody speaks English and I do not speak German), my study period abroad was enriching and stimulating; locals were generally kind and helpful and I had the chance to get to know the German culture as I craved.

Gottingen is a relatively cheap city. Thanks to the Erasmus Plus scholarship I could not only travel around the country, but also conduct a pretty relaxed life (finance wise). Monthly I spent around 200 for groceries, 50 Euros for eating out (canteen plus extra), 230 for the rent and 20 for laundry.

While in Gottingen, I have been constantly in touch via email with my sending institution, the University of Groningen. My coordinator was always available in case of doubts concerning bureaucratic procedures and in general for support. This made my exchange period smooth.

In conclusion, I must say than studying abroad is not always easy. It is for sure interesting and exciting as much as challenging and sometimes frustrating. The availability of my sending university, together with the flexibility and careful help of my hosting institution, have rendered my Erasmus an unforgettable experience, in terms of academic learning, social exchange with other students and peers, as well as personal discovery.