PLACEMENT REPORT

George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies
Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany

MARTYNA KAROLINA DOBROWOLSKA (S3436500)
Master’s in International Security

Sending Institution: University of Groningen
Hosting Organisation: George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies
Period of Internship: 03 September 2018 to 30 November 2018
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction                                                                                          p. 3

1. Before                                                                                               p. 4
   1.1 My choice: Internship instead of additional lectures                                             p. 4
   1.2 Looking for an Internship                                                                         p. 4
   1.3 George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies                                           p. 4
      1.3.1 Choice of Institution                                                                          p. 5
      1.3.2 Application Procedure                                                                         p. 6
   1.4 Expectations and goals prior to the Placement                                                     p. 6
   1.5 Connection to Degree Program                                                                     p. 7

2. During                                                                                               p. 8
   2.1 Activities and tasks undertaken during the placement and the personal learning process          p. 8
      2.1.1 Being a “special” Intern                                                                      p. 8
      2.1.2 Activities, tasks, and personal learning process                                              p. 10
   2.2 Evaluation of the working attitude and placement supervision                                     p. 12

3. After                                                                                                 p. 13
   3.1 Have my expectations been fulfilled?                                                              p. 13
   3.2 Future career orientation                                                                        p. 13
   3.3 Tips for future students                                                                         p. 13

4. Financial support                                                                                      p. 14

5. Living in Garmisch-Partenkirchen                                                                    p. 15
   5.1 Housing and cost of living                                                                       p. 16
   5.2 Social surroundings                                                                              p. 17

Conclusions                                                                                              p. 18

Bibliography                                                                                             p. 18
Introduction

I am a student of the University of Groningen, in the Netherlands, attending the Master's in International Security degree program. It is a one-year program, in which the second semester international students have the opportunity to choose whether to attend additional classes or take part in an Internship program. Obviously, I chose to enrol in an Internship program. I am of the opinion that during University, every student should have a combination of theory (i.e. lessons) as well as practice (i.e. an internship). Students should have the opportunity to put into practice everything they have learned. An Internship is also useful to understand if a given environment could represent (or could not) the ideal place for a possible future job. Given the opportunity to choose, I did not hesitate and took the internship route. My internship lasted three months, from September 2018 to the end of November 2018.

This report is dedicated to the description of my journey to the host organisation, which is the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies in Germany. In this report I will describe all parts of my experience - before, during, and after starting the collaboration with my host organization. Information about the city, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, is also included. In addition, I have also included some criticism, both regarding the city and my entire experience, as well as financial issues and suggestions for future students.

I hope this report can help others understand what should be expected from the process of deciding to undertake an internship.
1. Before

1.1. My choice: Internship instead of additional lectures

As already mentioned, I decided to experience an Internship program in order to have the opportunity to put into practice everything I have learned during the first semester of the Master’s in International Security program. Not only that, but I also wanted to get involved and challenge myself. Furthermore, an Internship is a great opportunity to live directly within a working environment, and gain a real professional experience. There is also the possibility to build networks for life, and obviously to enrich one's own Curriculum Vitae. My hope was also that an Internship could help me in writing my thesis by offering new ideas and suggestions. The search for an Internship is not easy and it is possible to encounter many obstacles. For example, many organizations follow specific dates for the application period, and offer fixed durations of the Internship. My study program requires a minimum of three months full time. Next, I will describe my search process.

1.2. Looking for an Internship

First of all, my goal was to stay within the scope of my Master’s program, International Security. I must say, however, that this decision also reduced the chances of finding an internship, as the security environment is very complicated. On the other hand, I was very determined to find something, and I was not willing to do an internship in a field that was not connected to my studies. First, I relied on technology. I looked for a number of security-focused organisations using Google. This was quick and simple, and very productive. I sent applications to various organisations. Where the information dedicated to Internships was not available, I requested more information via e-mail. I did not receive replies to some requests, which is a common problem. The search for the right internship required lot of patience. Finally, I received a positive response from the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies, in Germany.

1.3. George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies

The George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies is an important instrument for a German-American Partnership. The aim is to create a stable and secure international environment, which is only possible if there is a strong collaboration between all the states. To promote this, it is
necessary to be able to find solutions to regional and transnational security challenges. The Center focuses on issues such as terrorism, instability, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, peace operations, and many other topics. The programs are offered to security professionals from many different countries. Currently ten courses are offered, and they are as follows:

- Program on Applied Security Studies (PASS)
- European Security Seminar – North (ESS-N)
- Program on Countering Transnational Organized Crime (CTOC)
- English Language Enhancement Course (ELEC)
- European Security Seminar – East (ESS-E)
- European Security Seminar – South (ESS-S)
- Program on Cyber Security Studies (PCSS)
- Program on Terrorism and Security Studies (PTSS)
- Senior Executive Seminar (SES)
- Seminar on Regional Security (SRS)

1.3.1. Choice of Institution

There are several reasons why I decided to collaborate with this hosting organisation. Primarily because the focus of this institution is the issue of security, which ranges from local to international problems. After discovering more information about the Marshall Center, I realised that it could be an ideal place for me to enrich my theoretical knowledge, and it would allow me to work in a military environment. The Center was born as a collaboration between the United States and Germany, but currently it offers several programs that are aimed at connecting representatives from nearly all countries, who come to the Center with different perspectives, strategic interests, and challenges. Thanks to this I have been able to analyse various national security challenges, and compare them with what is happening in Europe. This additional aspect of transnational and international collaboration was an added advantage that influenced my choice. Moreover, such an environment has helped me with collecting ideas for my thesis. Another factor was the destination country, Germany. I thought I could refresh and improve my German language skills as well as my English. Finally, the financial compensation offered by the Marshall Center also contributed to my decision, as most other internships are unpaid.

1 George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies website
1.3.2. Application Procedure

The Marshall Center's application procedure is very simple. In the section dedicated to Internships, there is an email to which you need to send the following documents: letter of motivation (specifying the desirable time frame, a list of preferred supervisors that can be found on the website, academic background, and your research interests), and a current CV, including a photo. It is possible to send requests during all periods of the year. However, it is not guaranteed that the supervisors you decide to include your list of preferences will be available. When they are not willing to follow you for certain reasons, then Marshall Center (when the organisation is interested in your application) responds with different offers, specifying all the tasks you would do. In this case, the final decision is up to you. This is what happened in my case, I requested certain faculty members but I received an alternate proposal. In hindsight, I am very happy how it turned out!

When I found out I was accepted, the enrolment process started. For legal and security matters, other documents including the criminal records check are required. Furthermore, it is necessary to provide information regarding physical data such as weight, height, eye and hair colour. From the beginning I was followed by the person who is in charge of dealing with the issue of Internships. I could always count on this person for information, clarifications, doubts and problem solving. This type of assistance remains until the end of the Internship period, which is in addition to the help of your personal supervisor. Another issue that is important to emphasize is that the Marshall Center requires its own contract, in addition to the one that is required by the University of Groningen.

1.4. Expectations and goals prior to the Placement

My expectations were varied. First of all, I expected a professional and a rigid environment, as Marshall Center is both an academic and a military environment. I must say that I was very frightened at the thought of starting this internship there, because I have never had experiences related to the military world. As a result, I expected to be surrounded by soldiers and generals. I also expected a dress code: formal business. Regarding the figure of the Intern, I expected to be considered a part of the staff. The trainee's figure is often associated with unsatisfactory jobs, such as making coffee and doing office work. I, on the other hand, expected to be treated like a real employee.

My goals were to carry out research on certain issues and on different aspects of security, to participate actively in conferences and meetings with officials and representatives of many countries in order to have the opportunity to understand the dynamics that exist between states. Additionally,
another goal of mine was to be able to analyse the theories of International Relations and be able to apply them to real situations.

1.5. Connection to Degree Program

The Marshall Center perfectly mirrors my Degree Program, which focuses on international security. I could see, apply, and expand the knowledge acquired during my first semester of studies. The topics I studied helped me in group discussions and with different military personalities. Without the basic knowledge of International Relations and security issues, I would have experienced difficulties. Additionally, the Center has helped me with the structure of my thesis. The Marshall Center offers a rich library, with historical documents of all kinds (there are also documents from the Cold War, and also publications written in Russian). I had access to huge databases, and as a Marshall Center alumni, I retain access to some of them even now. I had access to books, articles, and reports. As if this were not enough, the employees also helped me: they gave me many suggestions and also shared their work experiences that might have been helpful for my thesis.
2. During

2.1. Activities and tasks undertaken during the placement and the personal learning process

2.1.1. Being a “special” Intern:

Before starting, I would like to specify that I was a “special” Intern. In other words, my task was to be a general Intern and also a participant of the largest resident program organised by my host institution, the Program on Applied Security Studies (PASS). I had to help my supervisor, which was also the Director of the Program, and actively participate in all the lectures and seminars and, of course, in all the extra activities. In addition, my task was also to assist all other members of the Center in their daily tasks (if necessary). What was the PASS program? It involved more than 100 participants from 43 countries around the globe. The participants are civilian government officials, military and security force service members, and government academics. This program was structured as follows. We had varied lessons, organised in six modules. The lectures were then discussed and analysed in small groups in the seminar rooms. The topics included:

- Approaches to International Relations;
- Defining and applying security;
- Origins of today’s global political and security architecture;
- Diplomacy;
- Origins of today’s global economic architecture;
- US policy and implications for Euro-Atlantic region;
- NATO;
- The European Union;
- OSCE;
- MENA security challenges and implications for Europe;
- The UN and international security and stability;
- Russia policy and implications for Europe;
- China;
- Sub-Saharan Africa security challenges;
- The International Relations of the European Union;
- Indian Subcontinent security challenges and implications for Europe;
- Security implications of climate change;
- Countering weapons of mass destruction;
- Media from intimidation to instrumentalization;
- Migration;
- Arctic security challenges;
- Maritime security;
- Countering transnational organised crime;
- Understanding and combatting terrorism;
- Cyber security;
- Strategy development;
- Security sector reform;
- UN peacekeeping;
- Whole-of-society approaches;
- Gender mainstreaming;
- Norms and power;
- Democratic transformation and deconfliction;
- Rule of law;
- Human rights;
- Negotiations and conflict resolution;
- Germany’s security architecture;
- US security institutions;
- Contemporary warfare.

In addition to the lectures, I had the opportunity to choose different focuses of specialization, the so-called electives. My electives were Climate Change and Security, African Security Challenges and Impact on Europe, Protracted Conflicts, and Understanding and Combatting Terrorism.

It was then mandatory to put into practice all the studied topics, during a three-day Capstone Exercise in a given scenario that included a negotiations component. For each seminar group, an imaginary country was assigned, along with all the information to be studied. Together with my group I had to learn how to do SWOT analysis, create the National Security Strategy, and the Security Sector Reform. I was also supposed to prepare for a simulated negotiation, with the aim of reaching agreements and not going to war.
Finally, I participated in two field study trips, the Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial Site, and Berlin. I helped to structure the days, to organise meetings and transports and to moderate the discussions during the moments of questions and answers. In Berlin I had the pleasure to visit: Reichstag, the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the German Federal Council, the Parliamentary Committees, the Ministry of Interior, the German Institute for International and Security Affairs, the Federal Ministry of Defence, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, and Chancellery. It was a really intense week.

I consider myself not only a special Intern, but also a lucky one, because during the last week of the Internship I had the opportunity to participate in a three-day workshop of another program, the Program on Countering Transnational Organized Crime (CTOC). The focus of work and study was on anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing (AML/CTF). This program also offered me the opportunity get in touch with specialists in the field. Before starting this experience, I had very little knowledge on the subject.

2.1.2. Activities, tasks, and personal learning process

My primary tasks were to:
- Support the course as member of the Program on Applied Security Studies (PASS) Leadership Team. This means that my job was to support the planning, organising, coordinating, and the execution of the course; prepare statistics; and conduct research on given topics (those listed above).
- Actively participate in the Program on Applied Security Studies (PASS). This meant attending all lectures, seminars, and electives regarding security topics, and becoming a member of a network of security sector practitioners from governments and NGOs around the world. I am now also a member of the GlobalNet portal, thanks to which I can stay in touch with the people I met during this experience.
- Review and support in improving internal processes of the course. During these activities I enriched my critical thinking because I had to give suggestions on what could be improved or changed. The ideas of the interns were taken very seriously.
- Review and recommend corrections and updates for “participant support tools,” such as the Participant Handbook and Program Internet Presence. In the last case, I contributed to the modification of the institution's website. Some things that were not very clear previously have been changed.
All these activities allowed me to improve in the following capacities:

- **Academic and communicative skills:** I have expanded my basic knowledge and have had the opportunity to speak in front of about a hundred people about certain security issues and then also to undertake a common discussion.

- **Autonomy in conducting research:** both in regards to looking for new information in preparation for the lectures, and for collecting material that were necessary for my thesis.

- **Foreign languages:** I improved both English and German. On some occasions I had the opportunity to speak in Italian too.

- **Team work:** I have collaborated with both my peers and with people with more work experience. I also got in touch and had to work with people from different countries, different cultures, and different work environments.

- **Adaptability:** for different tasks it was necessary to adapt different skills and knowledge.

- **Self-organisation:** my job was very serious and everyone trusted the Interns. I was assigned both group tasks with other trainees, as well as individual tasks that required personal organisation (both the organisation of the working method and time). What required more organisation and more responsibility were the tasks related to people's sensitive data.

- **Work under pressure:** sometimes it was quite stressful to be both a regular trainee and a member of the program because on one hand, I had to help to prepare the lessons and to organise the days, and on the other hand, I was supposed to study the documents in order to be prepared and be able to participate in the discussions. This helped me to manage the stress. I learned that it is important to stay calm and ask for help if needed.

- **Creativity and critical thinking:** several times I have been asked to give suggestions on possible changes. Creativity and critical thinking have also been useful in the parts of study and during debates with other people. Exchanging different and often conflicting opinions has helped me to change my way of thinking and open my mind even more.

Being both a simple Intern and a member of both programs gave me great opportunities. This experience helped me to grow and mature my theoretical knowledge. By getting in touch with people from different countries, I had the opportunity to compare different security challenges and to contribute to the drafting of suggestions for possible future solutions to problems. For me, the biggest challenge was represented by the days of capstone exercise, because I could identify with a representative of the assigned country and try to create fundamental documents for the survival of a state. I learned by doing, listening, and seeing. I participated in the events, I reflected on what I learned, and I could use these things to improve my way of working and studying. The environment
and the relationship both with my peers and with more experienced people contributed to my personal growth. I must say that my motivation has contributed a lot: the desire to help, to challenge myself, to contribute, to learn new things and to take an example also from the experiences of others.

2.2. Evaluation of the working attitude and placement supervision

The work assigned to me was proportional to the master's level: not too simple, not too complicated, but also challenging in some moments. I learned to be even more organised, more than I already am. In this type of work, organisation is the fundamental point. There were times when I needed help and I was always supported. Nobody imposed pressure and for this reason the environment was relaxing. I had to deal also with work that required a high level of responsibility, especially if related to personal and sensitive data. I have always been a proud person, and I had trouble asking for help. After this period everything changed: I learned that hurry does not help and that we must learn to ask for help, even for the simplest things. Only in this way the work becomes less heavy and more productive. I must say that I have enriched myself in every sense. However, there were some staff members who still have the idea of the Intern as someone who only has the task of preparing coffee or tea, making photocopies, and doing only jobs that nobody else is willing to do. In the presence of these situations we have always found a solution. Of course, we helped with anything (every job is always a job), but we wanted to be sure that this would not become a routine.

As regarding the supervision, my supervisor was also the Director of the PASS Program. Despite being busy, he has always been ready to help, to advise, and to find always new tasks. He always kept us busy and included in staff meetings. In addition to the supervisor, I also received support from the person responsible for the internship administration. In addition to them, the other staff were also always ready to help and give advice. From the beginning I felt integrated and seen in a serious way, I felt like part of a big family. I did not think it was possible to create such a strong link between staff members and Interns. So, in my case the supervision was perfect and I cannot think of any criticism.
3. After

3.1. Have my expectations been fulfilled?

The Internship exceeded my expectations, and the goals I set prior to the placement have been met. Firstly, the environment of the organisation is not as rigid as I imagined it before starting. Of course, it is a professional place and there is a code dress to follow, but it is a peaceful and serene environment. Moreover, it is more than an academic and civilian environment, rather than a military one. For this reason, there are few people in military uniform. The thing that impressed me the most is the fact that I was treated as a part of the staff. For example, every week I participated in faculty members meeting to discuss the course improvements, and I was considered a point of reference for other participants. But I must be honest: all this is due to the fact that I was a “special Intern”, also considered as a participant in the PASS Program. Having said that, I am very happy because I learned more things at the Marshall Center than at the University. I have also created networks for life and met people that I can consider to be my friends.

3.2. Future career orientation

Even if this experience exceeded my expectations, I have to admit that this placement helped me to understand that I could never work in an academic environment like the Marshall Center. I need more movement, more action, more application, more simulations, and participate in security monitoring systems. It is the perfect place for people who like to do research on different topics. Of one thing I am sure: I want to work in the field of security.

3.3. Tips for future students

In general, the first advice I can give is to get involved and leave for an Internship experience. Being in the field and participating directly in a work environment is different than studying from books. Before sending applications, it is essential to have clear ideas on the focus of interest that you might like. It is also essential to have patience because the process is not simple and does not always lead to success. It should also be noted that not all placements lead to positive experiences. With all of this in mind, the decision to leave for an Internship will be much easier. As for the Marshall Center, I recommend accepting the position only if you have a well-described plan of the tasks you will be
doing and especially if you are sure you will be a member of one of the ten programs that are organised by the institution.

4. Financial support

Because living in the city of Garmisch Partenkirchen is very expensive, I have to say I was lucky to have different economic supports. First of all, the Internship was possible thanks to the help of my parents, who supported me from the beginning to the end. In addition, the University of Groningen offers the possibility to apply for the Erasmus Plus Internship Scholarship, a financial aid program guaranteed by the European Commission. Obviously, it does not cover all the expenses related to the life during the Internship, but it still helps. The sum depends on the destination country. In the case of Germany, it was around 300 euros a month. Finally, the host organisation also offers some small financial support to Interns, around 300 euros per month.
5. Living in Garmisch-Partenkirchen

The city of Garmisch-Partenkirchen is located in the south of Germany, precisely in the region of Bavaria. This city is also very close to the Austrian border. In fact, Innsbruck is only about an hour drive away. Historically, this city was divided into two parts: Garmisch and Partenkirchen. In the 1930s the two cities merged, becoming Garmisch-Partenkirchen. The difference between the two can be seen walking through the streets. Garmisch is more modern, while the streets of Partenkirchen reflect the typical Bavarian landscape: wooden houses accompanied by colourful paintings of Bavaria.

Today Garmisch-Partenkirchen is a well-known tourist destination, especially typical for skiing, hiking and ice skating. It is a true paradise for nature and mountain lovers.

Source: Google maps
5.1. Housing and cost of living

Being a tourist city, finding an apartment, a house, or even a room is very complicated and expensive. When I was accepted at the Marshall Center for three months of Internship, I immediately started looking for some accommodations. It turned out to be a very difficult process. First of all, for the period from September to the end of November (period of my internship), almost everything has already been booked. I was looking for a studio because I wanted to have my own room with a bathroom and kitchen. All this for a simple reason: after working hours I wanted to go home and relax and have my daily rhythms, without the need to find a compromise with anyone. After two months of research on the internet, during which I had sent numerous emails and requests, and no positive results, I thought I had lost hope. No positive result because either everything was already booked, or it was outside the city or the rents were extremely high. At that moment I decided to contact the Marshall Center, asking if they could help me with any suggestions. I received a list prepared by previous Interns with some examples of accommodation. It was from this list that I selected a place to live. It was a small studio, in the middle between Garmisch and Partenkirchen, and only 5 minutes walking from the train station and the city center. To reach my organisation, however, I had to buy a monthly bus ticket, because from my home to the Marshall Center it was about 40 minutes walking, while with the bus only 15 minutes. The cost of the monthly ticket is 46 euros. My studio, on the other hand, was much more expensive: € 575 per month, all inclusive. Cleaning service was also included at the end of each month. The only additional price was for the washing machine (2 euros). As for the cost of living in the city everything is very varied. Being a touristic city, the prices turn out to be a bit higher compared to other cities. But there are numerous cheap supermarkets, like Aldi or Lidl. Edeka is also famous, although a little more expensive than the first two. As for household products, there are shops like Müller or DM, also very cheap.
5.2. Social surroundings

Garmisch-Partenkirchen is an ideal city for tourists and for people who love tranquillity. For young people however, it can become very frustrating. The city is full of restaurants, hotels, and small souvenir shops. There are also some bars, where younger people can meet. However, the fact remains that everything is very quiet and peaceful. On the other hand, however, the list of tourist attractions is very rich. These are touristic sites both nearby and a little further away. However, the symbol of the city is the Zugspitze, the highest peak in Germany.
Conclusions

The decision to choose the Internship instead of additional lessons was the best option. During the first semester of my Master’s Degree I received basic knowledge of both International Relations and security issues. During the Internship, however, I could put this knowledge into practice. Thanks to this I was able to contribute to the daily life of the host institution and help in the various daily tasks. I spent three wonderful months, during which I developed my personality. Now I am surer of myself. I have collaborated with people of all ages and from different sectors related to security, I have exchanged opinions with people of different cultures, I have improved my critical thinking, and many other things. Nevertheless, I also understood that the academic environment is not the right place for my future work. I love learning new things but I prefer more practical and busy jobs. I also like jobs that involve a bit of stress because they give me more satisfaction when completed. Conducting an Internship helped me to reflect on my future. Now I have clearer ideas, at least as regarding the type of the work environment.

Bibliography


Google Maps https://www.google.it/maps