

**EXCHANGE REPORT****Name****Year and term for exchange**Benjamin BachmaierAutumn 2018/2019**Exchange university**Technical University Eindhoven/Netherlands**Degree programme**Urban Studies & Real Estate

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My exchange semester at TU Eindhoven – Making the most out of it

Before departure

I always had a keen interest in visiting new places and discovering new opportunities in order to keep growing. In my opinion an exchange during your studies is the best way to do so. After some information gathering about potential exchange universities, also with the help of the exchange coordinators Sofia and Erika at the department of Architecture and Built Environment, I have chosen the Technical University in Eindhoven/Netherlands. Special language requirements were not needed as all of the master courses are given in English.

Upon arrival

I arrived quite late at the exchange location as I was working the whole summer back home. There were some general introduction days for all international students but even though I missed them it was no problem at all. Thus, I arrived at the introduction day of the faculty Built Environment where I was able to make first contacts with other students.



Train station Eindhoven

Financials

The financial part is quite difficult to express as everyone has a different understanding of cheap and expensive. I got the Erasmus scholarship (around 350€ per month) which was quite useful. Unfortunately, I did not keep track of my exact spending but generally said cost for living are cheaper in the Netherlands compared to Sweden. There were no mandatory fees to pay for University.

Accommodation

I was provided with accommodation through the university and even had several options to choose from. I picked the student residence located a bit north of the centre which was absolutely fine. It took me about 10 minutes by bike to reach the campus and centre. The accommodation was older compared to other student residences in Eindhoven (for instance on the campus) and my room was quite small, but the rent was very cheap. Depending on the room size the prices were between 290€ (8sqm) and 350€ (13sqm) per month. In this student residence usually three people are living together and share kitchen, bathroom and living room. The bedrooms were equipped with bed, chair, table and wardrobe. The living room had a table and several chairs as well as a small couch. The kitchen included a gas cooker with 4 cooking possibilities and also a washing machine.



Kitchen

Bedroom



Living room

University and studies

The university campus was quite big and in total there are approximately 12,000 students. The TU Eindhoven has nine departments. Compared to KTH the studies such as lectures and project works were not too different and had pretty much the same level. Nevertheless, in my opinion the grading system at TU/e and in the Netherlands in general is very tough, so it is harder to get very good grades there. Those facts can obviously also differ from faculty to faculty. Also, the study schedule varies in the different departments, mine was actually pretty fine to manage. I was lucky that the lectures of my selected courses were not every day, so I had at least one day off each week. Furthermore, all my studies there were in English and as far as I am concerned every master program is in English. Dutch language courses were also offered but I decided not to take them.



Department of the built environment

Courses

During my studies at TU/e I was in the department of the built environment. Most of the students took between two and three courses per period, depending on how many credits they had to reach. I took five courses in total. Basically, in all of the courses was some kind of group work to do what I think is good as you learn how to work with team members from different countries all over the world. It is possible to choose courses already in advance (in my case around July) but you can also register at university itself after your arrival. You will get information about that at the student service center in metaforum building. I will transfer the courses to KTH as electives as I completed all of the mandatory ones before.

City and country

In general, Dutch people are quite open minded and always helpful. I didn't experience anything such as a cultural shock. The most different thing compared to Sweden is probably the great bike culture, so make sure to get a bike once you arrive as it is the best way to go around and discover places. I and most of the other exchange students ordered a bike from swapfiets, a bike rental company. You can rent a bike for 12-17€ per month with all potential repairs included. In case of an issue with your bike they will fix it or give you a replacement bike within 12 hours which is pretty good. Eindhoven is a way smaller compared to Stockholm, but you have everything you need there, and it doesn't get boring.

Leisure and social activities

From university several activities were offered, and also other exchange students were quite ambitious in organizing trips to other Dutch cities, pup crawls or bike tours. University has a very big gym, indoor soccer pitch and a swimming pool. You can access it with TU/e sports card which costs around 60€ per semester. During all those activities and sport offers I met a lot of people from different countries which I really enjoyed. A big thing in Eindhoven is the GLOW festival every year, where a walkable tour is set up through the city with different light shows. It was super interesting and fun to see, and I really recommend doing it when you are there.



GLOW festival Eindhoven

Other recommendations and observations

I do not really have any additional recommendations or tips for a stay in Eindhoven. Basically, all of the people I met and me included really enjoyed the semester there and would visit again. However, I can only recommend an Erasmus semester in beautiful Eindhoven as you will not regret your stay there.