

Travel Report

GENERAL INFORMATION

What was your semester abroad like?

I agree to the publication of the report and attached photos
(there are no third parties rights to these photos) Yes

New outgoing students sometimes ask us for a way to
contact former outgoings. Are we allowed to pass on your
contact details in case of inquiries? Yes

Academic year 2024/2025

Start semester Herbst/Fall 2024/25

Duration in semesters 1

Study program at EUF B.A. European Cultures and Society

Subject 1 (only applicable to teacher training students)

Subject 2 (only applicable to teacher training students)

Subject 3 (only applicable to teacher training students)

Host country Ireland

Host university University of Limerick

YOUR PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

How did you prepare for the semester abroad? What should
be organized in advance?

I have to say that I did not prepared that much academically, since the help provided by EUF as well as the receiving institution were already very extensive and I just had to fill in a few documents and so on. What I did however was to talk to a student from EUF who previously went to UL (University of Limerick) and she gave me some tips. I would recommend this for everyone who is thinking about going abroad. To talk to another student who went to the same university as you are planning on going helps a lot because as helpful as these reports are, they probably cannot capture everything.

Do you have any recommendations for environmentally
friendly travel (if applicable)?

Traveling to Ireland is really hard and expensive to do without going by plane, but within Ireland I highly recommend taking the bus everywhere you go. Most of them go every hour and all the major cities are reachable within a 2-3 hour bus ride (plus they are quite cheap).

Where did you live and how did you find your accommodation (self-organized/provided by host university, dormitory/private etc.)?

Well, to be completely honest, the accommodation crisis in Ireland is no joke. I want to take this as my very first statement, because even though I had heard about this before going abroad, I was not prepared for the extent I experienced. BUT very importantly, I would go to Ireland again any chance I get and I do not regret anything about choosing Ireland as my country of choice for Erasmus. You just have to be aware of the challenges and prepare. I lived off campus because I did not get into the student accommodation on campus. I first thought, since the on campus accommodation saves a couple of places specifically for Erasmus students, that I will have no problem getting in. I did not and had to search for other options, and those are very limited. Other (private) student accommodation was way too expensive for me, so the only other option was to look for accommodation offered by other residents of Limerick who would offer up one room in their house, which leads to the other problems. Most of the ads for such accommodation only offer up the rooms from Monday to Friday, not ideal. Most Irish students go home on the weekends, thus this arrangement makes sense for them, but of course not for an Erasmus student. The last thing I want to mention here is that the place I first ended up living in was horrible (of course that is not a representation of Limerick itself or Ireland as a whole, but it definitely changed the course of my stay there). The University was immensely helpful with finding a new place for me, so if there is anything you are having questions about or issues with even before flying over, DO NOT hesitate to contact the university, they are very happy to help (it is definitely better to ask before ending up in a place or room where you do not want to stay in). Even though it can be challenging some times, the issues I encountered helped me learn a lot about myself and shaped my stay abroad!

Did you participate in events for exchange students? How did you establish social contacts in other ways?

The university gets a lot of students from all over the world, so they have established a global office, which is not only your point of contact for any academic or personal issues, but also organizes a lot of activities throughout the semester. Their welcome week was full of fun things to meet the people you are going to study alongside with. They also offered some trips around the country, which you would have trouble getting to without this option, so definitely take them up on this offer (AND even though it might seem stressful to go on a trip each weekend of the first few weeks, you are missing out on a lot if you do not go!)

How satisfied were you with the host university (facilities, staff etc.) and the course offer (workload etc.)?

I think EUF prepares us very well for the workload and offers at other universities. In some cases of course the workload was a bit more than at home, but I also chose a few courses where I already knew that they were going to be a bit more demanding. Otherwise the course offer at UL is amazing, there were so many courses to choose from that the decision was not easy.

Did you learn the local language? How important was the language for your stay?

I did not learn Irish, sadly, but to be honest I also did not have that much time to do so. If you want to learn it however there are a few courses to learn it! The language is of course not important for your stay, but seeing as school kids in Ireland learn it and there are even whole regions that still have Irish as their first language, you might want to give it a try (also, a lot of information in everyday life is given in Irish as well as English ;)).

What intercultural experiences/skills have marked your stay?

One of the major experiences that marked my stay was the accommodation issues I faced, but that is only one of the many things. I made a lot of friends that changed some of my perspective, I traveled the country and had the chance to experience the beautiful Irish landscape (do not miss out on this!), and I also kind of fell in love with the university itself and studying. Of course the uni is a bit older than ours, but some of the buildings have some nice corners to meet up for study dates.

Which perspectives on your host country/home country have changed - and why?

I have to say that there are a few things that I have learned to appreciate more in Germany. The energy efficiency for one. In Ireland many houses are centrally heated, meaning that if you want to heat up one room you have to turn on the heating centrally and every radiator in every room turns on... not very efficient. And the shower is controlled the same, if I could not use the electric shower for some reason, I had to wait 30-45 minutes for the water to heat up (not ideal in the mornings). The first thing I did back home was thus of course a hot shower ;).

How was your everyday life (leisure, shopping, transportation, inclusion etc.)?

My everyday live was basically filled with meeting up with friends, lectures, studying and going on trips around the country. Shopping was pretty much the same as at home, Lidl, Aldi and other supermarkets are often just a short walk or bus ride away and the transportation is quite cheap. But again we are being spoiled in Germany and a t EUF. The fares for the bus are not covered by a Semesterticket as it is at home, every time you get on a bus its 65 cents and the busses themselves are definitely not as reliable as in Flensburg ;) One tip: make sure you apply for a LeapCard (kind of like the Semesterticket that lets you charge it and use whenever you get one, also shows that you are a student yo you get the cheapest fare) as soon as you get to Limerick or as soon as you have your new address.

Do you have any recommendations for a sustainable stay abroad (projects, initiatives, everyday life)?

You can get most places with bus or by foot, no need to rent a car etc.

How did you manage financially? How much did you spend on visa (if applicable), travel, accommodation (per month), living expenses, leisure activities, other expenses (books etc.)?

The most expensive thing was the rent. For my first room I paid 980€ a month (yes, I know it's insane, but not every place is like this and you should generally not settle for anything this pricey, do not make the same mistake as me). The second room I stayed at was way cheaper with 500€ a month, which is also not the standard but made my time there a lot more enjoyable. The next in the list of nigger expenses was groceries and travel. While yes some of the living costs in Ireland are higher, a lot of the produce is very cheap and if you go to Aldi or Lidl it is definitely manageable. Just be prepared to pay a little more on hygiene things. Travel was also cheaper than in Germany I think, for a bus to Galway and back you can expect to pay around 20-30€, which is very affordable. Many other things cost basically the same as in Germany.

What was your best/worst experience? Is there anything else you would like to share?

The worst experience for me was the first room I lived in, it was in a dirty house with loud neighbors and thus little sleep for me. By far the best experience was however to see so much of the beautiful landscape and I can not stress enough that you definitely should go out there and see as much of Ireland, cities and coasts alike, to make the most of your stay!

Would you recommend a semester abroad at your host university? For what reasons?

I would 100% recommend a stay at UL and in Ireland as a whole! The universities offers a lot of diverse courses and is generally organized quite well. The professors were all really nice and you get a lot of help academically as well as personally and mentally should you need it. Ireland itself is of course worth a visit without also studying there but you definitely get to see a lot more when you stay for a whole semester :)

PHOTOS

In this section, you may upload some photos that represent your stay abroad. When selecting the photos, please bear in mind that the pictures will be visible online if you have given us the permission to publish your report.

Photo (1) file_677bd03d47ce9-img_0980.jpeg

Photo (2) file_677bd043e79e3-img_0121.jpeg

Photo (3) file_677bd04b641d5-img_9758.jpeg

Photo (4) file_677bd051ae4ff-img_3194.jpeg

Photo (5)

Photo (6)

Here you have the possibility to enter descriptions/explanations for the photos

1: take a walk around UL's beautiful campus (especially during autumn!) 2: explore the Cliffs of Moher, probably Ireland's most scenic coast 3: go to the Aran Island to experience the typical Irish landscape 4: maybe travel to Northern Ireland while you are there and hop on a tour along the Antrim coast







