

My name is Stefan Alexandru and I'm a student at KEA in Business Economics and IT, international line. As I have decided to study abroad, I have spent the period from Aug – December 2022 doing an exchange semester abroad in Seoul, South Korea. The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the academic, cultural, and personal growth that occurred during the semester. I will briefly be talking about the classes taken and the academic challenges I've faced. I will also provide an overview of the cultural experiences, and the interactions with locals. Overall, this report aims to provide an account of the exchange semester in Seoul and the impact it had on my overall development.

During the exchange semester, I was enrolled in a variety of classes at Seoul National University of Science and Technology. The international coordinator was extremely helpful in helping the exchange students with all their needs, as well as the buddies that we have been assigned. The classes were primarily in Finance and included topics such as Financial Market and Management, Managerial Accounting, and Industrial Relations. The following 3 have been focusing on academic knowledge shaped around Finance. I have also taken Organizational Behavior and Supply Chain Management, with more of a Business focus. According to your interest, I would recommend choosing topics that you would like to study more in-depth i.e. Managerial Accounting. I found this class the most rewarding, given that I have further enhanced my financial understanding of financial statements. Personally, I believe that the Korean language class was the least rewarding for me, as the pace was quite fast and I believe that I won't be able to exercise my Korean skills back in Europe. Yet, the academic program was challenging, as the teaching styles and cultural expectations were completely different than what I was used to. During a semester, a student had to sit 2 exams, do a group project, make a presentation, and do different assignments.

When it comes to the city, Seoul is a vibrant city with a rich culture and history. I had the opportunity to greatly explore and immerse myself in the local culture. Some of the highlights included visiting historical sites such as Gyeongbokgung Palace and Bukchon Hanok Village, experiencing traditional Korean foods such as bibimbap and kimchi, and attending cultural events such as the Lantern Festival. Moreover, I also had the opportunity to visit the 2nd biggest city in South Korea, Busan, which had a different vibe than Seoul.

I also had the opportunity to interact a lot with my fellow international students and made long-lasting friendships, which greatly enhanced the cultural experience. Not only as students, but as tourists, we usually embarked together in visiting different places and discovering the riches of the country on our own. I would say that this aspect has been the central one of my exchange semester, meeting over 120 people from all over the globe and learning about other cultures.

All in all, I would say that the exchange semester was a transformative experience for me. The opportunity to live in a different country and immerse myself in a new culture helped to develop intercultural competence and open-mindedness. Additionally, I have made significant progress in learning

the Korean language, which greatly improved communication with locals and enhanced overall understanding of their culture. The exchange semester in Seoul was an incredibly valuable experience that provided me with both academic and personal growth.

Overall, studying in Seoul has proven to be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. The academic program was challenging but provided valuable hands-on experience, whilst the cultural experience was rich and enlightening. It was a highly positive experience that I will treasure and I would recommend to any student considering studying abroad to choose Seoul if they are up for a completely new culture, studying pace, and extremely international setting.



Trying Italian-Korean fusion cuisine



Partying in Hongdae, Seoul



Wearing traditional Korean Clothing Hanbok, at the Palace



Visiting the Lotte Tower, Seoul



Visiting the main amusement park in Seoul, Lotte Adventure World