

Exchange Report

Estonia, Tallinn

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Introduction

Why did I go to TalTech in Estonia?

Let me first of all tell you, that I'm of course a student at KEA and I'm studying programming at third semester. And this exchange semester would be my fourth. The reason I wanted to go to Estonia, Tallinn was because of their reputation about Cypher Security. I really wanted to study security for my exchange semester, and Estonia was one of the only country's there could provide that education. While I was considering what I should choose, I talked with a friend and mentioned Estonia. He said that it was a really nice and beautiful city and a good place if you want to party and have fun. That for me was when I made up my mind and choose Estonia.

What are my expectations?

My expectations were high! I was exited for the study, meeting new people from all around the world and was hoping for a lot of parties. I was looking forward to learning about Cypher Security that I find that interesting and was also looking forward to the Estonia/Russian parties. Had heard that a lot of Russians was living in Estonia.

Where did I find a place to live?

So, when I looked for a place to live, there was not really any help to get. I was looking on other exchange students before me what they did but could not really find anything useful. Later I got a mail from my contact person from Tallinn, where you could apply for 2 hostels and you could choose if you want your own room or share with one. Later when I got over here and got to know people, I have talked a lot about where other people live and how. There is a lot of Facebook groups where you easily can find a room to rent in a apartment shared with maybe 3-4 others. The hostel I was in was academic hostel.

<https://www.academichostel.com/>

This was a really cool place, because it was right next to the TalTech school and there was a lot of students living here. So, you got to know people fast and did a lot of events.

Experiences at the host university

What I studied

As told before I studied Cypher Security at TalTech University. In total I had 6 different courses and each course gave either 6 or 3 ECTS points. I give you a list of the names of each course I had.

1) Windows administration, 2) Introduction to Cyber Security, 3) Cryptography, 4) Fundamentals of Python, 5) Java Technologies and 6) Governance and Management of Cyber Security.

The teaching methods was all PowerPoint presentations some of them were long and boring, others you could code/work after. But I was expecting to do a lot more coding... only in Cryptography, Python and java I was coding. All the others were only sitting and watch a PowerPoint.

What did I learn?

Most of the was pass/fail and the rest was graded. The courses them self are not hard at all. It is a nice new learning experience but, I truly think that I would have learned a lot more from KEA back in Denmark. I learned something that of course could not have learned back in Denmark, but overall the courses were easy.

Cryptography was the best course I had, I learned how to encrypt and decrypt, and how to code different encryptions methods. Truly a nice course.

Social and cultural experiences

How was the social life?

The social life was the hole thing worth it! You meet a lot of nice new friends. In the beginning there will be a lot of ESN events for meeting new people, and I will recommend going to them.

I lived in a hostel where maybe 50 young people lived, and of course you will not know every one, but at the events you will find out who you are having a good time with and you will hang out with them. If you go to Tallinn, join the facebook groups "ESN Taltech" and "ESN Tallinn" there will be a lot of events from partys -> gocarding -> trip to Russia.

How was the nightlife?

Now let me tell you... in Tallinn every exchange student goes out drinking every Wednesday. If you have class Thursday that's too bad, you must go out on Wednesday. There are a lot of nice clubs and the prices is not that bad. I have meet lot of people there didn't drink before but now, minimum 2 times a week. Drinking life is wild.

There was an event "Pirates of the Baltic Sea" where you go on a boat for 3 days and drink. And you get to see Helsinki and Stockholm, but the point is... that you are on a party boat with 2000 other students!

What to see?

There are a lot you can go see, I have been to 5 others country's than Estonia while I was down here. It's close to Russia, and for 5-10€ you can go by buss to Latvia and Lieteau. Tallinn is a nice small capital, but after the first month I think you have seen around all of it. faster depending how often you go to the city. But don't worry you will go outside to other city's or countries and it's cheap to do so.

Practical experiences

how did I travel to Estonia?

I went by flight. It's the easiest and fastest. When you land in the airport of Tallinn, have Bolt(taxify) installed. A normal cam from the airport is around 20€ and by using Blot its maybe 7-9€.

How was the public transport?

If you are a student and are staying for more than one month in Estonia, you can get an Estonian ID and then you will get free public transport within Tallinn. One of the first days look up how to get the "Ühiskaart" it is the Estonian travel card, just like the Danish Rejsekort. When you get that connect it with your Estonian ID number and then you have free travel.

What do things cost?

Things are not that expensive, I payed 200€pr. Month for my staying, then 15€pr. Month for gym, and food is hard to say because it depends on what you will buy. But compared to Denmark its maybe 15-50% lower, depending on what.

Conclusion

My overall conclusion is good! I really don't regret coming here and it was one of the best experiences of my life. The courses where easy so don't worry about not being the top student back in Denmark. The social life was amazing, lots of good-looking girls and you can always find friends who are up for partying.

I Give Estonia 4 out of 5 stars!

And as a last pointer! I went with a friend, we both signed up for Tallinn because it was not that popular, so there was a better change we will go together. You don't have to go with a friend you know, I would still have gone. But if you want to go with one, there is a good change that you both will get accepted if you choose Estonia.