

# POLAND – Jagiellonian University

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## I. Your overall feeling after your semester abroad

*How was your experience abroad? If you could go back in time, would you go to this university and why ?*

If I were to rate my overall experience abroad in Poland, I would give it a 7/10. It was an interesting experience to discover Central/ Eastern Europe in terms of its scenery and its culture. I used this opportunity abroad to travel to different cities in Poland (Zakopane, Gdansk, Warsaw) as well as nearby countries such as Slovakia, Hungary, Czech Republic, and Austria. I was intrigued by Poland and its culture and I am glad I took the opportunity to discover it. Academic-wise, I was able to attend Jagiellonian University which is the oldest university in Poland dating back to the XIV century. Sadly, because of COVID most of my courses were conducted online via Teams. I did have one class where I had the chance to attend in person and I did enjoy being able to go to the University campus. Many of the Professors speak good English and have worked or collaborated on an international scale which is always interesting so yes, I would recommend this university.

## II. Before the travel

### A. Preparation

#### 1. Visa

*Do I need a visa ? If yes, what is the process ?*

If you are a EU citizen I believe that there is no need for a visa. I personally did not have one.

#### 2. The flight

*what flight did you take (the company name, airport etc.) and when did you take your flight ticket*

I learned quite late due to the Polish administration communication of when classes would start etc, I started around Feb 21 and I believe I was notified late January/ early February of the dates of the school year. For these reasons as soon as I received the information I immediately took my ticket there.

I used Ryanair from Marseille Provence to Krakow John Paul II Airport. To get to Marseille you can either take a bus, the train, or the car, I personally took the train and it cost me about 10-15 euros. For the flight I would say that the cost depends on when you book your ticket but I booked it quite late so I think my ticket was around 50 euros.

### 3. My luggage

*what to not forget in the luggage (what was useful and what you would like to have taken)*

The school year is from late February (winter) to late June (summer) so if you are not planning to go home I would advise you to take both winter and both summer clothes. I personally went home after 2 months out of the 4 so I used that occasion to switch my winter clothes (puffer jacket, turtle necks, long socks) for summer clothes (tank tops, dresses, shorts).

Poland is a continental country so when it gets cold it gets cold and when it gets hot it gets hot. Bring clothes for all weathers and don't forget beanies, gloves, sunglasses, swimsuits, or umbrellas.

Apart from clothing I also brought an extension cord and pairs of shoes for all occasions.

### 4. Bank account

*did you have to change bank? To respect some amount requirement on the bank account etc.*

In Poland they do not use the Euro they use the Zloty (PLN/ ZL). You can use your own French bank account and pay a small fee for your payments out of the Euro zone (at the Société Générale I had an offer to pay 5 euros once for these fees and that's it, no longer after). If not, I believe it is possible to open up a Polish bank account, I think that for students most banks have a special offer in which you would not need a minimum amount required or what not. However, I did not do any of these instead I used an application called Revolut. It is basically a money/ banking application that allows you to spend money in different currencies for free. I would create an account (that would give me a RIB or IBAN), transfer my euros on to the application then directly exchange my euros transferred into the currency needed. I could then directly pay in PLN with my credit card on my phone.

### 5. Insurance

*What insurance did you subscribe to ?*

As a EU citizen I just had my standard EU health coverage.

## B. Housing

### 1. Where to live

*Do a google maps capture and circle the area you recommend to live in (and the one you do not recommend)*

Honestly, Poland and Krakow especially is a quite safe space. I believe that as long as you live near or in the city center you will be fine and that is what is most practical. I lived 10-15 min away by foot from the city center and it was very helpful.

### 2. Find a flat or a room

*How did you find your flat? Do you have any recommendation*

When the university contacts you and sends you all necessary information for back to school, they offer you the possibility to stay in a student dormitory. There are in total 4 dorms in Krakow, all you have to do is notify that you are interested and rank the dorms from most to least preferred. I took Zaczek dormitory that is near the city center and I stayed in a shared room with private bathroom and shared kitchen with the rest of the floor (about 10 rooms). Each of the 4 dorms has their own unique features and locations so please do a little research beforehand on each one of them before your do your ranking.

If you do not want to stay in a student dormitory you can also find a colocation. If not, there is a student residence called Livinnx that is quite luxurious (jacuzzi, gym, lounge room, sauna, barbecue, rooftop, study floor etc) but that is 20 min in tram and quite expensive compared to the Polish living standards. (about 400-500 euros by month for a private room in a shared apart with 3 other people).

### 3. Cost

*How much should I plan for a room?*

I believe I stayed in one of the most affordable accommodations. For my shared room in the student dorm I paid 100 euros by month. You can also ask to stay in a private room but I believe this to be a bit more costly.

## III. When I arrive at the university

### A. Inscription at the university

*How was the process, what did you have to do?*

I just had to follow the process that MOMA indicates and once we are accepted into the partner university they then contact us and send us all information necessary. However I did receive the essential information quite late (early Dec) compared to my fellow colleagues who received messages early Nov so please do be patient.

### B. Information on the university

#### 1. Courses

*List the different courses, and for each course, describe the format, the content, the exam, what did you like and not like, would you recommend it for the next student?*

When studying at Jagiellonian University we have the choice to take classes from the Faculty of Management and Social Communication and the Institute of Entrepreneurship. I chose the following courses: Human Resource Management, Leadership in Contemporary World, Organizational Culture, Semiotics of Advertising, Social Media, Supply Chain Management.

-Human Resource Management: 7/10

The Professor is lovely and loves to interact with the students. She has her slides and she does her lectures but she also shows us videos which we discuss in groups then as a class. She also uses a site (Menti) to ask us questions that we answer anonymously and that she then comments together with us.

The exam is a 30 min MCQ, 80% of the questions are multiple choice and 20% are open questioned. The questions are on the exact content seen in class like statistics, facts etc which makes it quite easy. Presence in class is also obligatory 75% of the time to pass.

I would recommend.

-Leadership in Contemporary World: 8/10

If you enjoy out of the box thinking, discussing and debating with others, and speaking your mind then this is the class for you. Sadly, it is not what I prefer the most. This course along with the Professor pushes you to think of our society, dissect what is wrong, why it is wrong, and search for solutions. In each class there is a reading (sometimes 2-3 texts, sometimes 3-30 pages) to do beforehand and the subject of that reading is the subject of that class. The Professor asks questions about the text and then he splits us into small groups of 4-5 to discuss the subject and answer questions he'd asked us.

The exam is both continuous and terminal. We are noted on: presence and participation, written blogs on online platform (similar to Moodle), and final individual essay.

I will admit that I discovered many new concepts and learned new ways of seeing our current society. However, I believe that you have to be ready to do some reading, always prepare your work, and always be ready to share your ideas and your thoughts on a subject for this course. If this is what you enjoy then I would 100% recommend this to you.

PS there is another course something along the lines of Leadership of the Future which is actually conducted by this same Professor and has similar course content, so if you are interested in taking one of these 2 leadership courses, be sure not to take both.

-Organizational Culture: 8,5/10

I personally enjoyed this course. The Professor is enjoyable and shares his knowledge both in OC and in Psychology as he previously studied that subject. He is very organized, he has his slides, everything flows naturally and makes sense and on top of that he records each of his lessons so we can rewatch if needed.

The exam was a short quiz of 5 questions. At the end of each lesson he would ask 2 questions based on the subject of that class so at the end of the course he would have about 20 questions. He would then randomly choose 5 questions out of the 20 and we would have to answer the 5 questions under an hour.

In terms of content it resembles the classes of M Chauvet so if you are interested in Management in that sense of Organizational Culture then I would 100% recommend.

-Semiotics of Advertising: 7/10

This course is interesting as it takes daily culture analysis to a deeper level but it can get quite technical at times. We see many current examples and analyze advertisements whether it be

photos, videos or other. The Professor has her slides and does her lessons in this manner, then she would ask us our opinion on an example and ask us to analyze and explain why this why that etc. However this was the longest class I had (2h instead of 1h30 for all the others).

The exam consists in writing an essay in which you analyze the advertisement of your choice. The Professor sends a guideline to help us and inspire us on what can be interesting to take a closer look at.

I would recommend if you like marketing or if you like to analyze and go deep deep into detail.

-Social Media: 7/10

The Professor is very kind and answers all questions we have whether it be on the course of in terms of Erasmus mobility. In the course we analyze social media, see what it is, how it works, why it works. Lots of theory but with lots of concrete examples.

The exam consists in 3 assignments on 3 different social platforms: Facebook, Instagram/ Tiktok, Canvas. Amusing exams which are fun and easy to do. I would recommend.

-Supply Chain Management: 5/10

Out of all courses I took this was the one I had the most trouble with. Most classes were done in person physically and not online contrary to all of my other courses. The Professor is passionate about his subject and it shows however I believe that the lessons could have perhaps been a bit more organized. The course really goes into detail and for a beginner student in the subject it may be too in detail.

The exam consists in a group case study on chosen companies in which you have to answer questions in an excel file and then present these answers and lastly individually answer class questions. If you enjoy the Supply Chain and would like to discover all aspects of it in a thorough manner I would recommend this to you.

## 2. Advice on “contrat d’étude”

*would you recommend for a student when picking its courses*

I would say to be sure to look at all of the courses offered and read their descriptions. Make a list or a ranking of those that interest you and go back a few days or weeks after to see if you are still interested in taking those classes.

## IV. When I live there

### A. Safety

*Is it safe? Is there areas or times I should avoid*

I would say that Krakow is safe++. As an Erasmus student you are likely to party late at night and despite this you will not be bothered, even if you are female. All areas and all times are safe (11 pm, 2 am, 4 am...)

## B. Phone and Internet

*How to be able to call and have internet*

I personally have a EU-covered phone plan with Free so I did not have to change anything.

## C. Events

*How to know about the events?*

I would advise you to join in as many group chats, Facebook, Messenger, Whatsapp as you can, for your University, the Faculty, the Erasmus group, the French group etc. Not only will you be informed of events of these communities but you will also meet people who will know of these events.

## D. Sports

*What sport can I do ? and how?*

I personally like to dance and go to the gym and I did just that. I went to Wild Dance Academy (Florianska) and Fitness Place in the Galeria Krakowska. This was independent from school of course.

## E. Eating

*Any recommendation? Or good tips (e.g. an international house buffet)*

When in Poland you have to try the basics: pierogies, zapiekanka, goulash etc. You can eat for very cheap (15-20 PLN = around 3-5 euros).

## F. Go to the university : bus, car, bike

*How did you get access to the bus, car or bike*

To get to my Faculty I had to take the public transport. I had a 20 min trip in bus and tram and there is an application for the transport (Jakjodade) that is very accurate and helpful so I would recommend it as a must to install. I know that when you have a student university card you get reduced prices on your travels.

## G. Travels

*What do you recommend and what do you not recommend*

I would recommend everything and everywhere. In Poland I only visited 3-4 cities which I regret. With the train (and for a fair price of 5 euros with the student discount thanks to the university card) you can visit all of Poland, the trains are not as fast as the TGVs but they get you where you need to go. I would highly recommend Gdansk as it is at sea (along with

neighbouring city Sopot), Zakopane/ Morskie Oko where you can either ski or go hiking along a beautiful lake at the border of Slovakia, and why not Warsaw since it is the capital (however most Poles prefer Krakow to Warsaw). Otherwise I visited Budapest, Prague, Vienna, and Bratislava and I would recommend them all.

#### H. Any other information you would have liked to know about

*What would I liked to know if I could have gone back in time*

Krakow is a cute city and has its charm. If you like big cities I would not recommend, it is a bigger city than Montpellier yes but you mostly will do your activities in the city center so you quickly get to know the city.

#### V. Photos

I actually made a Tiktok showing some of my trips, my photos etc so don't hesitate to contact me for that, other photos (of Poland or of the dorm for example), or any other questions! My email is [ziafulam@gmail.com](mailto:ziafulam@gmail.com) and my instagram [@zialam](https://www.instagram.com/zialam)

