

[SUÈDE] – [Södertorn university]

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¹ To update the agenda just click right on your moose

I. Your overall feeling after your semester abroad

I loved my experience in Sweden. I had the opportunity to visit many cities in Sweden but also in Europe, I met people from all over the world and I improved my English a lot. Södertorn University is a really nice university to study, however I think some courses are more interesting than others. Also, the content of certain courses was too “easy” for a student in his 3rd year of Bachelor in my opinion. The only reason why I put 4.5 and not 5 is the weather...

GRADE : 4.5

=> 0 (I do not recommend this semester abroad to my best friend) - 5 (I totally recommend this semester to my best friend)

II. Before the travel

A. Preparation

1. Visa

You don't need a visa to study in Sweden if you have a passport/ID from one of the countries of the European Union.

2. The flight

I was supposed to go to Stockholm from Marseille with Lufthansa with a layover in Germany. These plane tickets were really cheap, less than 200€ round trip with a check-in suitcase. I booked them in advance, around November for January. In the end, I had to change my flights because I postponed my arrival due to medical issue. Thus, I took a direct flight from Lyon to Stockholm with Transavia. I had 50kg of luggage. For the return, I found a direct flight from Stockholm to Marseille. I paid around 300€ in total.

3. My luggage

The most important is to have warm clothes. If you have ski equipment (jacket, boots, gloves, thermal clothing, socks, hat, scarf...), I advise you to bring it with you, especially if you are planning to go to Lapland (that's why I had 2 big suitcases!). But summer clothes can also be useful since in May the weather is really good or if you want to travel to the south of Europe. Don't forget to bring your swimsuit to go to a sauna, a typical Scandinavian activity!

4. Bank account

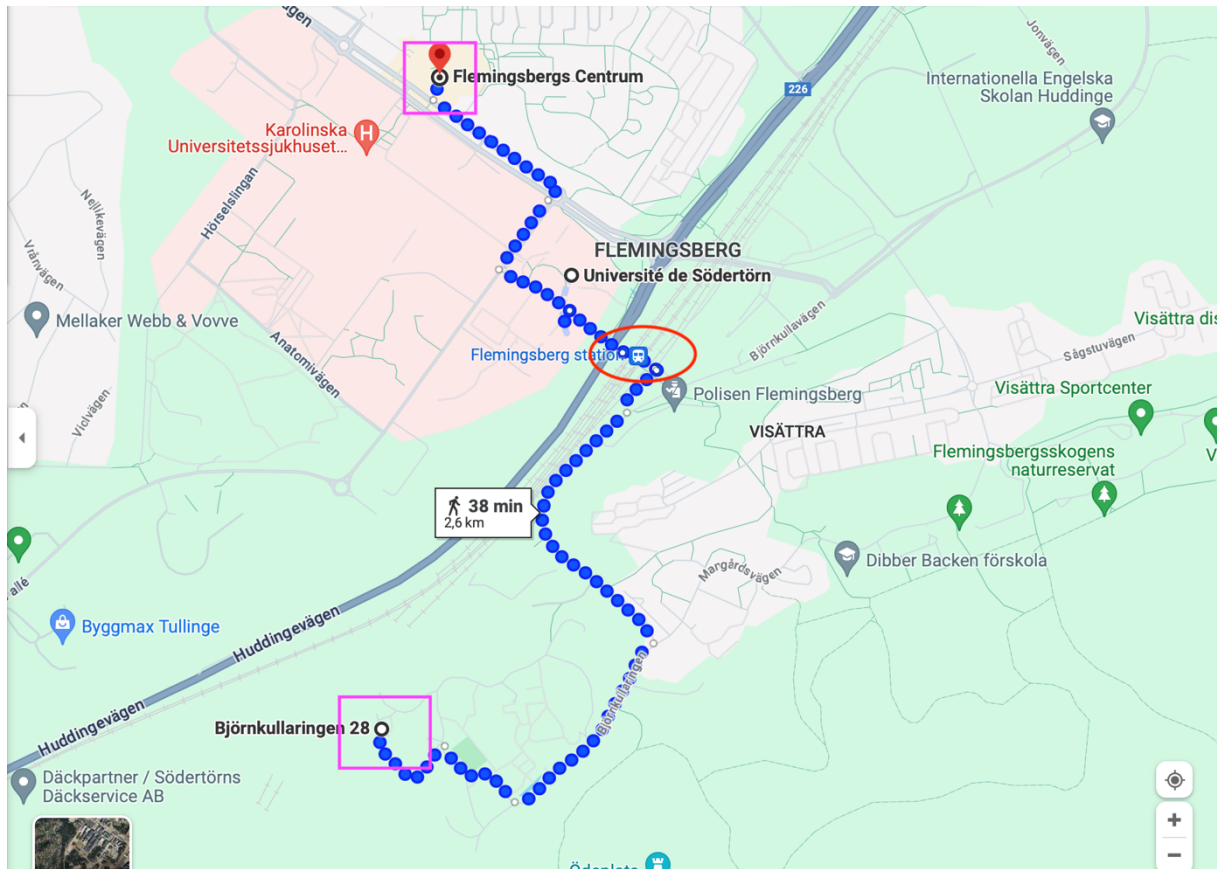
I didn't change my bank account. I already had an international option that permits me to not have fees when I'm paying in another currency.

5. Insurance

I only had my European health card.

B. Housing

1. Where to live



There are two residences proposed by the university: Flemingsberg centrum which is in the center of the little town you reside in, and Björnkulla. I stayed at Björnkulla and did not regret my choice. While Flemingsberg centrum is more practical to go to the supermarket and walk to the university or the train station, there is no shared common area, like there is in Björnkulla. You are sharing the kitchen with a maximum of 8 other students and have your own bathroom in your room (with a small kitchenette too but I didn't use mine). A lot of parties happen in these common kitchens. Also, there is a really nice courtyard in Björnkulla where you can enjoy the sun, eat, or even have a barbecue. To go to Björnkulla from the train station, you can walk (around 15 min) or take a bus. The bus stop is less than 5 min walk from Björnkulla. To go to Stockholm, you have to take the commuter train (Pendeltåg in Swedish) at Flemingsberg station for 20 minutes.

2. Find a flat or a room

You don't need to search by yourself, the university proposed the residences by email. You must list your preferences in order (single room in Björnkulla, shared room, or single room in Flemingsberg). However, if you want to find an accommodation in the center of Stockholm you can, but I think it's really difficult and expensive.

3. Cost

I paid 27 000 SEK, which represents approximately 2 400€. You need to pay before your arrival, which is not super convenient if you don't have this amount of money on your account... The agreement was from the 15th of January to the 15th of June for everyone.

III. When I arrive at the university

A. Inscription at the university

They sent me some emails for the inscription before my arrival. So when I arrived I just asked them to fill out the certificate of arrival for the scholarship. They are quite quick to answer if you need help.

B. Information on the university

1. Class

The Swedish system is really different than the French one. You will have only one course each month. At the end of the period, you will have an exam (the form of the exam is different depending on the course) and then move on to the next course. There are very few classes compared to French universities, a maximum of 10 hours per week.

2. Organization of the Class

Depending on the course, each class is between 2 and 3 hours and the schedule can be different each week. There are two kinds of classes: the lectures (similar to our Cours Magistraux) and the seminars (similar to our Travaux Dirigés). Only the seminars are compulsory, you can only miss one during the period but the teachers are usually comprehensive (they know that we are traveling), but they can give you other work to do to compensate your absence. They also know that we're not used to the Swedish system so if you fail one of your assignments, they will give you the opportunity to improve it. There is a lot of reading to be done compared to France, with the books being found online or at the library. The volume of work wasn't big in the courses I took, but I know that some of my friends had more work to do.

3. List of courses and recommendation

International management: a lot of notions have been seen at MOMA, the teacher is very nice (he speaks fifteen languages including French). For this course, we had 2 lectures per week and 1 seminar. During each seminar, we had a group presentation and a paper to submit answering the same questions as the oral presentation. The teacher decides on the groups and mixes the nationalities, since it's the first course of the semester it's a good way to meet people. These presentations required work but didn't take too much time to complete if you are well organized, we had the subject of the presentation a few days in advance. The exam was a "take-home exam" with 5 questions on the various subjects we had covered (2 pages per answer). I would recommend this course.

Social psychology: the subject is super interesting as is the teacher. The lectures are clear and fun. During the seminars, we had to do a group work about a social experiment. There were 4 groups of seminars, 3 taught in Swedish and 1 in English, thus we were only between international students and didn't get the opportunity to work with Swedish students which was a little bit disappointing. If you are interested in psychology and human behavior I recommend this course, even if it requires more work since it's not our field of study. The exam was a "sit exam" (équivalent à nos partiels) with multiple-choice questions, and 4 questions requiring more detail, if you fail this exam you have to come back the next semester to retake it.

Social economy and social entrepreneurship: the easiest and also less interesting course. The lectures and seminars weren't that necessary as we just had a report to do in group

about the social company of our choice. The teacher was very nice and comprehensive (a lot of people were traveling during this period, so we had a few lectures on Zoom). I would recommend this course if you want to deep dive into a company that you like but I didn't learn that much, except for the company we chose.

The tourist company: this course was a little bit disappointing since it was more about marketing than tourism. However, most of the notions have been seen during the first semester at MOMA. We had a group work to conduct as well as a sit exam at the end of the period. The main teacher wasn't really helpful for the group work, and we had different teachers during the lectures, so it was a little bit confusing. I wouldn't recommend this course, except if you want to deep dive into a tourist company that you like.

4. Exam

The type of examination varies from one course to another. Usually when you are choosing your course on the website of the university the type of examination is mentioned in the syllabus. As I said before, when it's a sit-exam (partiel), you won't have a second chance before the next semester, but if it's a home exam or a group work you will have the opportunity to improve it if the teacher thinks it wasn't satisfactory.

IV. When I live there

A. Safety

Sweden is a safe country. You can take public transportation at night without feeling unsafe as well as walk in the streets. I was able to walk from the train station to my place safely (the only thing you can meet is a deer or a hare in the forest!). It's very pleasant, especially as a woman.

B. Phone and Internet

I kept my French SIM card and had a box for Wifi in my room, the internet connection was really good by the way.

C. Events

I suggest following ESN Stockholm on Instagram to know where parties and other events are happening around the city. Good to know: the National Day of Sweden is the 6th of June, and you can attend a parade and see the King of Sweden; also the 1st of May is an important day in Sweden (Walpurgis night), some event occurs this day in Skansen (the open air museum of Stockholm). Finally in April (I don't remember the exact date), all the museums are free for one evening, it can be a great occasion to visit one of the numerous museums in Stockholm. You can search on the Internet for other main events in Sweden.

D. Sports

I don't think you can do some sports at the university, but I highly recommend you go to an ice hockey game.

E. Eating

Restaurants are pretty expensive in Stockholm but I would recommend you Slingerbulten in Gamla Stan (the old town) for traditional dishes, Max which is a Swedish fast food, and Stockholm City Food Hall. If you are a brunch fan, STHLM Brunch Club is the place to be!

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

From Björnkulla, there is a bus that goes directly to the university. You can also walk through the forest if you want and will take about 15-20 minutes (but be careful during winter it's slippery).

G. Travels

I had the opportunity to travel a lot during the semester. I went to Helsinki for the IAE Score Message (il n'y a pas de centre d'examen à Stockholm) but it was also the opportunity to see the city, not my favorite one, maybe because it was in February so it was really cold and there wasn't a lot of things to do (also it was my second time there). Then I went to Kiruna (Swedish Lapland), it was the best experience of my life, if you have to do only one trip during your exchange, I recommend this one (hope you will be lucky enough to see the northern lights as I did!). We took the night train directly from Stockholm (18 hours of train but it was worth it, and the landscapes were amazing). We also went to Tallinn, Riga, Budapest, and Copenhagen. You can find cheap plane tickets with Ryanair and Wizz Air, and train is a really good option to go to Copenhagen. I also visit Swedish cities: Lund and Goteborg. Lund was my favorite one and you can stop there on your way to Copenhagen for example.

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

Going abroad can be scary, especially if you are the only one of the promotion to go to this destination, but it's a wonderful experience and the perfect moment to go out of your comfort zone. And don't worry, you'll make friends easily, I arrived two weeks after the beginning of the semester and was really stressed because I thought that all the groups were already formed, but I met wonderful people and made really good friends ☺.

Regarding the weather, the winter can be a little bit depressing since the sun sets quite early and it can be really cold. Try to plan things to avoid staying in your room every day (since you won't have to go to the university every day). I advise you to take some vitamins otherwise you'll be tired due to the lack of sun. But as soon as spring begins, you will enjoy even more the sunny days!

If you have any questions don't hesitate to contact me I'll be really happy to help you!

V. After your semester abroad

A. What are you planning do to?

Next year I will start my master's degree at the IAE of Lyon (Master management et commerce international parcours affaires internationales).

B. Did you apply for master?

I applied between February and March for 15 masters, mainly in International Management and Business, it takes some time to prepare your applications so do it in advance. Also be aware that you'll probably have some interviews (online) during May so you have to be available.