

MY STUDENT EXCHANGE EXPERIENCE

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While I was struggling with relocating to a different region far from my family and friends, I received the message of the opportunity to travel for an Erasmus program. A part of me was elated while the other half of me was pessimistic about traveling because I had a lot on my plate to handle. My pessimism made me doubt if I had enough time to prepare adequately and get all the documents for my travel. In the cause of time everything happened smoothly, I boarded the flight, and today I'm writing this story from Hradec Králové, Czech Republic. I knew very little about the Czech Republic, so I had few expectations, I had no high hopes for my 5-month stay and I was only ready for the best that could happen and even embrace the worse. It was my first trip outside my country and that was my ultimate thrill.



City tour. (Athanasius, also from Ghana and other European students)



My buddy picked us up at the airport and he was an amazing person; soon I met other Erasmus students at the train station and we started socialising. From the city tour to meeting new people from other parts of the world, the first two weeks were super exciting. The ESN organised activities to facilitate the speed of meeting people and making friends, I quickly made about 5 new friends, and soon we could move within the Czech Republic on our own.

The next activity was the scavenger hunt which my group won second place and we got a prize for it.

Thinking I will miss my family during my birthday because I was far from home, I had an amazing birthday surprise cake and party from my friends and I think I will remember it each year.



I had super cool flatmates and my roommate was exceptional, not just because she is also from Africa but she is a nice person and very accommodating. She took me to an Afro HK party and had the chance to meet other Africans studying in Hradec Králové at Charles University. At random award picks, my name was selected and I had an award that night.



Lectures began and I had to minimise the fun, exploring, and parties. Almost everyone got busy trying to concentrate on studies and reading assignments. The learning space was conducive, provision was made for course reading materials and individual participation in class; the lecturers were receptive and the lecture sessions were interesting. I utilized my weekends and traveled outside Hradec Králové. I visited the caves in Blansko, a Castle at Hradec, Kutna Hora, and Prague. On weekends that I did not travel, I went to the Sauna, coffee shop, bar, or night works with my friends.

A few weeks later, the Philosophical Faculty advertised a Flag Food Contest for all students. I participated and I won; at this stage, my Erasmus experience was filled with winning prizes and awards...hahaha. I was reluctant to participate because I could not find Ghanaian ingredients for the food, and it was a requirement for the activity. But it all turned out well.

In all, my Erasmus experience was great. I have been exposed to other cultures and ways of life. I also learnt how education, teaching, and learning are constructed outside Africa. I had the opportunity to travel to another country in Europe during the Christmas break and it was exciting. Thanks to the University of Ghana, University of Hradec Králové, and the Erasmus Student Network for this opportunity.