Report on Erasmus experience (Spring Semester 2016/17)

The Aristotle University of Thessaloniki was my number one choice from the beginning. I chose to study there as an Erasmus student because I graduated from this Faculty of Law and I had only positive impressions.

Regarding accommodation in Thessaloniki, I found my apartment from a newspaper and it was even better than expected. The monthly rent was quiet low, at 200 euro but most importantly it was near the city center. The landlady was waiting in the apartment when I arrived and then gave me a tour of it, her contact details and her schedule in case of emergency.

About the most important thing, namely education, I met amazing teachers who were highly professional and inspirational. I met students with different backgrounds in multicultural classes, cooperating with teachers creating a friendly and creative environment without the latter being the authority inside the classroom. In my opinion, not only the study program for Erasmus students but also the quality of teaching is really on a very high level.

The Erasmus program in Thessaloniki had a list of activities planned, for the first week as part of a welcome package, and subsequently every week during the semester. For the most part the activities were well planned and coordinated, with the occasional exception. The Greeks were quite open, very friendly and also very persistent, once even sending a car over because the house party they had planned was really far away. The locals did their best to make us as a group fit in. The idea is simple: get drunk, meet people. In the end it depends on the focus of each person, their discipline and what their main objectives are to decide what they want to do on any particular occasion. In my group, the outings became less once the semester started in full, however it was nice to know that whenever a break was needed there was an activity available in which we could participate. It was not only partying though, there was karaoke, field trips to archeological sites, visits to islands and also the ESN Thessaloniki for Refugees Program. One of the fun things about Erasmus gatherings is the wide scope of nationalities present. It’s just incredible having people from the UK, Italy, Turkey, Poland, and Sweden, just hanging out together. Most of the people were quite nice although a few from the Baltic and Balkans had quite disgusting attitudes. In the greater scheme of things the philosophy is that eventually one would meet people like that everywhere and it is definitely not a true representation of a complete nationality, still it contradicts a bit the selling point of Erasmus as a large multicultural family.

To conclude, I would like to mention that the Erasmus program offered me only positive experiences, most characteristically, cultural sharing among the countries, brotherhood and wide understandings of European perspectives. I feel really happy to have been involved in this European project. Thank you for this opportunity!