

# Pauli Haarnio – Personal Report – DHBW Stuttgart

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Home university: Oulu University of Applied Sciences

Host university: Baden-Württemberg Cooperative State University, Stuttgart (DHBW Stuttgart)

Field of study: Information Technology

Degree intended: Business Information Systems

Number of semesters: 1

Period of time: 01.09.2023 – 21.12.2023

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## 1. Preparation of the exchange

Before my exchange I attended many informative events about going on an exchange, and what you need to do before exchange. The process was simple and there were good instructions on for example what documents you need to send to the receiving university.

In those events we talked about the culture shock, but Finnish and German cultures aren't really that different so the culture shock wasn't that bad for me. But in preparation I had a really positive idea about Germany.

I really didn't know any German so I practiced a bit of German with Duolingo which was proven to be really good. Learn the basics, like hey how are you doing and one coffee please.

Applying for the dorm was easy. There was plenty of info about the rooms, and the instructions for the application form were clear. To get a room in Stuttgart, I had to commit to a 6-month rental, even though I only stayed for 4 months. It was a bit of a hassle, but I get that the dorms are in high demand. The dorm's location was great. It was close to two subway stations and near the city center.

## 2. Studying in Stuttgart (DHBW)

The university was nice and in the welcome days we got to know the building and the surroundings of the university. There were space for the students to study which we used. And just right across the street a store so you can get a little snack and a coffee. The transportation from our dorms was easy and quick with the U-Bahn and S-Bahn.

The courses I took were A1 level German, Leading Effectivly, IT Service Management (ITIL), Technological Innovations and their Social and Environmental Impacts, Intercultural Training, and Online Marketing. The teaching methods varied, with some lectures following a traditional format, while others were more interactive. Most courses ended with a final written exam, which was done on paper rather than computers. The courses were not overly challenging, and we maintained an 80% attendance rate throughout the courses.

In comparison with my home university, the university system was quite a bit different. In my home university most of my classes were project orientated with no exams. This is because most of my classes at home were programming related so you really need no exams etc. In DHBW, in some classes we used the good old fashioned textbooks and notebooks to study, but most of the material was on Moodle. Moodle is a familiar platform to me, as we use it in my home university. All of the final exams was on pen and paper.

### 3. Living in Germany

Living in Germany is quite easy and I enjoyed it alot! Germans were usually nice and helpful and the overall atmosphere was nice.

I really enjoyed the Deutschland ticket that allowed you to use all of Germanys public transportation. I travelled a lot during my stay in Germany and I absolute fell in love with all of the beautiful places in Germany. I also travelled to Greece, Italy, France, Switzerland and Spain, and this was because the flights were so cheap.

But more of the day to day life, I was studying and enjoying my time in exchange with my fellow exchange friends. We went to trips together, partied and enjoyed Stuttgart to best of our abilities. Also every Wednesday was badminton that the university had arranged. The university had a lot of good sport opportunities.

### 4. Participation in conferences, workshops etc.

In some courses we had workshops, which were nice change for the traditional lecturing. I didn't attend any conferences. There were some conferences that I could have gone to but unfortunately I did not.

### 5. Tips for future exchange students in Stuttgart

Get the Deutschland ticket. It is 49€ per month and you can use EVERY public transportation in Germany. The public transportation in Stuttgart is very well made and I suggest that getting familiar with the U-Bahns and the S-Bahns is very beneficial.

Always carry cash with you. Germany is a little bit old fashioned with money and most of the places accept card payment, but is good to be sure. Especially bars and restaurants may only accept cash, so I suggest that you always carry atleast 40 euros just in case.

Speaking of money, open up a german bank account. The rent payment and such other things is easier with german bank account.

As I mentioned earlier that before I went to Germany, I studied a little bit of German in Duolingo. Duolingo is a very easy way to learn the basics, and because in DHBW A1 level of German is mandatory, it is good to know a little bit beforehand.

Subletting your room. I lived in a student dorm and the minimum rent was 6 months and I was only for 4 months. Get a subtenant early, but this is no problem because student dorms is in such high demand in Stuttgart, so you will have no problem with finding one.

To future exchange students, my advice is to make the most of your time abroad. While studying is essential, prioritize living and experiencing new things with wonderful people. Time will fly, so savor every moment. Step out of your comfort zone, embrace new experiences, and although initially overwhelming, you'll adapt to the changes. Culture shock is real, but maintaining an open mind will help you navigate it successfully.

## 6. Personal evaluation of the stay at DHBW Stuttgart and in Germany

My exchange experience was truly wonderful.

I chose my courses to allow me to explore Germany and other European countries. The best thing about the exchange were the incredible people I met. The international exchange group was exceptionally friendly, and I made lifelong friends.

Adapting to a new culture presented its challenges, but I quickly adapted, establishing strong bonds with fellow international students.

I highly recommend considering an exchange in Stuttgart at DHBW Stuttgart. The staff and professors were nice, and my overall experience with DHBW Stuttgart was positive. Stuttgart as a city is a wonderful place to stay. It is clean, safe and beautiful. It has a lot of interesting history, and wonderful people.

To anyone that is considering on going to exchange, I recommend it 100%. It is a once in a life experience, that gives you so much. You gain experience on different cultures. You make a lot of new friends. You get to see the world in a different way. To a young adult this is a such a present and wonderful experience.