

**Destination:** UJI, Castellon  
**Exchange period:** 2019, spring

**Choice of the destination and courses:**

Konrad told me about it. I chose between that and Asia, chose Spain because it felt comfortable, it was cheaper and I wanted to meet other european people from a lot of different countries (ended up meeting canadian, chilean and indonesian people too). People tend to end up in swedish or scandinavian groups in Asia because there's many of them.

I didn't have any restrictions in my choice of courses, so they were chosen by interest and I didn't find it so hard.

**Describe shortly the preparation process before the departure:**

Choosing courses and fixing learning agreement with my tutor, finding accommodation, booking a flight and then going - not much more needed!

**Contact with receiving institution:**

At first I thought they were quite slow with responding, and I was nervous not to receive my acceptance letter in time. Later they gave me a ton of information so that it was almost overwhelming, so then I felt more secure and prepared. When I then arrived they were very supportive during the whole semester.

**Support from Umea University:**

Yes! Konrad answered all my stupid questions and was a big support.

**Arrival information:**

Yes, and my experience were beyond expectation, perfect welcoming!

**Accommodation arrangements:**

Yes, I even got to stay in my mentors apartment the first two weeks prior to accessing my own apartment. I shared a big apartment in the city center besides a nice green park. If you're looking for shared apartments, make sure your contract is with a set price for the room and not a total for the whole apartment, otherwise you'll end up paying more if roommates move out. Most students live close to park ribalta which is a really well located area for students in the city center. Almost nobody lived in the campus area, and I would really recommend city center. Some people chose to live by the beach, but that's far from campus. Have in mind that spanish standards are worse than swedish and that you'll just have to get used to that. Most people pay 160-180 euro for a room excluded expenses.

**Transportation:**

You can buy a bike or have a subscription of a bike service (called Bicicas). I paid 24€ for a 12 month subscription so I could use the bike as much as I liked during my whole stay. There's also buses and trams to which you could have period tickets or single tickets. I paid around 7€ for 10 trips (one-way), you could also pay the driver 1,10 € while entering. Communications are good, there's also taxis of

course, and if you want to travel there's rental cars and trains and an airport.

**Budget:**

It's much lower costs of living in Castellon. Castellon is also cheaper than Valencia and Barcelona and many other cities in Spain. It's not touristic at all which I think is a big reason to the low costs. Especially food and drinks are cheaper, both in food markets and restaurants!

**Social activities:**

Watch ESN castellon on instagram and facebook to know more. They organize games, workshops, competitions, excursions, parties - everything! There is always something to do. Hiking in the mountains, swimming in the sea, eating good food, go to the gym, party, playing volleyball... Spain is an amazing country for traveling. A day-trip to Valencia or vacation in Andalusia, Ibiza, Mallorca, Madrid, Barcelona, Alicante etc.

**Recommendation :**

Yes!

**Practical things to think about:**

Which size of city would you like? For example, Barcelona and Valencia are bigger than Castellon and might offer even more people and things to do, but Castellon is less anonymous, less touristic, cheaper and more genuine! I loved Castellon, have an open mind and enjoy!

**General information about academia:**

Perception was that UJI is more like high school than university. Some homework and teachers give you more attention and ask more questions. If you take courses in English its very likely that the teachers explain and translate what they say in Spanish or that the course is partly in Spanish. I didn't know a word Spanish when I got there and I still managed to pass my courses, so don't let it scare you. Courses are mainly 6 credits, which means 5 courses to receive 30 credits instead of 4 of 7,5 credits. I also had all my exams in the end of the semester, instead of taking one or two courses at the time as I'm used to.

**Courses attended**

*Course 1:*

Introduction to Business information systems. syllabus <http://ujiapps.uji.es/sia/rest/publicacion/2018/> more focus on practical work than theory, I liked it. Both Excel and building a database in Microsoft Access was gone through. Had no literature. Graded on exam, group work and lectures. 100% held in English.

*Course 2:*

European economy. syllabus <http://ujiapps.uji.es/sia/rest/publicacion/2018/> . Everything the teacher said in English was translated to spanish. Otherwise interesting course if you want to know more about the european union and how it works. Focus on trade (tariffs, barriers and customs union etc). Used only lectures and slides for the exam.

*Course 3:*

Professional English for communicators. syllabus <http://ujiapps.uji.es/sia/rest/publicacion/2018/> . 50% theory 50% practical. Lessons where you're expected to be active, tasks to do during lessons. A lot of homework, but you were not obliged to do them. Got printed pages to use as literature and workbook. Course for people in public advertising so interesting content with social media etc. 100% held in English.

*Course 4:*

German - language and culture. syllabus <http://ujiapps.uji.es/sia/rest/publicacion/2018/> . Misunderstanding in choosing this one as i thought it would be a more advanced course. It was barely no culture included and though the syllabus said language of instruction would be 100% German it was 30% german and 70% spanish. German A1 was taught (the easiest beginner level)

*Course 5:*

Introduction to macroeconomics. syllabus <http://ujiapps.uji.es/sia/rest/publicacion/2018/> . Mathematics. Good teachers. Used only content provided on the university webpage even though there was a book available (in spanish). You should be comfortable with maths and like graphs to take this one (almost everything is about graphs). Held 90% in English.

*Additional Courses:*

**Did the university provide language courses? Could you receive ECTS points for them? What was your experience of such course?**

yes and yes. I did not take it, but others did and were satisfied. It was payable and very intensive with long lectures every or every other day - the reasons to why I skipped it.

**Name:** Sofia Hallbäck  
**E-mail address:** hallback.sofia@gmail.com  
**Possibility of future contact:** Yes