



## Report

Country: Hungary  
Duration: October 2014 - August 2015  
University in Bavaria: TU München  
Subject: Master Research on Teaching and Learning

### I. Practical experiences and tips

#### Preparation for my studies

My experience has been somewhat different from that of the typical scholarship recipients', since I applied for the scholarship in the second year of my studies, thus I have already been accepted to the program, and spent a month or two in it by the time I had to put together my application materials. Being a student at my chosen institution helped a lot - by the time of the application, I had established rapport with the faculty in my program, so it was quite simple to find a professor at the university who would support my application.

I do not recall many difficulties with managing the local authorities, but I think I was in a rather privileged position, because I had other Hungarian friends and acquaintances living in Munich who could inform me about steps I had to take to establish residency, open a bank account etc. In addition, my program at the university was designed with international students in mind. In fact, the vast majority of students in the program were international students, thus we could all help each other whenever we had to figure out administrative problems.

I was very lucky when it came to finding accommodation, too. First of all, because my friends hosted me while I was looking for a place to live. Second, because I moved to Munich with my partner and together we could afford to rent a small studio through a rental agency. However, I know that for most of my friends, finding accommodation was the hardest task during their relocation. Some of them applied to the dorms months before they even knew that they were admitted to the program, because waiting lists were extremely long, and thus getting a room in a dorm could take several semesters. Others had a hard time finding rooms in a shared apartment, because they could not afford travelling to Munich just to look at places to live, so they had to start their search for accommodation in late September – early October. This is extremely difficult, given that hostels are full of tourists during that time because of "Oktoberfest". Unfortunately, accommodations are not only difficult to find, but they are also expensive. One way to keep the rental costs lower is to move further away from the city center, even to the villages surrounding Munich. The public transportation works really well, and it is usually possible to get to the city center quite fast.

## **Travel to the place of study**

I mostly traveled between Munich and Budapest, given that the distance is relatively short compared to other Eastern European countries. The best way to travel for me was to take the train for about 7 to 7 and a half hour. The prizes are reasonable if you buy your ticket ahead of time. Another way to travel is to use websites like [www.mitfahrgelegenheit.de/](http://www.mitfahrgelegenheit.de/), where people traveling between Munich and Hungarian towns (and many other places as well) are looking for passengers to decrease their costs. There are also several Facebook groups for Hungarians living in Munich where it is possible to find someone traveling between the two countries and looking for passengers. However, with these two options, you never know whom you end up with, sometimes these trips are really nice and comfortable, and sometimes you wish you never looked them up on the internet. The prizes vary with these latter two options, sometimes a train is still a more affordable solution. It is important to keep in mind that the costs of travel are really high around Christmas time, so you should always buy your tickets well in advance when traveling this time of the year. I never flew from Munich to Budapest. While I was living in Munich, there were no budget airlines operating between Munich and Budapest, but it might be worth to take a look, as this could have changed.

## **Traffic, costs of living, and free time**

The best way to keep the costs of living low is to cook at home. Restaurants and pubs in Munich are rather expensive: a beer from the grocery store costs about a euro, while the prize of the same beer at the Oktoberfest is over 10 euros. Clearly, the costs of eating out add up quite fast.

Public transportation is not only great in Munich, but TU students can use their student IDs between 6pm and 6am, and during the weekends for travel, which makes the otherwise rather pricy transportation system more affordable. For an additional prize (last year it was around 140 euros), you can buy a "Semesterticket", which is valid for the whole transportation network round the clock.

Everyone likes to spend free time in different ways, but finding programs in Munich is not a difficult challenge to accomplish. While the more high-brow cultural activities (classical concerts and theater, for example) are on the rather pricy end of the scale, there are numerous events that are affordable for students as well, ranging from concerts to events organized by the university specifically for students. A couple of cinemas offer movies in their original languages, which is definitely helpful for those who would struggle understanding the German dubbed versions. And then there is of course the "Oktoberfest" and a large variety of beer festival in and outside Munich. "Lederhosen" optional!

I could never quite figure out the sports facilities at TU – since my campus (the School of Education) was rather far from them, I never really used them. However, I definitely enjoyed the large and numerous parks in Munich, which are perfect for those who like running in their free time.

## **II. Academic experiences and further qualifications**

### **Experiences at the university**

I am absolutely satisfied with my decision to get my master's degree at TUM. The program I studied in (Master Research on Teaching and Learning) was a small one, with about twenty students in

my class. The majority of them were international students and the language of instruction was English.

Looking back, I think that the program is very well designed, and it prepared me for my current doctoral studies. The classes were designed to build upon each other, and most of them taught us marketable applied statistical skills, too. I think all students in the program shared the impression that our professors were not only very knowledgeable, but also really approachable, friendly and keen to help. This was also true to the staff at the School of Education in general, whenever I needed help in any sorts of administrative matters, they were always quick to respond to my needs. Since the program is a rather young one, the opinions and suggestions of the students were taken into consideration, and have often impacted how the program changed during the time I spent at TU.

The one problem I had during my studies was that it was rather difficult for me to find internships, since my German was not up to the standards of the employers. Understandably, if having to choose from two similar applicants, they would pick the one who is fluent in German. This is definitely something to consider – unless you are planning to work in a field where German language skills are not essential or are not among the priorities, you will have to invest time into mastering the language in order to secure internships, and later on, jobs in Germany. The university offers language courses, but it is not easy to get in due to the large number of students who wish to take them. There are also several language schools in Munich, offering various kinds of language courses.

One of the best things during my studies was the community I became a member of: the other students in my program were great to work with and since we were all going through the same experiences (moving abroad, trying to build a new social network in the new country), we became an almost family-like, tight-knit community of friends, and also, colleagues. The seminars were often organized around team work, and I have definitely benefited a lot from working with and learning from others. However, if you do not enjoy working with others, this program might not be the best choice for you.

### **The BAYHOST Scholarship**

The scholarship obviously was a great help in covering my living costs while studying in Bavaria, but in addition to that, it offered access to another community of students who were going through similar experiences as I was. I enjoyed the three-day trip we took to Passau and the workshops and presentations I participated in. I met great people there, too.

### **III. Activities after the program ended**

I officially graduated from the TUM master's program in November 2015. Currently, I am a doctoral student in the Research and Evaluation Methodology in the School of Education at the University of Colorado Boulder.