

IAESTE Internship in Krakow, Poland

10.07.2017 - 15.09.2017

Preparation

Organising and preparing the internship did not require much effort from my side. Most of the work was done by the more than helpful people from IAESTE and all one had to do was to fill out some paperwork once accepted for the internship.

If you intend to do an internship within the European Union, you might also consider applying for the Erasmus+ mobility grant. To get this grant, the internship has to be at least two months long and you can get up to about 800€ to cover travel expenses and living costs.

Living in Krakow

During my stay in Krakow, I lived in one of the student dormitories. I shared the room with two guys from Switzerland which coincidentally worked at the same company as me and were also staying there for 10 weeks. The room itself was rather spartan (single room with three beds) and we shared bath/toilet with three other rooms. In return, the rent was fairly cheap with only 350 Zloty (approx. 83€) per month. As I have never shared a room with strangers for such a long time, it was a rather unfamiliar situation at first, but once you get to know each other, you quickly get used to it.

Krakow itself is a nice and beautiful city, with many different cultural influences. There is a vast number of restaurants, pubs and clubs where you can enjoy the polish cuisine for a fair price. In general, the living costs are pretty cheap and while going out you can even get a good beer for half the price as one would pay in Austria.

Krakow also offers many interesting sightseeing attractions like the Wawel, a castle used by the polish kings, the St. Mary's Basilica at the beautiful main square or the Schindler Factory, a second world war museum in the old factory of Oscar Schindler, who saved more than 1000 Jews during the war.

I would also suggest visiting the Wieliczka Salt Mine. You can get a 2-hour tour through the old mine and will see beautiful underground lakes and an astonishing church carved into salt. As a final remark, I would like to recommend the artificial lake Zalew Zakrzówek, located in an abandoned mine close to the city. The crystal clear and deep water, is surrounded by cliffs, from which one can directly jump into it. Unfortunately, this beautiful place is well known, and therefore it was really crowded and not that easy to find an empty spot to stay.



1 A marvellous view of the lake Zalew Zakrzówek

Working at AdRem Software

The company itself is in the south of Krakow, and it took us about 45 minutes by tram to get there. The office is situated in a brand new building and during the workday one could always get free coffee, tea, fruits and sweets.

The first three weeks were rather boring. Besides the task to translate customer success stories of the company's product for their homepage from English to German/French, we had to research and learn JavaScript and various related technologies on our own. In the second week, an employee had prepared additional JavaScript tutorials for us and by the end of that week we also got a first task, redesigning a dialog window from their software. When we had finished our design proposal, we waited for further instructions to implement it, but nobody had time for us, to discuss our work. Our supervisor told us, that the boss would talk to us, as soon as he got time, but for over a week, we got no feedback or any new tasks.

Eventually, by week four this started to get better, as we got a proper task, which we had to solve as a team of four. This task filled the rest of my internship, and I learned a lot concerning code quality and programming outside the university in an industrial setting. I think that working in a team and repeated code reviews from our supervisor greatly improved our programming abilities and taught us things that cannot be learned in university.

Conclusion

All in all, I am glad that I had the opportunity to do this internship. I met a lot of kind and interesting people, with whom I hope to stay in contact in the future. The intercultural and interpersonal aspects alone are totally worth to go abroad, and the additional experiences I made while working for the company are definitely a personal and professional gain.

Finally, I really want to thank the people from IAESTE Krakow, who made my stay a most pleasurable experience. Dziękuję bardzo!



2 A trip to the mountains of Zakopane organised by IAESTE for all interns