

**Hello everyone! Today we won't talk about an Erasmus+ experience!  
Today we are going to talk with Buse from Turkey who studies at the  
University of Opole! :)**

*Hi! Can I ask you please to introduce yourself and tell us something about your hobbies? :)*

First of all, thank you for choosing me for the interview. My name is Buse and I am 23 years old, a fresh graduate from the University of Opole. I am a Turk who lives in Poland. I have studied Economics, sp. International Business and I am currently in my gap year. One of my biggest hobbies is sewing. I just love sewing something from scratch or adjusting something to my style. I am also a climber.

*Could you tell us why you decided to choose Poland as your studies destination? What was your first feeling when you arrived here?*

I was influenced a lot by my Polish friends in Germany. My first visit to Poland was in 2015 or 2016. I remember the first time I visited Kraków and I was just amazed by the city. Later on, in my friends group three of us decided to move to Poland. I wanted to continue my education and I saw that the Polish higher education system is just the same as in the whole of Europe. It just surprises me how Poland is in the centre of Europe and still has a distinguished culture when we talk about western culture.

I remember my first day in Opole. It was Autumn 2018. I walked all the way from the train station to my dormitory with my three pieces of luggage. I was so excited. I remember thinking how big Opole is. Later on, when I discovered every corner of Opole I loved it even more. It was like a city where time slows down. I did not have this feeling in Krakow or Wroclaw or any other big city in Poland.

I haven't heard about this city before. I was reading blogs and forums non-stop.

I haven't met anyone who has been to this city before.

*What do you like the most about this place?*

I think the ease of life. I have lived in big cities alone and starting life in a new country is best done by moving to a small city. I have learned the Polish language and culture faster in Opole.

*What surprised you the most when you came here?*

I was so surprised that this region was once in Germany. See, the thing is that in Turkey they teach so little about World War II and I wasn't educated enough at that time. It was my first or second month there and I had some issues during payment at the Tesco check-out. The cashier and I were struggling to communicate because I did not know Polish at that time. I switched to German to try my luck and she was speaking fluently in this language. She had dual citizenship because her grandparents were living here when it was a German region. I just realized how little I knew about European history.

*Why do you think it's a good idea to study in a different country?*

Being a part of a different culture just makes you look from the other side. I feel like I have already read hundreds of books.

Disadvantages are that because you're not a citizen of that country, you have to start from the beginning.

*What do you recommend to do in Opole? How can you spend your free time?*

I just love how nature is literally in the city. I was usually spending my time on

Bolko Island. There are many cafes and language libraries, dance courses and festivals. I did not know Opole is the city of Music Festivals.

*Your favourite places in Opole and close to Opole. What are the best places to visit?*

Within the Opole Voivodeship, I would say Bolko Island and Moszna Castle. Near Opole I would recommend Wrocław.

My favourite city in Poland is Gdańsk. I think I have been to every city in Poland but Łódź. So it is my next destination.

*How about the transport? Is it hard to find buses/trains/flights to other places?*

I cannot emphasize enough how easy it is to commute. There is always a bus or train everywhere.

*How would you describe Polish people?*

I just love Slavic culture I guess. I couldn't find this type of friendliness and hospitality in Germany or France. I feel really comfortable among Polish people.

*Is it difficult to communicate with Polish people in English?*

It is not hard to communicate in big cities. The Younger generation knows English. I think you really should learn at least the basics because Polish people are usually taught Russian or German in schools.

Well, my funny story will not make sense if you don't know Polish. I was in Katowice in winter 2018 and my phone was dead. I knew I was near a train

station. It was the time I was trying to learn Polish with my friends. I knew how to ask for an address and I wanted to say “where is the train station?”. I remember asking two young ladies “Gdzie jest Pociąg Stacja?” instead of Dworzec Główny. I remember them laughing but explaining the direction. Later on, I realized why it is funny.

*Is Poland an expensive country?*

It depends on your previous experiences. Compared to most EuroZone countries it is rather cheap but not the cheapest country. I prefer to use the word affordable.

*Are there any disadvantages of choosing Opole as your studies destination?*

The biggest disadvantage is that there are no international companies in Opole so you need to take the train to Wrocław for that dream job of yours :)

*Are classes at the University hard? Is it hard to pass exams?*

They are rather balanced. There are both - really easy and fun subjects and the hard ones. I remember my whole group was studying for one exam for the whole week in the library and the study room in the dormitory. Some of us failed on the first try but it was an unforgettable week.

*Your favourite Polish food! What can you recommend to non-Polish people?*

I recommend pierogi ruskie, barszcz and ptasie mleczko. These are my favourites.

*Would you recommend visiting Poland to others?*

I definitely recommend it. You will have so many memories and wonderful friends.

*Thank you so much for sharing your experience with us! :)*

Thank you so much!