

ERFAHRUNGSBERICHT ÜBER STUDIENERFAHRUNGEN IN BAYERN

[Report on study experiences in Bavaria]

Herkunftsland [county of origin]:	Serbia
Studium in Bayern [program in Bavaria]:	von [from] 10.2021 bis [until] 10.2023
Hochschule in Bayern [university in Bavaria]:	FAU Erlangen-Nürnberg
Studienfach [subject of study]:	Physics
Abschluss [degree]:	Master

Practical experiences and tips

I completed my Bachelor's studies at the University of Novi Sad, Faculty of Sciences, Department of Physics. In October 2021, I came to Erlangen with the goal of obtaining my master's degree at FAU University at the Department of Physics.

The process of arriving in Germany and **dealing with all the formal bureaucracy before** beginning my studies was very stressful and challenging for me at that time. I felt lost, but my strong will to succeed in my dream pushed me forward. Looking back after 2 years, I can say that it has been rewarding, and I am grateful to BAYHOST for supporting me during my second year of studying and for recognizing me among many outstanding candidates.

Firstly, I'd like to address the **requirements as a citizen of Serbia**, which is not part of the European Union. I had to apply for a **student visa** at the German Embassy in Belgrade. Detailed information about the process can be found on their official website. Obtaining confirmation of financial support was one of the most challenging aspects, particularly since I was not a scholarship holder in the first year. It was necessary to demonstrate a financial statement from someone guaranteeing support or to have a specific amount of money in a bank account. This process was difficult to navigate as I had to figure it out alone without assistance at that time.

Blocked account: A specific amount, around 10,300 euros for the entire year in 2021, was required to be in a "blocked account." I highly recommend Fintiba bank for opening this account; I was satisfied with their service. The account opening process is straightforward, with all details available on their website. However, I encountered issues with Serbian banks that were not familiar with this procedure. Initially, I deposited the money into my Serbian account and then transferred it to the account I opened with Fintiba. Despite some initial confusion, the transfer was successful after two days, and I received a PDF confirmation from Fintiba stating that I had the required amount of money in the blocked account, which I provided to the embassy.

Regarding other visa-related documents, I won't elaborate as I believe they are relatively easy to acquire without major difficulties.

Finding accommodation before arrival is essential. It can be extremely challenging, especially in Erlangen, particularly when searching online. For the initial five months, I lived in a house with suboptimal conditions. However, upon arrival, I recommend seeking any available accommodation as connections and information tend to improve over time. The **FAU accommodation service** might be helpful; although it didn't assist me, I know people who found places through their support.

For my first arrival in Germany, I used a **car transport service** available in Serbia, which directly transports individuals from their home address to a German address. This option was ideal due to the amount of luggage and unfamiliarity with transport connections and addresses upon arrival, especially without internet access.

Experience in Erlangen

Erlangen offers an ideal environment for student life. It's easy to meet and connect with people through various student organizations, WhatsApp groups, social media, and university-organized events. I personally met many amazing people by attending events informed by my roommate, leading to friendships that continue today. **Erlangen is a place where I felt safe, surrounded by fellow students who shared similar experiences and problems.** One of the greatest joys for me was meeting people from around the world; I had never anticipated encountering individuals from South Korea, Japan, India, Mongolia, Colombia, Mexico, and more. It was an incredible experience and one of the most significant benefits of being an international student. Despite the challenges, I realized the uniqueness of the opportunity and aimed to gain knowledge about various cultures, understand differences, and adopt positive habits I had never considered before.

In terms of **sports**, the university offers a wide variety of activities. Due to the high demand, quick registration is necessary. Personally, I played badminton and also attended a local gym for boxing. Boxing, a new experience for me in Germany, not only helped in staying fit but also significantly aided in stress relief.

Regarding **expenses**, I spent 400 euros on accommodation, 120 euros on health insurance, and approximately 300 euros on food. Basic transportation costs were included in registration fees. Therefore, I believe around 1000 euros per month is sufficient for a normal student lifestyle.

Academic experience and further qualifications

Studying was not an issue for me. Professors usually inquire about lecture content during exams, so **attending lectures regularly is advisable.** Pay attention to exam registration deadlines, as notifications are usually sent via email or posted on the website.

During my first year, I successfully passed all exams, and the second year was devoted to my master's thesis. I completed my **master's project and thesis at UniKlinikum Erlangen** to further my career in the



field of Medical Physics. In the initial year, I selected subjects related to this topic. I recommend choosing subjects of interest; in the second year, you can ask professors to join their research groups as a master's student. In my case, I focused on electron radiation and developed a model to improve the accuracy of patient treatment with electron radiation. As a result, I presented my work at a conference of the German Society of Medical Physics. I am currently maintaining contact with my mentors, collaborating on writing a paper that we aim to publish in the Journal of Applied Clinical Medical Physics.

Consequently, I believe that **my master's thesis has opened many doors for me**. However, after completing my master's in October 2023, finding a job was not easy due to my limited

professional experience. Nevertheless, I succeeded in securing a position with a company near Munich, starting in January. Although the job is not directly related to medical physics, I am pleased to gain work experience in Germany.

Looking forward, I am optimistic about having more opportunities. I am **extremely grateful to BAYHOST** for supporting my journey. Without their support, it would have been much more challenging to focus solely on my studies. **I foresee contributing to German society in the future, using my knowledge and experience to advance the field of Physics.** I am extremely proud to be a scholarship holder and of my personal growth. Choosing Germany and Bavaria as the place to grow personally and professionally has been a dream and I have no regrets.