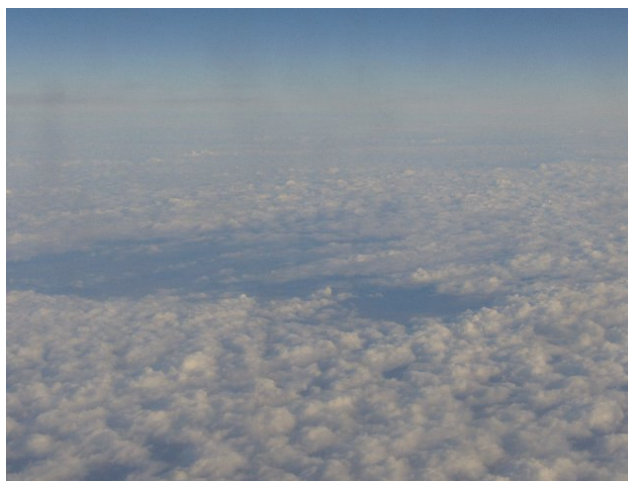


**Kære Læser,**

I might as well have written Dear Reader, as the English say. Let me introduce myself: my name is Péter Holló and I spent a wonderful spring semester in a wonderful small town not far from the capital of Denmark. But what do I mean by saying wonderful? Let's just say it was good enough for me to make up my mind and decide to spend the summertime in Denmark before coming back to my home country. During the summer I worked a lot but I also had the opportunity to explore the land of Vikings a bit.

I still remember my very first day as if it had been yesterday. I took a flight from our Ferihegy Airport, Terminal 1 airport on 23<sup>rd</sup> January. The sky was cloudy but it was not raining or snowing; the weather was suitable for my very first flight experience. Everything went smoothly – the take-off is not that bad, actually, one just should not forget to take some sweets or chewing gum with oneself -, but as the plane landed I had to realise that the weather was terrible. It was extremely cold and it was raining. It took me more than an hour to get to the



business academy where I had to call and wait for my Erasmus coordinator; unlike those two Hungarian chaps who took the same flight and told me that their coordinator had already been waiting for them at the airport. Anyway, they attended another school as exchange students...

**Getting to Denmark**

Well, Sterling – the Danish flight company – offers direct flights from Budapest to Copenhagen. If you book your flight in time (i.e. at least a week or two before departure date) it will cost you around 1.000 DKK – according to the current exchange rate: 1 DKK = 32 HUF. But of course if you like to plan things well in advance, you will only have to pay around 7-800 if you are quick enough (you may find return tickets at the price of app. 500 DKK). Later I searched for alternative low-fare airlines and I found Wizz Air whose offers were better than those of Sterling. However, Wizz Air does not offer direct flights to Copenhagen or any other town / city in Denmark. The closest it takes you is Malmö, the third largest city of Sweden, from where you can go to Denmark by boarding a train that goes directly to CPH (abbreviation of Copenhagen) through the Øresund Bridge. The bridge connects the two countries – major part of it lies beneath the sea level.

**Getting to the school from Kastrup (Copenhagen) or from Sturup (Malmö)**

I am sure that your would-be Erasmus coordinator will give you detailed information regarding how to get to the school; still, I would also like to make some suggestions. As it was mentioned above I had found two ways to get to Denmark therefore I will explain how to get to the school.

*1) Choosing Sterling's direct flight from Budapest to CPH:*

After the successful landing and after obtaining your luggage do not be surprised that you have to walk a lot. Those corridors at the Kastrup airport may seem endless as the airport is much bigger than ours. If you call Ferihegy Terminal 1's check-in area a room, than that of Kastrup should be called a hall. An enormous one.

First you should find the DSB office at the airport where you can buy a clip card. The abbreviation DSB stands for Danske Statsbaner; this is the Danish transportation company responsible for public transport in Denmark, pretty much similar to the Hungarian BKV.

Copenhagen and its suburbs are divided up into zones. The amount of times you have to clip with your card – you can clip on buses right after getting on through the first door, or at the stations before getting on the metro or train – is determined by the amount of zones you intend to travel. The farther your destination is the more zones you have to travel, therefore the more you have to clip with your card. You can buy a one-way ticket on the bus from the driver or a ticket for the train or metro at the several DSB offices found in Copenhagen but this way your expenses will be much higher. If you travel, for instance, 4 zones regularly, than it is much better to buy a 4-zone clip card – by doing so, you will save a lot of money. The same applies for the 6- and 8- zone clip cards. Upon my arrival a 2-zone clip card cost 120 DKK, later in the spring the price rose to 125. A card can be used for 10 clips. Since the school is 6 zones away from Kastrup, I had to clip three times with my 2-zone clip card to get there from the airport. Note that after clipping you can travel to the designated area and back only for a relatively short period of time. This is indicated on the back of the card, e.g. after 1 clip you can travel for an hour. The more you clip the more time is available for you to travel.

I would not recommend anybody to dodge paying the fares (i.e. travelling without a valid ticket). If you are caught then you have to pay a fine of 500 DKK. You can only get on a bus through the first door therefore you always have to show your card or pass to the driver. Rarely do ticket inspectors check passengers on the train or metro, yet, as it is said: prevention is better than cure.

Not only can you buy tickets and clip cards at the DSB offices, but you can also buy monthly passes to save money if you travel regularly. I, for instance, worked in Copenhagen at the end of spring and I had to travel 4 zones from Lyngby to Nordhavn (a harbour in Copenhagen) every day for 2 weeks. So I bought a monthly pass for 575 DKK which entitled me to travel 4 zones for a month whenever I wanted. However, a pass only allows you to travel in the desired zones. By that I mean a 4-zone monthly pass does not entitle you to travel 4 zones in every direction. The numbers of the zones you wish to travel in are written on your pass. Sometimes people want to change these zones. The staff at DSB offices will only do that if it remains that way for a long time. So, if you travel, let's say, 6 zones to the south since you have to go to CPH from Lyngby every day, but one day you decide to travel to Helsingør to the north because you heard that Hamlet's castle can be found there, do not think DSB's employees will change the zones for you just because Helsingør lies 6 zones, too, from Lyngby. The only pass that entitles you to travel in all 9 zones of Zealand (the eastern island of Denmark where CPH can be found) and also in every direction costs more than 1.000 DKK.

After obtaining your clip card from the DSB office you should head upstairs (you can use the elevator) to get to the metro. It is quite modern – fast, silent, doors are opened / closed

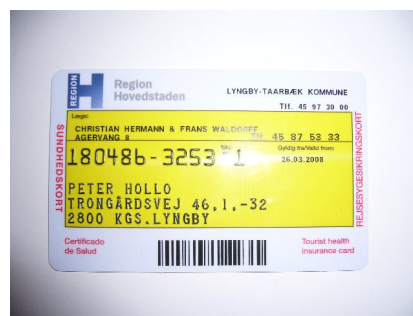
automatically –, so you will definitely start envying their transport company. Your destination should be Nørreport (it does not matter which train you choose, all the cars go to Vanløse). From there you just hop on to bus number 150 and you get off at Klampenborgvej. The school and your temporary home (i.e. the dormitories) at least for the following six months should be just a 10 minutes' walk. Another option is to go by train from Nørreport to Lyngby – either you choose E line, or B line, Lyngby will be among the stops (E line is faster since it skips a couple of stations) then you take bus number 183 or 388 and get off after a couple of stops. Bus No. 388 stops near where you can get off from 150, No. 183 goes a bit further but the stop will be closer to the school. The trains are clean, fast and very silent. There is a display in every single car indicating where you are at the moment and where you are headed. There are special compartments for the bicycles, but passengers need to buy tickets for their bikes, too. Buses are the same as the new Volvo buses in Budapest.

## 2) Choosing Wizz Air's direct flight from Budapest to Malmö:

After the successful landing and after obtaining your luggage do not be surprised that you will see a large parking lot and a lot of trees once outside the building. Sturup Airport is located pretty far from Malmö's Central Station. There are two bus stops outside – the one you need is the one whose last stop is the Central Station itself. The ticket must be around 100 SEK (the Swedish Crown is app. 25% weaker than the Danish). You can also buy a return ticket from the driver assuming that you bought a return flight ticket. The journey to the centre of Malmö takes approximately 20-25 minutes. Coaches from the airport leave rarely – expect to wait at least 40 minutes if you missed one bus. At the central station you can buy a train ticket for around 150 to the central station of CPH. There you have to change to another line – the so-called S-tog (or S-train, the same train I mentioned above) and go either to Nørreport or to Lyngby. The rest is as it is explained above.

## Necessary things to do after the arrival

The very first thing you should do after staying in your room for a couple of days is to go to the Immigration Office in Farum. To go there you have to go by train and change from one line to another. Of course the Erasmus coordinator will tell you everything and he or she will take all the exchange students there at once, but you may have to wait for it a couple of weeks as he or she is also a student therefore can be pretty much occupied with other tasks at school. After filling in the necessary documents at the Immigration Office you will get your residence permit and also your work permit (green document) in a couple of days' time. Whenever you go to look for a job remember to make copies of these to hand out as you must always keep the original ones with you! After receiving your permits you should go to the Kommune (found in the shopping centre of Lyngby) to apply for a yellow card. The yellow card is your ID card in Denmark as well as your health insurance card. It gives you detailed information about your doctor (name, address, telephone) and only if you have a card can you start working and also seeing your GP for free of charge. The reason why I recommend you to do these as early as possible is that you can get ill – especially because the spring semester starts at the end of winter when you can still catch a cold or other more problematic diseases – and I assume you don't want to wait many weeks until you can go to your doctor. In fact, to get your yellow card after the visit to the Kommune will take several days.



There are two reasons for opening a Danish bank account in Denmark. First, you will probably work; therefore you need an account so that your employer can transfer your monthly salary to that account (or they give you a cheque which you have to take to your bank). Second, if you don't work it is still advisable to have an account as picking up money from an ATM costs a lot if you are using your international bank card. The charge was 7 Euros in each and every occasion when I used my Raiffeisen MasterCard; however, withdrawing money is free of charge with your Danish card. Some went to the Nordea Bank to create an account, some – including myself – to Danske Bank. After opening an account I received my Danish MasterCard a couple of days later, and then I went to the bank as I wanted to apply for the e-Banking service. With e-Banking you can check your account's balance by using your computer and you can pay your rent for the dormitory online without any extra charge. The extra charge is 20 DKK if you go to the bank with the given cheque for the rent or 15 if your destination is the post office.



If you work, you will need a Danish phone number as I assume your would-be boss would like to reach you on a Danish number instead of a foreign one. Telia and Sonofon mobile shops are available throughout Denmark to buy a SIM card for 100 DKK. If you deplete your balance that comes with the SIM card, you can refill it for the same price. You can even get 25 DKK extra for doing so. The other option is to apply for a subscription, but of the terms and prices of that I do not know. The shops can be recognised easily as Telia has the same pink colour for its theme logo as T-Mobil and Sonofon has the same blue leaflet or clover for a symbol as Pannon.



## **Business Academy Copenhagen North**

The institution is full of international students. We had two international classes in Marketing Management; I attended the one called mec02. My classmates came from the following countries: Denmark, Lithuania, Estonia, the Ukraine, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Hungary, Poland, Belgium, France, Italy, Pakistan, Cameroon and China. The classroom of the other class (mec01) was next to ours therefore I could get acquainted with students going there, as well. Thus I would extend my list with the following nations: Finland, Germany, Russia and Romania. Oh, and not to mention those in the dormitory who either attended other classes or studied at other institutions: people from Czech Republic, Latvia, Greece, India and Uzbekistan. My only regret was not having more students from other continents. The dormitories are just a hundred meters or less away from the school.

A day at school consists of 3 blocks. The blocks last for 80 minutes with 10 minutes breaks in between them. We did not have any classes on Fridays (except during project weeks) since that day was always considered as a "Study Day". We made sure that this name would be forgotten right at the beginning of the term as we introduced the concept of the "Party Day".  
☺

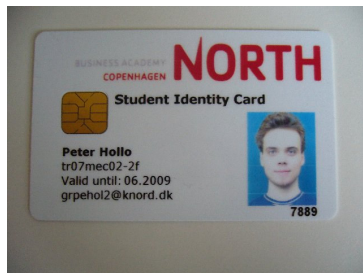
During the semester we had two big projects. One was related to a temporary subject called Design: at least 3 or 4 students had to form a group and choose a product for which they wanted to see a new design. The task of making that new design (the group decided what they

meant by design: colour, shape, package, motto, etc or all of these) laid in the hands of another group. A questionnaire was made prior to the appointment of the groups – it was filled in by at least 50 participants and the idea of the new design was based on the answers. The new design was made by using Photoshop. My team made a new design for the Bisca – the Danish brand for biscuits – while we ordered another team to make a design for a brand-new type of Kellogg's cornflakes we had come up with: the “Dutchflakes” (Dutch waffles used as cornflakes).

The second project – the so-called Project C – was about introducing a Scandinavian brand into the market of an international student's country where it had never appeared before. During this project teams consisted of 5 students; 3 of those came from the Danish classes (there were also two mec classes for Danish students who learned the same as we did). So the 2 remaining international students had to decide whose country to choose as the target country. At least 40 pages had to be handed in at the end of the Project Week. All relevant theories taught during the classes had to be used: Value Chain Analysis, Porter's Five Forces, Porter's Diamond, etc. The student who came from the target country was supposed to write the part called cultural briefing based on what had been taught in Global Communication classes. I worked with a Lithuanian guy and three Danes and Hungary was chosen as the target country where we wanted to introduce a Swedish coffee brand.

Note that all two projects are required to be passed or otherwise you and your team members cannot apply for the end-of-term exams. Of course, eventually, everybody passes (if you don't for the first time, you and your team members will get an extra week). But it is better to do it at the first time. The projects should be uploaded on the school's network and also printed out and handed in at the reception with the signature of the participants.

Open Learnings (OL) – rooms with lots of computers – are available for the purpose of studying and also for surfing the Internet. The computers are not the fastest but you can use them whenever you want. During project weeks we sat there at least 6-8 hours a day. It often happened that we left an OL after midnight. Printers can also be found in the OLs.



Every single student gets a student card at the beginning of the term. As a gift from the school 200 DKK is uploaded onto the cards. You need this money since printing one page costs you 30 øre (1 DKK = 100 øre). You can put more money on your card but for that you need to use a special machine in front of the reception. You also have to use another machine (again located in front of the reception) since the money you

put on your card will only increase your card balance. In order to be able to use the money for printing you have to transfer it to your printing balance by using the PayStation. However, only the amount that is on your balance can be used for copying, therefore I advise you never to transfer all the money from your balance to your printing account (no possibility for transferring money back). Tricky, isn't it? Furthermore cards can be used to access school and OLs when the school is closed (i.e. at weekends, during holidays). You have to insert your card into the panel found next to the entrance doors and



type in your 4 digit PIN code. The PIN should be made up when the photos are taken for the card with the use of a special machine in the library at the beginning of the term.

The librarian is a wonderful woman called Helena. She can get you any book you need. All the books you need for the classes will be given to you at the beginning of the term plus some extra ones if you are there for the spring semester. These extra books are related to the previous semester so that you can get rid all of your shortcomings. The staff of the school has a very good command of English. Do not hesitate to ask them if something bothers you!

## **MyNorth / MitNord**

MyNorth is the school's own network system. It is not similar to our Neptun as it is an intranet network. Therefore it is safer and more stable. You don't need to apply for subjects, neither do you need to apply for the end-of-term exam via the system; the staff of the school will do it instead of you. Then why do students need MyNorth? Well, students need it as news is announced (at Accumulated Announcement section) via the system. News about postponed classes, exam results, deadlines of compulsories, parties (!) etc. Not to mention the fact that each subject has its own folder (at the Document Links section) where you can find all the notes that are required for the classes. In fact, you can find more than that just to be able to read more so that you can broaden your mind. So, you don't have to ask for somebody's notes if you skipped some classes. There is no need to borrow exercise books in order to make copies of them as you do at home. This is how a well-structured system should work in my opinion. Also via MyNorth you can send messages, mails to your classmates and teachers. What is more, in the forums you have the opportunity to discuss compulsories with the class. You can ask the teachers who will reply very soon as they are logged in to the system very often.

But what are the compulsories? These are basically home assignments. They are announced on MyNorth; the materials you need to use so as to solve them are uploaded and you will be notified about the deadlines, as well. You need to upload your home assignments for which you are given a grade. We had to do 2 compulsories for every subject during the term.

You can also check your schedule and timetable for the term via MyNorth's calendar. You can only log in to the system if you type in your ID and password. We had an introduction course about MyNorth at the beginning of the term where we had to come up with a password (ID is given by the school). The password should be changed in 2 months' time to ensure the safety of the system. You access MyNorth not only can from the OLs but also from the dormitory. Through the system you can check whether you got a new message for your new e-mail address given by the school or not.

## **The courses for the spring semester**

- Global Communication: I start with the one that was my favourite. The course was about communication regarding business life. What are the obstacles when two businessmen coming from two different nations want to negotiate with each other? What are the Iron Rules that should be taken into consideration when doing business with your counterpart? Richard Gesteland's Cross-Cultural Business Behaviour was suggested to be read. In fact, the homework was always to read several pages or a chapter from this book. After a couple of weeks a schedule was made for the students since they had to present their own country in front of the class. There were no requirements for the presentations. The most important things were related to the way we were acting while presenting our country – How good was your English? How

often did you take a look at the audience? How many times did you look at your PowerPoint material? Etc.

- Finance: The material was pretty much the same as at Budapest Tech. During the term we were solving exercises in connection with investments. Therefore we used formulas like NPV, IRR, payback period etc. Also we had two exercises as compulsories. Two books were given for Finance. One explained the theory whereas the other one gave us many exercises to put the theory into good use.
- Global Economics: In the autumn the class had discussed every relevant thing about Microeconomics, therefore during the spring they moved on to Macroeconomics. John Sloman's book on economics covered everything with its 700 pages (both Micro- and Macroeconomics). An extra book was given to study the Danish Economy, as well. Again, two exercises as compulsories.
- Business Law: Not only did we discuss the international law in effect within the EU but also the Danish law. Personally I found the book too hard to read (for me everything was explained too law-wise), but the teacher was kind enough to upload notes onto MyNorth. The notes were enough for the classes, compulsories as well as for exam preparation. Topics we discussed during the courses: The Court System, Tort Law, Insurance Law, Marketing Law, Intellectual Property Rights, etc. Two compulsories and several home assignments.
- POS: Everything you wanted to know about Logistics but were afraid to ask. Several PowerPoint files and also documents could be found on MyNorth, plus a chapter from the Supply Management book always had to be read prior to the classes. Only one compulsory as a case to be analysed from the point of view of the logistics.
- International Marketing: During classes we discussed Svend Hollensen's Global Marketing book. The latest edition was given to students and at least 200 pages had to be read during the term. We didn't really have compulsories; however, we had several tests at the beginning of almost every course. Mainly the things we had learned at marketing classes were later used for our second and most important project.
- Innovation and Entrepreneurship / Statistics: The two elective subjects we could choose from at the beginning of the term. I chose Innovation as I had already learnt Statistics for 1,5 years at Budapest Tech. For Innovation two books were recommended to be read but it wasn't compulsory as classes (and uploaded materials) covered every relevant part of the subject. We had one compulsory plus a project we had to do. Groups of at least 3-4 people had to be formed and a company we found innovative enough had to be chosen for analysis. During our analysis all the theories we had learned had to be discussed with regard to the chosen company. The elective subjects are the only subjects that were not part of the end-of-term exam.

The Danish education system differs from ours. During classes we solved many cases and we always worked in groups. Their system has a more practical way of solving problems. You are not asked about definitions. You are not required to describe a theory a famous person came up with. During the exam it is assumed that you already know the theory therefore you have to use this knowledge to solve cases. When I solved the Business Law part of my exam I was not asked to describe what the Tort Law was. I was given a case regarding Tort Law. Then I had my approximately 600-page law book to solve the case in 2 hours. You have three cases to solve during the exam. Each case is related to a subject. Students are allowed to use their notes (plus everything found on MyNorth), books during the exam, basically everything with the exception of the World Wide Web (you can even use a USB stick on which you can upload an electronic dictionary if you need it). Since there were three exercises the exam lasted for 6 hours. For me it was the most stressful exam I had ever sat for! The 3 subjects that

were part of the exam out of the 6 we had had during the term had been announced only 24 hours before the exam. Exams are solved on computer, then had to be printed out in 3 copies. The teachers are really helpful: you can have extra classes with them and also they help in the compulsories; furthermore they have a really good command of English (though sometimes they do not really know how to spell one word or another).

### **The people, the language, products and cuisine**

The Danish are very informal people. You can say “Hei!” (pronounced exactly as the English “Hi!” and it also means the same) to every person you meet without offending them. Age and gender don’t really matter; “Hei!” is the suitable greeting word for everybody. At school we had to call teachers by their first name. There was no need for any Mr. or Mrs., at all. As far as I know this informality is the characteristic of all the Nordic countries.

The second thing you will find really interesting is the fact that in this country almost everybody speaks English. They speak very good English that is closer to the British one than to the American one. I will give you three examples. During the first couple of weeks of my staying I was desperately trying to find the seaside. I went to the wrong way and after half an hour of walking I kindly asked an old couple about where to go. The old lady was the one who replied my “Do you speak English?” question instantly with a “Yes, a bit.” answer. Her pronunciation was really good and she fluently told me where to go and which bus to take to get to the Bellevue Beach near Klampenborg. She must have been at least 65 years old. The other example is related to the other extreme. The youngest child able to speak English I came across must have been at least 13-14 years old. We were in a shop in the shopping centre of Lyngby where he wanted to find out what he looked like while wearing 4 caps on his head at the same time. When I replied to his Danish question in English he suddenly asked me again, but this time, in English: “What do I look like?” The third one is related to a homeless person asking for some spare change on the train. My reply for his question was “Sorry, I don’t speak Danish.” which was followed by the same question from him, however, for the second time, in English: “Do you have some change?”.

The mentality of people is also different. Copenhagen and its suburbs are really clean. People don’t mind taking the garbage to the nearest trash bin even if they have to walk a couple of minutes. Trains, buses, metro cars are all very clean. Of course you can find garbage in Copenhagen as it is a capital with several habitants but it is also regularly cleaned. People are hospitable, kind; they always help you if they are not in a hurry and of course if they can. Yet, in some way they seem to be a bit distant towards foreigners. That may have been the reason why I only made friends with two Danes.

Almost everybody uses a bike in Denmark. In fact, bicycle lanes can be found everywhere and in Lyngby they are at least twice as wide as the pedestrian lanes. At train stations hundreds of parked cycles can be seen. No wonder Denmark is called the “Heaven of cyclists”. The government encourages people to use the public transport or bikes by levying pretty high taxes on cars. The registration tax on cars is said to be even higher than their price. Thus it is not unusual to see cars of the ‘70s or ‘80s on the roads and traffic jams cannot be seen, at all.







The weather is a very common topic of discussion, just like in Britain. It often rains; no matter what meteorology says you should take an umbrella with you almost all the time. In winter it was snowing only once and the snow melted as soon as it hit the ground. During the summertime we had days with at least 25 C, but then these were followed by days when it was raining cats and dogs, which the Danes call the typical Danish weather. Even though there are times when it's rainy, windy, stormy, you can always see people

cycling around. In Denmark many people pursue some sport: swimming, running, Nordic walking and cycling are the most common. It is very common to see a family riding bikes together: the father is in the lead of the "team", the mother is in the back while the kids are in between them. In Lyngby they ride horses, as well.

I found the Danish language extremely hard to learn. We had the opportunity to attend a very intensive language course (for 500 DKK), which, eventually, did not start as there were not enough (i.e. 10 people) applicants. It seemed only a few people were interested in the Danes' language. The language belongs to the group of Germanic languages. Therefore you can find many similarities with English. If you speak German it is even better as the Danes have loanwords from them, too. However, easy as it may seem regarding the written language, the pronunciation of words is very hard. They omit the pronunciation of many letters in their words. The benefit of learning their language is the fact that you can get very close to knowing Swedish and Norwegian languages, too, as they are very similar to Danish. Not many people speak Danish in the world beside the 5 million Danes living in Denmark, though. There are four letters in their alphabet you should pay attention to: æ, ø, å and y. The pronunciations for these are é, ö, ó and ü, respectively. Now you know that Lyngby is not Lingbi, but Lüngbü. ☺

When it comes to food, expect everything to be very expensive, also you have to give up some of your favourite food. Bread is very expensive and you cannot really find 1 kg of the typical white bread that is always on display in the Hungarian CBAs. You will likely buy toast bread in the Danish supermarkets. Rolls come in packages (6-12 rolls in them) and they have a different taste. They are delicious, yet, I missed those you can buy at home. Also you have to give up the big, cheesy croissants and practically any kind of croissants you regularly eat in Hungary for sandwiches. In the Danish supermarkets this product is unknown. Those that are sold in bakeries come with nougat or something else. Even though many things you got used to are unavailable in Denmark, I could find some Pick salami in the Netto supermarket in Lyngby!



There are many kinds of milk according to the amount of fat they contain. The one with 0,1% is the cheapest and considered to be the healthiest but we didn't really like it as the taste was closer to water than to milk. The highest fat percentage the milk contains is 3,5.



Danone yoghurt can hardly be found. I really missed the Activia and other flavours. The only Danone I found came with stracatella. You have to be satisfied with the brand Yoggi which is far from being as delicious as Danone.

Snack: Instead of Milka you will be likely to find Marabou chocolates. Let's say this is the Milka that Kraft Foods distributes in the Nordic countries. They are delicious just like Milka and come in many flavours (milk chocolate, hazelnut, dark chocolate, caramel, etc). The Marabou Premium products can really draw attention with their mixed flavours and high prices. Also instead of the Hungarian Györi biscuits you will find the

Danish Bisca good enough to chew on in the afternoons. As for chewing gums instead of Orbit, Airwaves and Winterfresh you will buy the Danish Stimorol which comes in many flavours – people in the Nordic countries like this special flavour called liquorice; personally I couldn't eat any gum with that flavour, it was just horrible. You cannot buy a packet of chewing gum – they are sold in “3 Packs” and “2 Packs”, which is also common for other products, e.g. toothpaste.



If you want to try a new coffee taste you can try the Swedish Gevalia. I don't want to compare it to the Mercedes of coffees (i.e. Nescafe); both of them are just fine.

While walking down the streets of Copenhagen you will probably bump into several sausage wagons. These are the typical fast food outlets in Denmark selling several types of hot dogs. Just look for the word pølser. The prices of hot dogs range from 20 DKK up to 30 DKK.

Tuborg and Carlsberg are the Danish beer brands known worldwide. Faxe Kondi is a soft drink that has the same taste as Sprite or 7Up but it's much sweeter. Beside Fanta you will have the opportunity to buy the orange-flavoured soft drink called Squash from Tuborg.



7-Eleven: first they were opened only between 10 am and 7 pm, now they are open 24 hours a day, yet, the name remained. If you need some refreshments, snacks or just some bakery products in the morning head for the nearest 7-Eleven in your vicinity. Dozens can be found in CPH.

Smørrebrød: A typical Danish sandwich with heavy toppings and dark rye bread. It is called open sandwich as there is no bread atop. I found one shop selling many kinds of

Smørrebrød near the central station of CPH. Prices range from 25 to 50 DKK.

## The Residence Hall

The Residence Hall is the place where Erasmus students of Business Academy Copenhagen North live. This is the dormitory the institution provides exchange students with as they are considered first priority. Had I stayed in the following semesters at the school (I was given the opportunity but decided otherwise) I would have had to go someplace else as I would have become a regular student. Don't take it wrong: if there are enough free rooms, then, practically, any kind of student can stay in the Residence Hall, however, they expected at least 50 new students for the autumn term in 2008 therefore many of the residents were told to find a new place by September. But of course some regular students had a contract for 2 years so for them no problem occurred.

Every student has a room with the area of 12 m<sup>2</sup>. The furniture includes a cupboard for the clothes, a bed, a table and a chair. There is also a washbasin in the corner of your room. Everything else you need you have to buy yourself. Bus No. 150 can take you to the IKEA, it's relatively cheap and it is just a few bus stops away. Everybody has a neighbour with whom they have to share a toilet and a shower. First everybody enters a small hall where the two rooms, the toilet and the shower can be accessed from. You can use your key for the door that leads to this hall and also for your room. You and your neighbour have to take care of the cleanliness in these areas. If there is a problem students have to notify the janitor or the warden. Bear in mind that the rooms can vary greatly. Some have extra cupboards; some don't have Venetian blinds or curtains, at all. I, for instance did not have any carpet whereas others had a nice and clean wall-to-wall carpet and some extra lamps in their room. So, if you are lucky you are given a key for a room of which its previous owner took great care.

There are 3 kitchens in the Residence Hall. Each of them serves 20 students. The kitchens are very well equipped. There are two stoves, many refrigerators, a toaster, a microwave oven, a boiler in them and there is even a TV with a subscription to dozens of channels. Movies are not dubbed in Denmark; the Danes prefer to watch everything in the original language with English subtitles. You also have to take care of the kitchen you belong to. You have to do the washing-up because nobody else will do it for you. We had some problems with the tidiness of our kitchen from time to time and as a result of that notices were put up on everybody's door announcing a cleaning day. The message also included the consequence of not participating in the cleaning process: permanent evacuation from the Residence Hall. There are so-called kitchen weeks during school term. It means that the person who is responsible for the kitchen for one week must do several things: taking out the garbage, changing the bottles that have PANT symbol on them (they are recyclable), cleaning the plates if somebody has not done so, etc. You have to do it or otherwise you have to pay a fine. Also there are monthly tasks. These include cleaning the fridges, the windows, the microwave oven, washing the kitchen towels and the sheets of the sofa. Again, if you don't do it, expect to pay at least 200-300 DKK as a fine. Each kitchen has a manager, i.e. a student just like you who was willing to take the job, meetings are organised and regularly held in the kitchen. The list of duties and the schedule for the kitchen weeks and monthly tasks can be found on the boards in every kitchen. Oil, flour, salt, sugar and the spices are for everybody therefore the residents have to pay a small amount in each month (I paid 50 DKK) so that the person responsible for the week can buy them. Sometimes after big parties things can break or get lost – since students are responsible for this all those belonging to the kitchen have to give some money to buy new things. When it comes to broken equipment the school covers the expenses.

## Tour De Chambre

There are many parties in the Residence Hall. As mentioned above we organised these parties on Friday as it was a free day, or later at weekends. However, students usually worked at weekends and since we did not want anybody to lose one day's salary because of a severe hangover we tried to stick to Friday. When somebody had a birthday a kitchen was always full. There is a so-called common room just after the Hall's entrance to the right, but we usually went there to play table tennis or table soccer (there was even a piano some students enjoyed). In the middle of the term the time of Tour De Chambre finally came. This party, the biggest and most amazing of all is organised in every term. A few meetings are held in the kitchens to decide the date of the TDC and also its theme. The theme the residents choose will determine the clothes people have to wear during the parties. And this is the only part where the 3 kitchen differ from each other. We were pirates, students of the downstairs kitchen were angels and devils and the residents of the Swamp kitchen were punks. The rule is always the same – after the dinner the residents of the kitchen start their journey by going from room to room in their corridor to taste the drink their fellow residents previously prepared for them. So you can expect to be really drunk at the end of the journey as many shots are served. You can enjoy the national drinks if served – Tamás served pálinka (as I recall it was plum-flavoured, other exchange students enjoyed it pretty much) while the Turks had Rakit in their room. We even dared to go and visit the other kitchens' corridors after we had finished with ours but of course residents there had already drunk everything. It was nice to see a group of people consisting of pirates, bad guys and devils. It was truly a memorable, never-to-forget experience of my life. And one of the worst as it was my kitchen week then and I had to clean the mess 20 people had made right next morning! I still shiver if I have to think about what we left behind.



## Lyngby

Kongens Lyngby lies just north of Copenhagen. You either travel by train or by bus from CPH it takes approx. 20 minutes to get there. Lyngby is a small town with lots of green areas and with many lakes offering you the possibility of canoeing. Its amusement park with its old rollercoaster running on wooden rails is considered to be one of the oldest in Europe. The fun park can be found in the national park which is truly a remarkable experience if you want to see the fight of the deer. There are several supermarkets in the town – Super Brugsen, Netto, and Fakta Quick – and many other shops can be found along the main street of Lyngby or in the shopping centre (Lyngby Storcenter).



## Sightseeing in Lyngby

- Mill: the old mill where ducks lie down to sunbathe in the summer heat. Go along Lyngby Hovedgade from Lyngby Station and several minutes later you will see the mill to the left.
- Open Air Museum: a museum where you can find old buildings, farms and landscapes. The museum gives you an insight into what life was like a couple of hundred years ago. Admission is free but if you would like to travel the area on horse-carriage you have to pay 25 DKK. After the mill you should go along Kongevejen to find the entrance of the museum to the right.
- The Deer Garden: a forest park that covers almost 12 km<sup>2</sup>. The park has many lakes where ducks and swans swim and large open fields where hundreds of deer stroll each day. The Deer Garden is said to be the home for at least 2.000 deer. There are many entrances characterised by big red gates. The easiest way to reach the sea from Lyngby is to go through the main road (Fortunvej) of Dyrehaven (the park's Danish name) until you reach the Bellevue Beach next to Klampenborg Station. Those of you who like taking photos as a hobby don't restrain yourselves while in the park. Swans and ducks can be seen next to the lakes awaiting you to give them bread crumbs while some of the Danes ride horses on the designated roads. While you are en route to the Eremitage Palace along Kongevej you can see the largest fields with hundreds of deer. Behind the Eremitage Palace you will find the field where the deer usually fight with each other.
- Eremitage Palace: banquets were held here during deer hunts hundreds of years ago.
- Bakken: as you go along Fortunvej in the national park you will find the world's oldest existing amusement park next to the lake called Kildesø. If you pay approx. 100 DKK you can ride as many things as you want and as many times as you want. The old wooden rollercoaster and the Double Shot were the favourite of my friends.
- Kino Palæet: the local cinema (called Palace) where you should go if you miss movies on the big screen. Nothing special but it has a charm to see movies with Danish subtitles. However, the ticket is quite expensive: 105 DKK for premier movies and 85 for the rest. Not to mention the popcorn + cola menu where even the little menu is 50 DKK.





## Prices

Denmark is a very expensive country. The price level is three times as high as in Hungary when it comes to food. I will give you a few examples:

Milk (1 litre) – 7,5 DKK (with 1,5% fat; the less the fat the cheaper the milk)

Bread (500g) – 11-12 DKK (but it's just bread for toast, e.g. 500g of brown bread can be 20-25 DKK)

Bread (1 kg) – 23-25 DKK (let's call it the regular white bread that we have at home)

Mineral water (2 l) – 4,5 DKK (but there's 1,5 l for 7,5 DKK and also there is a more expensive brand called Evian for 13 DKK)

Cheese (250g) – 15-20 DKK (again, there are other, more expensive brands for 40 DKK or even more)

1 apple – 2-3 DKK

1 lemon – 3,5 DKK

Salami (250g) – 20 DKK

Chewing gums (3 pack) – 13 DKK

The cafeteria at school is also very expensive. Some cookies or biscuits plus the coffee from the coffee machine can give you the necessary carbon-hydrate and caffeine to be up and able to concentrate all day, but I wouldn't recommend you to have lunch at school, or even to have a sandwich for more than 20 DKK. It's cost-saving to buy the necessary ingredients so that you can prepare the food on your own.

Two supermarkets can be found next to the petrol station not far from the school. There you can find everything you need, still, sometimes it's worth going to Lyngby station as in the supermarkets – Netto, Fakta Quick – there products are cheaper. Some students went to Magasine in front of the shopping centre to do the daily shopping; some other swore that fruits and vegetables are best to buy from the shop in the shopping centre. Very cheap products for your room (e.g. pillows, blankets) as well as for the kitchen (e.g. trays, bowls) are available in Tiger.



## Finding a job

As mentioned in the “Prices” section Denmark is a very expensive country. If I recall correctly what I heard during some courses at school, nowadays Denmark is considered to be the most expensive country of Europe. You may find the grant your school provides you with not enough therefore you may want to find work, especially considering the fact that you have to pay a deposit at the beginning of the term which you will only receive after your departure. This amount equals to two months' rent, which was 4.200 DKK for me.

Finding a job in Denmark is not easy. You have to start looking for one as early as possible, especially in the spring term as summer is getting closer and closer and during summer time more and more people go to Denmark to find a job. It is said that there is a shortage of labour in Denmark. It is true; however, don't forget that Copenhagen is a very small capital compared to Budapest, therefore shortage of labour does not necessarily mean a lots of vacancies. Never accept a job where the employer offers you less than a 100 DKK as hourly payment! Among the “Useful Links” I mention one which is very helpful if you are looking for a job. Always ask your classmates or friends in the Residence Hall if they work or whether they know of any vacancies somewhere or not!

I had two jobs in Denmark. I worked as a waiter in a pizza house not far from Lyngby Station and I also worked for a Danish cleaning company. We had to clean at construction sites for several weeks. First I worked in Nordhavn in Copenhagen then a driver took us to Hillerød every day for 5 weeks. At the restaurant my payment was 100 DKK per hour plus tips (one day tips was around 150 DKK), whereas at the cleaning company they paid me 115 for a month as I was a trainee then it rose to 125 DKK per hour. First you think it's really cool and it's really easy to earn a lot in Denmark. Yes, it is, but also the taxes workers have to pay are really high. Until 4.000 DKK you have to pay 8%, then 38+8%. The next limit is around 27.500 DKK or something, where taxes can be 4x% to 7x% anything. To get your tax card you have to visit the Skat Office. The one in Lyngby is very close to the school. You just have to take bus No. 150 from the petrol station and travel a few stops. Your employers need your yellow card and residence or working permit beside your tax card. I think girls can more easily find a job as there are many houses in Lyngby near to the school where they usually need somebody to clean or to look after the kids. And of course the payment is in cash but you cannot work as much as you want.



## Sightseeing in Denmark

### ❖ Copenhagen:

- Little Mermaid: The very thing one should take a look at while in Copenhagen. You must not leave Denmark without visiting Andersen's Mermaid! Although behind the statue you can see the other side of the harbour with many factories, but if you are a bit sophisticated, you can take photos of the girl excluding those ugly buildings. The lady can be found near Østerport Station. Turn left and go behind the fortress!
- The Rosenborg Castle: A couple of minutes away on foot from Nørreport Station. The castle was the residence for the royal family a long time ago. Now it houses the rooms the previous kings lived in hundreds of years ago. The Danes preserved these rooms as much as they could. Some went under a little renovation; some have walls made of glass at their entrance so that tourists cannot go inside. I assume the walls serve security purposes since there are many original and probably fragile objects inside. The rooms of the kings are shown in a chronological order. In the basement you can find the crown jewellery; upstairs the thrones are kept with the three silver lions protecting them. In order to take photos you need an extra ticket!
- Kongens Have: Next to the Rosenborg Castle lies the King's Garden. Take your friends there during a hot day in the summer and lie down on a blanket to get a little sunbathe! Several statues (including one of Andersen's) can be found in the park.
- Nyhavn: Colourful houses can be found near the "New Harbour". Next to Kongens Nytorv metro station.
- Amalienborg Palace: If you are at Nyhavn, go along the Bredgade and you will find the Amalienborg Palace Square. The residents of the royal family can be found there. There is also a museum in which you can get a glimpse at the study rooms of previous kings from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Again, you need an extra ticket to get the permission to take photos. Three times a day there are guided tours upstairs – your guide will describe the meaning of the decoration of the rooms.
- Parks: Many other parks are available to spend a nice afternoon with your friends there. Sorgenfri Slotshave belongs to the municipality of Sorgenfri next to Lyngby. Some parts of the park reminded me of the Hungarian forests. Frederiksberg Have is behind the Zoo in the neighbourhood of Frederiksberg; the Botanisk Have with the Botanic Museum, Palm House and Geological Museum is located around Nørreport Station as well as Ørsted's Parken in the city centre. In some parks you can have the opportunity to canoe along the streams!
- Museums: plenty of museums are available for tourists throughout Copenhagen and beyond it. Somewhere admission is free while elsewhere you have to pay, but usually students can get a discount. I visited many museums and only very few disappointed me either because I found them too small or there were too few English translations of the texts to be found. The National Gallery a few hundred meters away from Nørreport offers you an insight into 700 years of painting. Some exhibitions focus on the Danish art, some on all the aspects of modern art. The Danish Museum of Art and Design is to be found close to Amalienborg Palace. You will get some information on Danish as well as Asian (mainly Chinese) design. The Dansk Design Center – pretty similar to the former museum – can be accessed in front of Tivoli. Go to the Vesterbro neighbourhood to find out the story of Carlsberg and Tuborg (don't forget the 2 free beers your ticket entitles you to in the bar), have a walk around Christiansborg if you want to take a look at the Royal Library as well as her Majesty's coaches and horses. A museum for the Danish Jews, for the Royal Arsenal and for one of most famous

artists of Denmark who has ever lived – Bertel Thorvaldsens – can be accessed from there, as well.

- The Round Tower: In the city centre you will find many of CPH's shopping streets. The Tower is around one of these streets. Upstairs there is usually a temporary exhibition, but the main reason you should pay the 20 DKK for the ticket is to get on top of the building where you can get a spectacular view of CPH. As I recall the observatory on top of the building can only be accessed from September.
  - Tivoli: The fun park that is considered to be the biggest tourist attraction in Denmark. Although the cheapest ticket is 85 DKK, you should buy the one for 200 DKK as it entitles you to ride as many things and as many times as you want. We found the Rollercoaster, the Double Shot and the Star flyer the biggest attractions. Beside the rides there are other types of entertainment as well as flower gardens, restaurants (there is one on a Pirate Ship). Tivoli is located next to the City Hall along Hans Christian Andersens Boulevard. The Andersen statue on the other side of the Boulevard is watching Tivoli.
  - There are so many things to see that I simply do not have enough space to write all of them down! At the beginning of the term you will receive a free copy of Copenhagen Tourist which gives you detailed information on where to go and what to see. There are sightseeing Double Decker buses in CPH and you can also do sightseeing by trying out the Canal Tours. There are dozens of monuments and statues in the city commemorating famous people or events of the Danish history. Some students took a ferry from Nordhavn to go to Oslo, Norway; others took a train from Hellerup to go to Roskilde for the rock festival during the summertime or to visit the Viking Ship Museum. Those who wanted to see where Shakespeare's Hamlet takes place took the S-tog to Helsingør to visit the Kronborg Castle. There a ferry takes you to Helsingør, Sweden as that is the place where Denmark and Sweden are closest to each other.
  - Kastellet: a well-preserved fortification in CPH with many cannons and barracks.
  - Lángos: Toni's Lángos is the only place in Denmark located near Nørreport Station where you can enjoy the taste of the Hungarian Lángos!
- ❖ Hillerød:
- The Frederiksborg Castle: The castle's role was the same as was the role of Rosenborg Castle. Members of the royal family spent their summertime there. The castle is built on an island and can be accessed by crossing an S shaped bridge. There is a wonderful fountain in the inner courtyard. Several paintings showing Danish kings, the war between Sweden and Denmark and stories of the Bible are to be found upstairs. Some chairs have been preserved so well that you would think you could sit down until you see the sign saying "Do not touch!". This Renaissance castle also houses the Museum of National History on the top floor. Behind the building you can go and relax in the Frederiksborg Castle Garden or take some photos in the Baroque Garden.







## Summary

Those months that I spent in Denmark were probably the best of my life – or at least the best so far. I had the opportunity to get to know other international students, thus other cultures and languages. I think I'm not mistaken if I say that I have more international friends now than Hungarian ones. And it was the first time in my life to be really on my own and, to tell you the truth, I really enjoyed it.

Becoming an exchange student is going to a new school on the very first day. You become part of a new community where people do not know you, at all. You have a fresh start and you will likely change a bit by the end. Your friends and your family will notice your new personality when you return and they will, hopefully, like it.

We should not forget the benefit from attending a foreign school, either. We can profit from the different education system the Danes have as well as improve our foreign language skills and one may learn Danish, eventually. In this new environment with mixed cultures one can have the chance to fight prejudices and broaden his or her mind.

Last, but not least I would like to thank Mária Dudás for her help. Without her coordination I would not have spent 8 months in the land of the Vikings. Without her assistance I would have at least a dozen fewer wonderful people as friends now. Without her guidance I would not be the confident young man I have become. The person who knows the meaning of such words as: friendship, responsibility, care. Thank you for giving me this gift!

Should you, dear readers, have any questions regarding life in Denmark, do not hesitate to contact me via the following e-mail address: [hollo.peter@gmail.com](mailto:hollo.peter@gmail.com).



## Useful links

<http://www.sterling.dk/> - Book a direct flight from Budapest to Copenhagen!

<http://wizzair.com/> - Book a direct flight from Budapest to Malmö!

[http://www.flygbussarna.se/Tidtabeller/Malmo\\_Airport.aspx](http://www.flygbussarna.se/Tidtabeller/Malmo_Airport.aspx) - Schedule for the airport coaches.

<http://www.knord.dk/international> - The homepage of Business Academy Copenhagen North.

<http://www.dsb.dk/cs/Satellite?pagename=DSBUK/Forside> - The homepage of the Danish transportation company.

<http://www.copenhagen.com/> - Everything about Copenhagen.

<http://www.visitcopenhagen.com/> - Copenhagen from a touristic point of view.

<http://www.cphpost.dk/> - The Copenhagen Post; all the Danish news in English. The newspapers newest editions can always be found at the school's cafeteria. They are free of charge.

<http://www.malmo.se/servicemeny/cityofmalmo.4.33aee30d103b8f15916800021923.html> - The third most densely populated Swedish town you will likely come across.

<http://www.helsingborg.se/Main.aspx?id=5&epslanguage=EN> - The Swedish town that is closest to Denmark.

<http://www.visitoslo.com/> - Information on Oslo for tourists.

<http://www.rejseplanen.dk/> - You will find this website really useful. It's the same as the Hungarian "Útvonaltervező". But this time it's all about Denmark. Don't worry: not only is the Travel Plan in Danish, but German and English versions of the site are also available.

<http://www.jobindex.dk/> - If you are looking for a job try searching here first. It's much better than walking in Copenhagen from shop to shop giving out résumés and asking if employers have any vacancies. The site is only available in Danish but I'm sure you will find a Danish student at school who can help you with the translation.

<http://www.polyteknisk.dk/> - The bookshop where the school buys the books for the students. Personally I found the marketing and the communication book so interesting that I decided to buy them. If you decide to remain at the school and continue the regular programme you will likely need to buy some of the books as the library doesn't have many to lend. Either because most are given to exchange students or the ones they have are older editions missing some very important chapters. The site has a UK version, too.

<http://www.bakken.dk/> - Homepage of the oldest amusement park of the world found in Lyngby. Also available in English language.

<http://www.kino.dk/> - Book your ticket for screenings in Kino Palæet in advance.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bornholm> - The island that belongs to Denmark, yet, it is closer to Sweden. The seaside is beautiful and also the fortress and the mills are worth visiting – no wonder many go there for the summertime. However, expect the journey to be expensive.

<http://www.bornholminfo.dk/?langId=2> – Find accommodation, plan your sightseeing and get acquainted with Bornholm's history, nature, etc.

2008-09-15