

# Final Report – Belén Ruiz Santos

## Semester exchange programme at PH Zug

### 1. Support

- From PH Zug / the International Office

Since the first moment, I received a lot of support from PH Zug and the International Office. Before arriving to Switzerland, we already had some conversations where they gave me all the information I needed to know before coming here. Specially this year, with all the Corona situation, they helped me with every problem I had and, for example, during the quarantine I did at the begging, they offered to buy me food and everything I needed, something that I really appreciate.

- From your classroom teacher (if you completed the internship)

All the teachers I had at the PH Zug were very kind with me and helped me in the different classes. Some of them made a big effort to talk in English just for me and I understand that sometimes it is something difficult to explain in a language you are not used to. All the teachers helped me with the work I had to do and perfectly understood my situation here and specially this year that half of the classes were online and that made everything more difficult.

- From your buddy

My buddy helped me also to integrate in Zug, specially at the beginning. When I started at the PH Zug, she was opened to help me with everything I need, and she also helped me discover this city and the surroundings.

### 2. Accommodation and living situation (max. 1/3 A4 page)

- Finding accommodations, type of accommodations, cost

It wasn't difficult to find an accommodation for me because I received a lot of help from the PH. They recommended me to stay at the Monastery near the university. It was the best option because it was the cheapest and it is very close to the PH. I also had the recommendation of another Spanish student that was in Zug the past year and stayed at this monastery. Personally, I think the monastery is good just for having a place to live during your stay in Switzerland, but I missed being in touch and living with other students as it could be in a student residence. The monastery is good for staying a short period of time, but I wouldn't recommend it if you stay in Zug a whole year. The most positive aspect of the monastery was the money you spend on it because it cost 450 CHF per month, that is very cheap compared to the rest of options in Switzerland.

(Photo of my room at the monastery)



- Approximate monthly living costs

In a month you might spend around 700-800 CHF. Just for the accommodation you spend 450 CHF. Then, you have to add the money you spend in food, which is also a high quantity (200 CHF prox.). Something in which I spend a lot of money too was in the public transport. Although the university helps you with a special card, the transport in Switzerland is very expensive (100CHF). These are the basic things you need during your stay, but you need to add other expenses you might have.

### 3. Overall programme

- Programme at PH Zug (lectures etc.)

I really enjoyed the different courses I had at the PH. All of them were very different as the ones I'm used to have in Spain, so I could learn a lot. I had some classes of arts and music, things that I personally like and that I haven't had the option to learn before at university. So, during my stay in Zug I appreciate to have time to practice this type of things. The subjects I had here allowed me to discover new ways of understanding the education and a new culture. Not only the teachers are different as in Spain, but also the students with whom I had the opportunity to exchange opinions about education and other different aspects.

- Teaching practice programme

At the beginning I was a bit scared of doing my teaching practice at ISZL because there I worked with kids that are 3 or 4 years old, and I was used to work in primary years. But I really enjoyed my time there because I learnt a lot of different things from the kids, and from the teachers. In my class, there were two teachers that helped me a lot and allowed me to have different experiences with the kids. The way this school has of teaching is something I never saw before so I will keep with me all the aspects and methodologies I observed at the school.

- Challenges you faced

Going on an exchange program far away from home is always something difficult, but the corona situation didn't make it easier either. Because of the classes where half online and half at the PH I didn't have the option to make so much contact with the other students as we only saw each other one day in two weeks. Also, in some subjects it was difficult for me to follow all the instructions by email or in moodle, but at least all the teachers were very kind and helped me with every problem I had.

## 4. Personal evaluation of the stay

- Benefit for your future studies and career

When I think about all the things I have learnt during my exchange program I definitely think about all the lectures I have received at PH, because as I said before, they were all very different of what I was used to learn and they taught me important aspects for education that I will use in my future. Also, having the opportunity of doing teaching practice in an international school let me understand a new way of education with many different characteristics that I will keep with me for ever. Finally, something that I also think I have learnt here and that will be useful for my future is having the experience of living for some months alone, in a new country where you don't know anyone and being able to meet people and discover new places by your own.

- Recommendations for future students

According to PH aspects, I recommend don't being shy and talk to all the students you have the opportunity to talk with, because like that you could learn a lot from them and their culture. Also, you must ask all the teachers whatever you want to because they will always help you with everything you need.

According to the accommodation, I recommend the monastery just if you don't have too much money or if you go with someone else you already know. Otherwise, it is a bit boring and difficult living in a placed where you don't have friends or people of your age.

- Personal evaluation (3 positive and 3 negative points)

Positive points:

1. My experience at the International School. I really enjoyed my time there and learn many things from their way of teaching.
2. The courses I had at the PH, specially the ones about Art and Music.
3. Having the opportunity of living by my own for some months and have time for me.

Negative points:

1. Difficulties to meet people. When I came here, I had in mind being able to meet a lot of new people, but it was difficult because either in the university or in the monastery, there were no other exchange students.
2. The coronavirus made all the situation harder and didn't allow us to make all the activities we would like to.
3. Spending a lot of time alone with no one else by my side. Sometimes it is difficult to be just by your own when you are not used to.