I remember arriving at my accommodation in Göteborg on a Saturday morning two days before my first work day. All my new housemates were there when I arrived, a Swedish guy, a Chinese girl and an Irish girl, they made me feel welcomed from the first moment. Some of them were also IAESTE students. IAESTE helped me to find the place. I am very grateful for that, as the house was at a perfect location and I enjoyed to live in a shared house with other students.

On my first working day, I went to work by bus, later I started to take the bike as it only took me about 15 minutes. My supervisor at work was great, she showed me around, answered all my questions and introduced me to a lot of people. Whenever there was an interesting presentation, a training or conference, she told me about it and encouraged me to go if I wanted to. There was another IAESTE student from Scotland in my team. She helped me a lot with some organizational stuff like getting a bank account. I got the feeling that sometimes the organization in Sweden is a bit chaotic. Already in my first week I realized that it’s sometimes hard to live in Sweden without a Swedish personal number. Because of that I didn’t get an entrance badge at work for about 2 weeks. It was a bit annoying, as someone had to pick me up every morning at the gate. It was nice that I could get some experience with fluid simulations at work. It is a field that I haven’t worked with before. I liked the flexible working hours, we were also free to work from home sometimes if we wanted to. A lot of my colleagues had small kids, and had to stay home whenever their children were sick. It’s also common in Sweden for all the male employees to take parental leave for at least half a year for every kid. Something a bit astonishing for me was that some colleagues even brought their kids to work for the whole day. The kids were watching some television while they were working. Most people at work brought their own lunch box and warmed it up in the microwave. I got to appreciate the Swedish coffee break called „Fika“ on Friday, when one person always brought cake. With some work colleagues we went running sometimes during lunch time.
When I arrived in Sweden I didn’t know any Swedish. I just brought a beginners book to learn. Soon, I bought a Swedish comic in the book store and realized that it’s not that hard to understand written Swedish text because there are similarities to English and German. I didn’t take any Swedish courses, but tried to learn it just by reading and watching some movies in Swedish. Still at the beginning, when my colleagues sometimes switched to Swedish during lunch breaks, I couldn’t understand anything. However after some time I was able to understand Swedish quite well. And I was happy that I could also practice a bit with my Swedish flatmate. But mostly Swedish was not really necessary, as Swedes are generally very friendly to foreigners and their English level is very high.

My first time meeting the IAESTE members was in their office at the university, where they cooked „Semlor“ for us. Its a Swedish speciality that tastes super good. During the year we had several parties in the office together and we also met for some other fun activities. In summer, we played football about once a week with IAESTE people. Some of my favorite places in Göteborg were the botanical garden, „Slottsskogen“ (a park with an open zoo inside), the islands and the lakes.

During my year in Sweden, I traveled to all the close capitals Stockholm, Copenhagen and Oslo. I especially liked Copenhagen for its liveliness, with its street food markets and street musicians. One spontaneous trip I made to the north of Denmark was very nice. I took the ferry from Göteborg to Fredrikshavn, and took the train from there to Skagen. Skagen has a very beautiful beach that is worth visiting.
I got three weeks of summer holiday which I spend in Sweden, Norway and Denmark, mostly together with family members, who visited me. First, I spend a few days in Skien (Norway) with my parents, we had no rain for the whole time, which is like a sensation in Norway. With my sister, I went to Stockholm and Gotland afterwards by train and ferry. Gotland was one of the highlights of the summer holiday, it is a very beautiful island, and I definitely plan to go back there one day. I without knowing booked a cell in an old prison there as an accommodation. That was funny and at least now I know that „fängelse“ means prison in Swedish. It’s very nice to rent bikes and cycle on the island, there are a lot of pretty beaches. I also spent some time with my siblings and cousins in a house in Munkedal, where we enjoyed the best of the Swedish summer, doing some trips to some near places, doing barbecue and boat trips with a small rowing boat and playing „Kubb“ (a game that is very popular in Sweden). It was sunny and didn’t rain for about 2 weeks, which is a long time for Sweden.

At the end of the summer, a lot of my foreign friends left Sweden to go back to their home country. I was a bit sad, also all my house mates were leaving. But soon I got new house mates from England, France, Sweden, Spain and Austria. During the year, I had housemates from seven different countries. It was always nice to hang out with them, cook together and learn about their cultures.
In autumn I joined a new football team that played twice a week just for fun. I met a lot of good friends there and we also went out sometimes together. Then it got darker and darker as the winter was coming and we had to stop playing on Thursday evening, because it was too dark outside. We still played on Saturdays. It was a bit hard in November that there were only about 8 hours of sunlight the whole month, it was cloudy all the time. I started to understand why Swedes put the Christmas decoration already at the beginning of November, which was weird to me at the beginning.

At the end of January, my internship was already coming to an end. It felt like time has passed far too quickly. I spent my last month doing some traveling in Norway and saying goodbye to my friends in Sweden. At the Norwegian coast we saw the northern lights, and even though it was dark most of the time far in the north, the landscapes are incredibly beautiful whenever the sun appears. It has been an amazing experience for me to stay in Sweden. I miss my friends from all around the world that I got to know in Sweden. Now I have a lot more countries I want to travel to because I know people from there.