

ESCape Companion to Erasmus



Dear fellow Erasmus enthusiasts,

what you are reading right now is a collection of stories about Erasmus experiences of your fellow colleagues. On the following pages, you can learn more about countries and cities you can travel to from our Department of English and American studies, and some useful tips and tricks to help you enjoy your Erasmus stay to the fullest. Moreover, you are going to find out that living the life of an Erasmus student is a wonderful experience you definitely should not miss!

Have you decided you want to go on an Erasmus, but you still do not know which country is the one for you? Browse through all the stories and let yourselves be inspired. Are you unsure whether Erasmus is really something you need to experience? Read on and we hope to change your mind. Are you already decided on the city of your dreams and you are just waiting to fill in your application? Great! Have a look at your predecessor's memories about their exciting experiences there. And then read the other stories just to double-check that going on an Erasmus means having the time of your life!

Bon voyage!

English Students' Club

P.S. Have you already been on an Erasmus and want to share your story too? Have you been to a country that does not appear in this companion? Or have you been to one of these cities and want to add your point of view? Send it to esc.english@gmail.com!

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AUSTRIA



University of Graz

Anna Jílková

According to Wikipedia, it is the second biggest city in Austria but it's the number one for students. Graz offers an immeasurable amount of both cultural and gastronomic opportunities. There are some events and workshops going on every week (even in English), a famous Austrian opera house can be found there (with cheap last-minute tickets for students) and local people are super keen on traditions so various festivals take place every month (and you can see people wearing "Dirndls" and "Lederhosen" almost daily).

Regarding food and drinks, it is impossible to count how many cafés there are. You never need to go to the same place twice (the only place you should visit regularly is TriBeKa – coffee shops with lively atmosphere and great coffee). The best part of it are so called "Bausatzlokale" – a chain of restaurants spread all over the city. As the name suggests, you literally build your own meals there. Just tick on a paper what you want on your pizza (or burger, pasta, sandwich, salad...) and they will make it exactly as you wish. And the best part of it – they have very affordable prices for Graz standards.

All of the above is easily accessible by bike. That surely is the best way to move around – it saves you time, money and because the public transport is adjusted to bikers, it is very enjoyable as well.

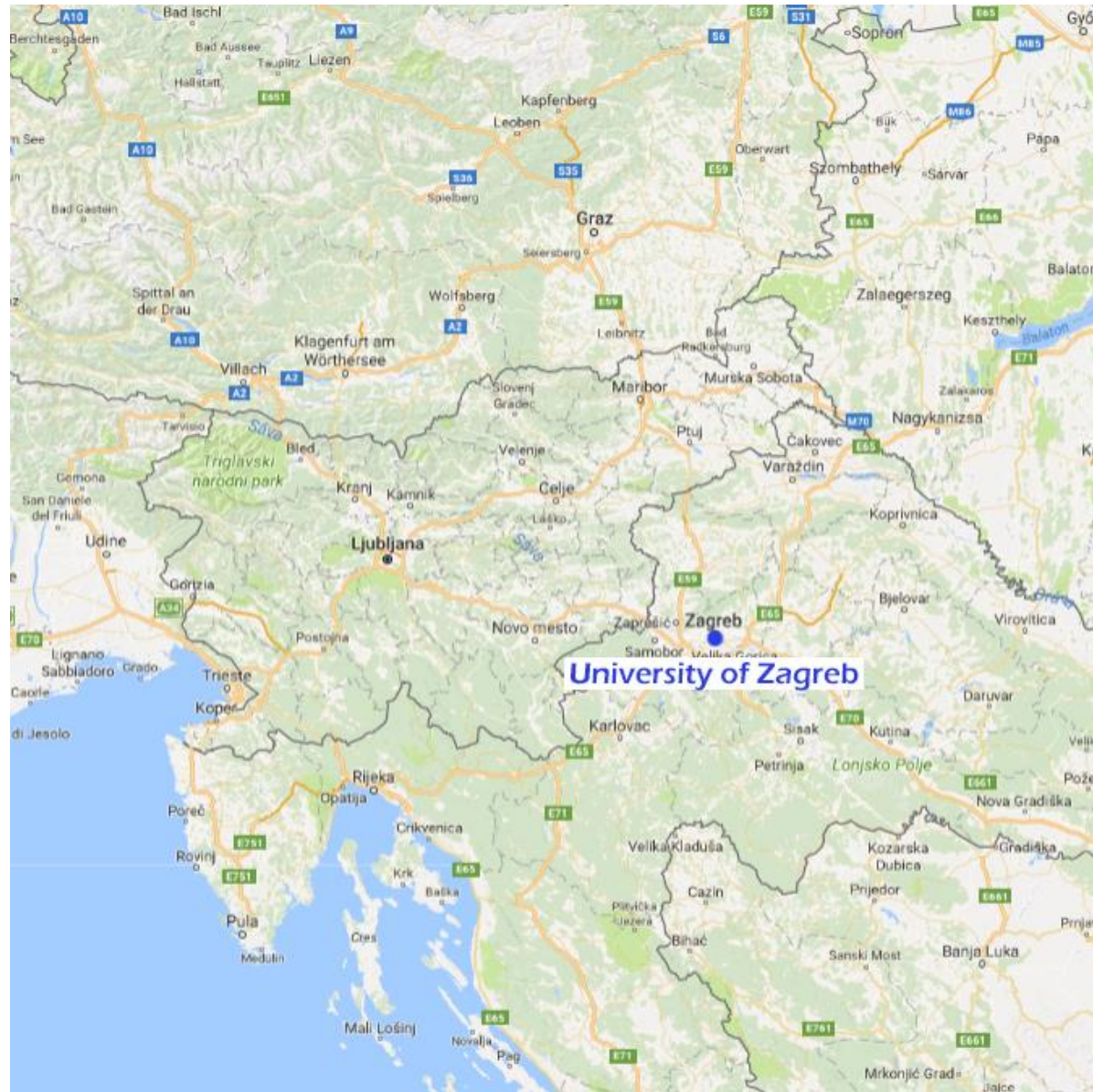


The University of Graz is a hospitable institution with a history reaching back to the 16th century. Its campus offers students many opportunities for relaxation, including calm parks where students hang out very often. The choice of subjects is wide, especially for students of English and American Studies who have no problems with the language of instruction.

Perhaps a bit limited choice of literary courses is compensated by a wide variety of linguistic and cultural studies courses. And don't be afraid to try something you normally wouldn't choose – there are very interesting and practical courses focusing on marketing or business skills in English and pronunciation seminars led by native speakers.

If by any reason you start to get bored in the city, you can benefit from its great central location. Explore Austria (go hiking, skiing, visit the wine area, the lakes or Vienna and other cities). Go to neighbour countries – to Slovenia for some desired low-cost trips, to nearby Hungary or to the seaside in Croatia or Italy. And if you feel homesick, just come home for a weekend, it is not that far. But I can guarantee that you will not feel this urge after your first month there.





University of Zagreb

Pavel Peléšek

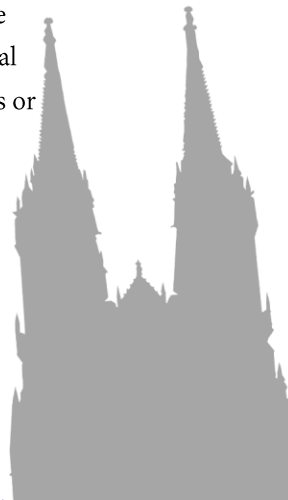


The city has four faces: the historical, the brutalist, the modern and the poor. Old buildings in the city centre are over two centuries old, brutalist communist buildings are dispersed around the centre, modern capitalist buildings serve to uplift the prestige, and the poverty is hidden between them. Wartime repairs left the country weakened, almost none of the buildings have been repaired since they were built decades ago. Public transport network has a lot of tram lines, but these are impossible to make sense of since one of them is completely random and the rest have no schedules on most tram stops. You can outrun a tram with a scooter during the rush hour, bicycles are even better.

The Croatian is a Slavic language, which facilitates understanding when listening to Croats. Don't think, however, that Croats understand Czech. Those not used to Czech tourists (everyone not on the coast) will have a hard time deciphering your

sentences. Unfortunately, you also cannot use English as a universal lingua franca since the language of communication with strangers for most Croats is German. You can take a language course at the university, but be sure to pay a lot of money even as a student, unless you are a student at the faculty of Arts. Only you have to take the course every day early in the morning instead of twice a week, which is a major disadvantage.

Croats like their free days – during Saturdays and Sundays the roads are almost empty, many shops are closed (even in the city centre) and some shopping centres are almost abandoned. Shops in Croatia are roughly three times as expensive as in the Czech Republic and have a limited offer in comparison, even the large international chains, such as Billa and Lidl. What they do offer is not designed to satisfy the needs of poor university students, but you can buy lots of things in bulk and multipacks or you can visit the flea market – Hreljić, the largest open-air flea market in the country – to buy everything from tools, bicycles, cars, and old military surplus, to cheap food, local produce or a pile of clothes, one Kuna per piece.





The life of a student in Croatia is much easier once you enrol. Discounts for public transport and entry tickets are a must, but apart from that the school cafeterias offer an incredible price range where on a good day you can feast on a three-course meal for the price of half a meal in the cafeterias in Brno. Accommodation in the halls of residence is also cheap and Erasmus students can choose from 3 levels of luxury, with the top class costing as much as normal rooms in Brno.

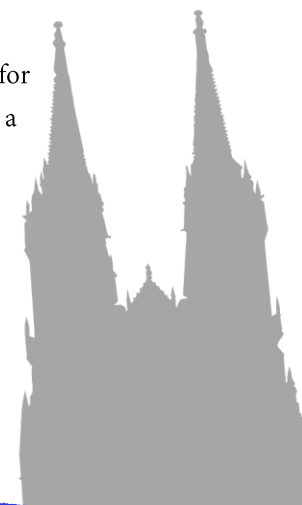
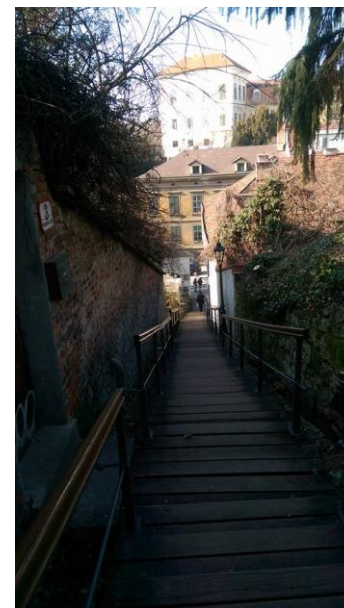
The university itself is run in a comparatively less smooth manner. You have to buy a paper index and pay enrolment fees via a payment slip submitted in person in a local bank. You have to undergo a lot of paperwork in order to enrol, once you do, however, you are invisible to the system. You are not registered in the Information System and the only proof of your attending the class is the record in the paper index and a teacher's signature. The end of your study period and successful termination of all exams is marked simply by your submitting a scanned index and a form with your marks in it, and you are done.

Zagreb has an active Erasmus Student Network team that organises lots of events for everyone. Once you pay a registration fee you get a card and are eligible for discounts in shops and some landmarks and monuments, and free entrance to ESN-held parties and bars. They organise trips,

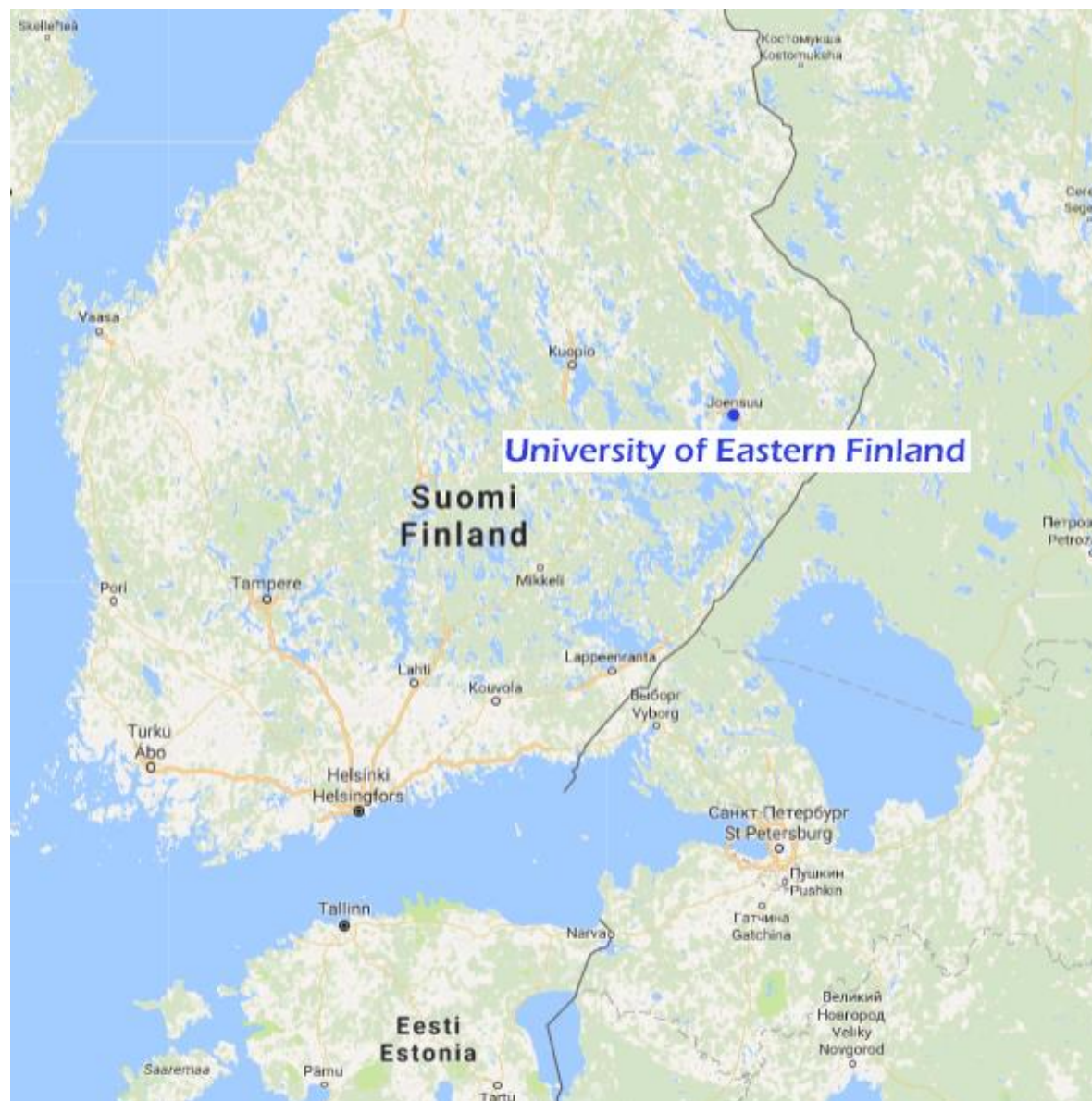
sporting events (such as an occasional paintball match in the ruins of a Nazi villa), cultural events and excursions all over the country and cooperate with other networks in Europe to plan trips abroad. If you prefer to entertain yourself on your own, there are many possibilities for urban exploration (said Nazi ruins, underground air force base) in the many dilapidated ruins of historical buildings, you can take a bus to the seaside or to any of the numerous national parks, travel abroad to Slovenia or Austria or partake in one of the many cultural events happening in the city – festivals, fairs, expos, museums exhibitions, etc.

I would certainly recommend Croatia as an Erasmus destination, and if you can do without lying on the beach every day after school, Zagreb might be just the place for you. People are friendly and if they see you're trying, they will do their best to help you. Local ESN guys will serve you all sorts of entertaining and exciting events on a silver platter, accommodation and school canteens are dirt-cheap and you will meet people from all over the world.

And that's why I enjoyed the stay as much as I did.



FINLAND



University of Eastern Finland

Pavla Wernerová

When I checked for the first time where the University of Eastern Finland is actually located, I was not far from giving up my desires to study in Scandinavia again. When you check the map, you may find out that Joensuu is in the middle of nowhere and you may feel like there is nothing to see. And that is actually the truth. In spite of that, it may be one of the best semesters of your university life.

The University of Eastern Finland has three campuses in three different cities. Nevertheless, the English studies are located on the campus in Joensuu. Joensuu is quite a small town where you may sometimes feel like you live there completely alone. The public transport does not really work so after some time you will get used to the fact that even when it is -25 degrees, you have to use your bike to get to the university. In spite of that, the town itself is really nice, especially if you are there during winter and you love winter sports. You may borrow skates for free from the Student Union



and go skating to the rink in the city centre (also for free), you may borrow cross-country skis or you can join a one-day trip organized by the university to go skiing to Koli National Park. Even though during winter most of the days are gloomy and dark, it still has some magic. Autumn and spring are probably the brightest seasons there.

As to the university, bachelor's students may learn something new but for master's students, the classes may sometimes feel a little bit boring. The offer of courses at the Masaryk University is much wider than in Joensuu so you may hear many times something you have already heard before. Nevertheless, the classes there are always very small (which is very nice) and your lecturer will remember your name after the first class. The majority of my fellow colleagues were Finnish so I was not surrounded by many international students at the university, which was quite often a disadvantage.



Finnish students in general need a lot of personal space and it takes them quite a long time to start talking to somebody, so do not take it personally when your Finnish classmates ignore you or reply to your answers with one or two words. In spite of that, the classes were taught in a relaxing atmosphere and I always felt like I could ask about anything. The relationship between students and teachers is usually on a non-formal level. Many of my friends were even invited by their teachers for Christmas parties to their homes. Another advantage of the university is their cafeteria. The meals there are really cheap and they are in form of buffets where you can basically eat almost anything you like.

Even though the town itself does not offer many exciting events, the ESN club at the university offers a wide range of events which you may join. From international dinners and language clubs to many different parties. Also at the beginning of your stay at the university, you may ask for a student tutor who will help you with everything you need to arrange at the university. You will be assigned to a group of about 5-10 other international students with one Finnish tutor, and if you are lucky, your tutor will be active and they may even organize extra events. Among them for example a guided trip to the forest or they may invite you to their houses where they have a private indoor swimming pool and sauna (yes, it can actually happen). For these reasons, I never had a feeling that I was bored. There was always something to do.

Another advantage of Joensuu is that even though it is in the middle of nowhere, it is actually quite easy to visit neighbouring countries. I visited Russia, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania during my stay in Finland. Travelling in Finland may seem quite hard because all cities and towns are very far from each other, nevertheless, the bus tickets are very cheap and you may even find a bus ticket to Helsinki (which takes about 7 hours) for one euro.

To sum up my “Finnish experience”, the University of Eastern Finland is not for people who want to learn something new. Even though the town itself is not very exciting, there are many activities which you can do and it may be one of the best semesters of your university life. Do not be discouraged by its location on the map, it offers much more than you could hope for.





Free University of Berlin

Dominika Kováčová

Spending a semester at the John F. Kennedy Institute for North American Studies was definitely one of the highlights of my university studies and I hope this short feedback on my Erasmus stay will help you choose the right place for you. :-)

University

The JFK Institute for North American Studies is a central institute at Free University Berlin and it brings together six different disciplines: economics, history, culture, political science, literature and sociology. I registered five subjects of the literature and culture modules and since it was my first semester of the MA program, I did not really know what to expect. To my surprise, there were no tests or oral exams but for each subject we were required to hand in a paper (of around 15 pages) during the exam period. The only problem was that the organization of the academic year is a little different in Germany; the autumn semester starts in late October and finishes in February and students usually have until April to hand in their papers. I, on the other hand, was starting the spring semester back at our department in the middle of February so I had to start writing my final papers during the semester. It was quite challenging, but everything turned out fine in the end. The Institute library is also the largest European library that specializes in North American studies so if you are looking for some sources for your thesis, it is the place to go.

Berlin

Berlin is an amazing city and you can never get tired of it. It is really multikulti and there is always something going on. You can get the most delicious kebab in a Turkish neighborhood, buy some used books at a flea market, have a beer and a currywurst at a street food festival and visit a concert all in one day! But everything comes at a price and you should be prepared to spend a lot of your precious Erasmus time in the public transport. Berlin is huge and it takes a lot of time to get from one place to another. I, for example, spent almost an hour on the bus every morning getting to the university (and my dormitory was located in a neighboring district!). Nevertheless, Berlin is a very hip place and it is hard to find the right words to describe the atmosphere there. We often described it as very Berlin and that fits it perfectly. Also, I highly recommend going on one of those free walking tours in the beginning of your Erasmus stay; a cheerful tour guide will tell you about some amazing places only locals know about.



German language

Since I studied German at the secondary school but I was no longer able to speak it fluently, one of the reasons why I chose Berlin for my Erasmus stay was that I would brush up on my German... but, frankly, I did not. Most of my Erasmus friends spoke English better than German and the subjects I attended at the Institute were all held in English. But the situation might be different at other departments and all Erasmus students are encouraged to attend a German language course. The computer-based placement test is taken in the first week of the semester and each seminar group deals with a different topic. Mine, for example, was 'Multicultural Berlin' which meant that besides grammar, we learnt about immigration, minorities and the way Berlin got its cosmopolitan character. We all enjoyed it a lot and I really recommend taking this



course because some level of German is indeed necessary. Even though most Germans can speak English, not all bank clerks, doctors and other office workers can. Not even the 'Hausmeister' responsible for accommodating international students in the dormitory!

Accommodation

I think that the best place to live during your Erasmus stay is a dormitory. I lived in the dormitory at Halbauer Weg in Lankwitz and I met most of my Erasmus friends who I keep in touch with even now there. Staying at the dorms, while much more expensive than in Brno, is definitely the cheapest option in Berlin. Landlords are unwilling to rent a flat for a short period of time and it is also very difficult to arrange from home. What I found surprising was that all rooms in the dormitory were single rooms with a bathroom shared with your neighbor. The room was quite big but there were no curtains or bed linen. There was also a rule that you had to have the mattress cover cleaned at a dry-cleaner's and show the receipt to the Hausmeister when leaving. I found it strange at first, but it really helped keep the beds clean. What is more, there was a nice bar in the basement where we hanged out and played darts. You could even try bartending there whenever you wanted. :-)



University of Regensburg

Anna Mikyšková

Key words: beer, bike, history, fun



I spent my Erasmus here in spring 2017 and I can only recommend it to all who like smaller historical cities, cycling, and travelling. Oh, and studying too, obviously ☺.

Regensburg **University** recently celebrated 50 years' anniversary since its foundation in 1960s. Important note for start: don't let yourselves be discouraged by its appearance, the campus is a monster of concrete, and sometimes you will have classes in old-fashioned underground rooms. Think of it as a cool futuristic bunker. But don't judge the school by its facade. The campus inhabitants are mostly friendly and the local **International Office** has 30 years of Erasmus programme experience; they help Erasmus students with everything (collective filling out forms, advising on syllabus, . . .).

The local community of Erasmus **tutors** is friendly and very international and organizes various trips and parties, so if you are into those big trips or if you want to meet as many people as possible, they are your guys! But doing trips on your own is also okay, of course.

As for **courses**, you can search their catalogue here: <https://lsf.uni-regensburg.de>. The courses change every year, but for instance I really enjoyed Professor Jochen Petzold's course on Shakespeare. What I can recommend is taking **German** language courses (a Pre-semester or a Semester course), it's worth it. But you will be alright even if you only speak English, no worries (though a bit of German helps). For those interested in German, every foreign student is offered 5 private sessions with a professional phonetician for free – just ask!





Regensburg is a charming **historical** city (with a cathedral, a stone bridge, and an old town hall) smaller than Brno. The city is a paradise for cyclists – my advice is: buy a second-hand **bike**! You can sell it at the end but I guarantee you will discover the city and its surroundings faster and better.

Plus there are numerous **cafés** (try the beautiful *Museum Café* in the museum building on Dachau platz), **pubs** (my favourite was the medieval tavern *The Mended Drum/Zur Geflickten Trommel* – a must for Pratchett's fans!) and clubs. The city breathes with student life and everyone finds their own.

Every student at the local university has to pay a semester fee to get a **student's card** which you need for Mensa, library, and it is also valid for the city transport and the nearby surroundings. When you want to visit other Bavarian cities, the cheapest way is to buy a **Bayern ticket** which you can share with up to 5 people, then the return ticket costs 10 euro per person.

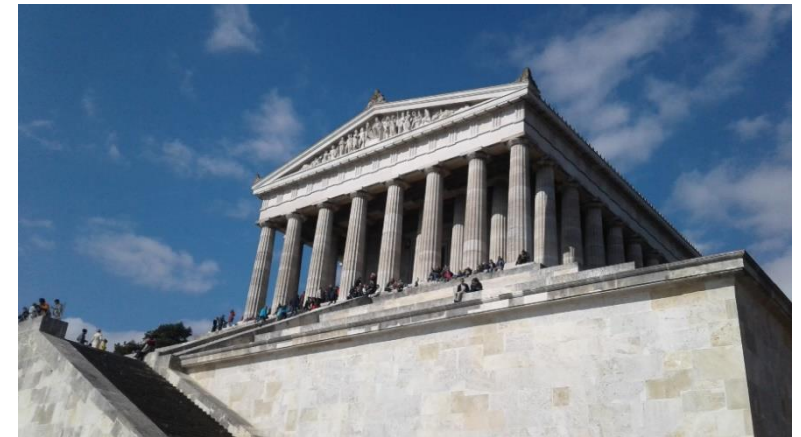


Trip suggestions: Walhalla Memorial, Weltenburg monastery, Munich, Nuremberg, Bamberg, Rothenburg ob der Tauber, Neuschwanstein castle, Salzburg (Bayern ticket applies for Salzburg, too)

Final tips:

- Bavarians are friendly and merry people, very proud of their national identity and *bayerisch* – the local dialect. Don't miss their summer beer festival *Dult* in May to see them celebrate and dance on benches!
- The registration to the UNI-WIFI at the dorms can last longer, so have patience and some data on your phone for the start.
- If you like to sing, join the local **Unichor** (German helps here), they are warm and wonderful people.
- The best **ice cream**: *Stenz Eis* near the Bismarckplatz

Local greeting: **Grüß Gott!**



University of Cologne

Blanka Šustrová

Cologne (Köln)

The city itself is beautiful, it is an eclectic mix of architecture, parks and of course the majestic river Rhein; there are great museums, galleries, a ZOO, nightclubs, concert venues, pubs (BEWARE, *Kölsch*, the local beer, is served in 200ml glasses) and food from all around the world.

It has good public transport (buses, trams/subway, trains) but it is often overloaded and traffic accidents happen from time to time. Night trams work only on weekends. When you pay a semester fee (cca 300€) you'll get a student card which works as a ticket for public transport and regional trains for the whole "Bundesland" of North-Rhine Westphalien. The card is also a cafeteria card and washing machine card (if you live in the dorms).

People are generally very nice in Cologne and even if you don't speak German well (my case), they will try to help you as much as they can. Don't expect people over 35 to speak English, even at the bank, municipal office or insurance company. Don't be scared to ask for an employee who can speak English.



University

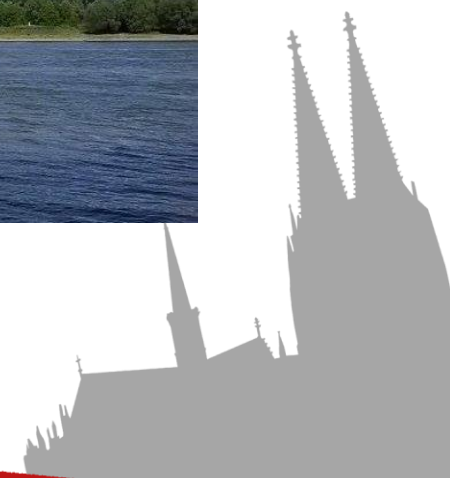
You can register lectures, where you just sit and listen and seminars of various difficulty (the most difficult being HS *Hauptseminar* – you read a novel every week). The ECTS system is different. You can get 2 credits for "Aktive Teilnahme" – you go there every week and actively participate in discussions. Other credits are for presentation, essay (various lengths for various credit points), written exam or oral exam – ask your lecturer how many credits they can give you for what type of exam and what are their requirements and deadlines. You can discuss your essay topic with them if you need, they are generally very nice and kind people. (Don't try to reach prof. Hanjo Berressem via e-mail, though. He doesn't reply to anyone. Speak to him in person.) The library is horrible and overcrowded, get your books somewhere else (second hand). Don't download them illegally, Germany has pretty strict laws, also, don't stream TV shows and films illegally.

Accommodation and Life Hacks

Apply for a dorm room through the online <https://www.kstw.de/> form AT LEAST 6 MONTHS BEFORE your stay if possible. Even though you are an ERASMUS student, you are not granted a room and dorms are the cheapest rooms you can get (180-300€/month). If you still don't have a room (no one sends you a rent agreement) 2 months before you leave, write a heartbreaking e-mail **IN GERMAN** to Ms. Gabriela Krol (krol@kstw.de), who is a magical sorceress working for KSTW and she will get you a room (90% chance). Write more e-mails if necessary. You'll get all your contracts in German.

The Uni canteen (Mensa) is pretty good, they have meat, huge bowls of soup, vegetarian, vegan, bio and two salad bars for great prices and they are open from 11:30 till 9pm. There are smaller cafeterias around the campus, with hot and cold beverages and sandwiches. Lidl and Aldi are the cheapest supermarkets.

Attend events for International students, don't be scared to join a group, you are all on the same boat - you will meet lots of cool people.



University of Marburg

Michaela Teličková



Spending my Erasmus stay in Marburg was one of the best decisions I have ever made and so far, it has also been the best six months of my life. I have been lucky enough to take interesting classes (I mean, who wouldn't want to take a course on Harry Potter?), to visit various German cultural sights (a two-day trip to Neuschwanstein was definitely worth it) and most importantly, to meet wonderful people who've become my Erasmus family.

Marburg is a quaint university city not too far away from Frankfurt. As the saying goes: *other cities have a university – Marburg is a university*. Many of the city inhabitants are either students or work for the university and every other building in the city belongs to the university (yay, free wifi). That also means that there's a big number of international students from all parts of the world so not knowing any German is definitely not a problem here. Marburg is an incredibly open and welcoming city. It provides care for visually impaired or otherwise disabled people and is also known as a green city – many of the buildings have solar panels installed.

Marburg's historic centre has a wonderful fairy-tale-like atmosphere which is partly owing to the fact that the Grimm brothers studied there. The city is rightly proud of this and as you walk through the historic centre, you can see a plenitude of statues that may have walked straight out of the Grimm's fairy tales. Going up the hill to the Marburg castle you can meet Cinderella's slipper while walking up the stairs alongside which runs a saying that in Marburg, there are more stairs in the streets than in the houses (© Grimm brothers). Which is true. Be ready for loads of stairs.

You'll be studying at the Department of Foreign languages and Cultures so you can take courses both on British and American literature and culture or linguistics. The amount of credits per course is entirely up to you – for 4 ECTS you need to come to classes and make a presentation/project, for 6 ECTS you also need to write an essay which is a bit longer than what we've become used to at KAA.



My tip? Take 5 classes for 4 ECTS, you'll get loads of free time to enjoy your Erasmus stay and basically no exam period.

It's not difficult to get a dorm in Marburg if you fill in the application for your stay in time. The only thing you need to do is to check the right box in the application.

Marburg has several dorms you can choose from, Studentendorf being the favourite party dorm. The rent (ca 200 € per month) is going to take up half of your scholarship and the second half should be just enough for food (so you'll only need to cover your travelling and socialising needs).

Shopping in Germany is not much more expensive than in the Czech Republic with the added value of better quality. You can eat at university canteens (for a reasonable price you get a three-course meal which is *also* quite tasty) or cafeterias which are open even for breakfasts and dinners. Be prepared to spend more money at the beginning of your stay, however, as besides rent deposit you'll be asked to pay for a Semesterticket (ca 250 €) which also works as a ticket for public transportation in all of Hesse. Don't hesitate to use this and travel as much as you can!

Sign up for the orientation programme if you can (also in the application) as the local students will help you get accommodated in the city, deal with all the necessary paperwork, and get to know other international students. Plus, they organise all sorts of events and trips around Germany, so be sure to join in if you can. It's also useful to take a German language course which takes place a month before the beginning of the semester (again, you can sign up in the application). There are different levels of the



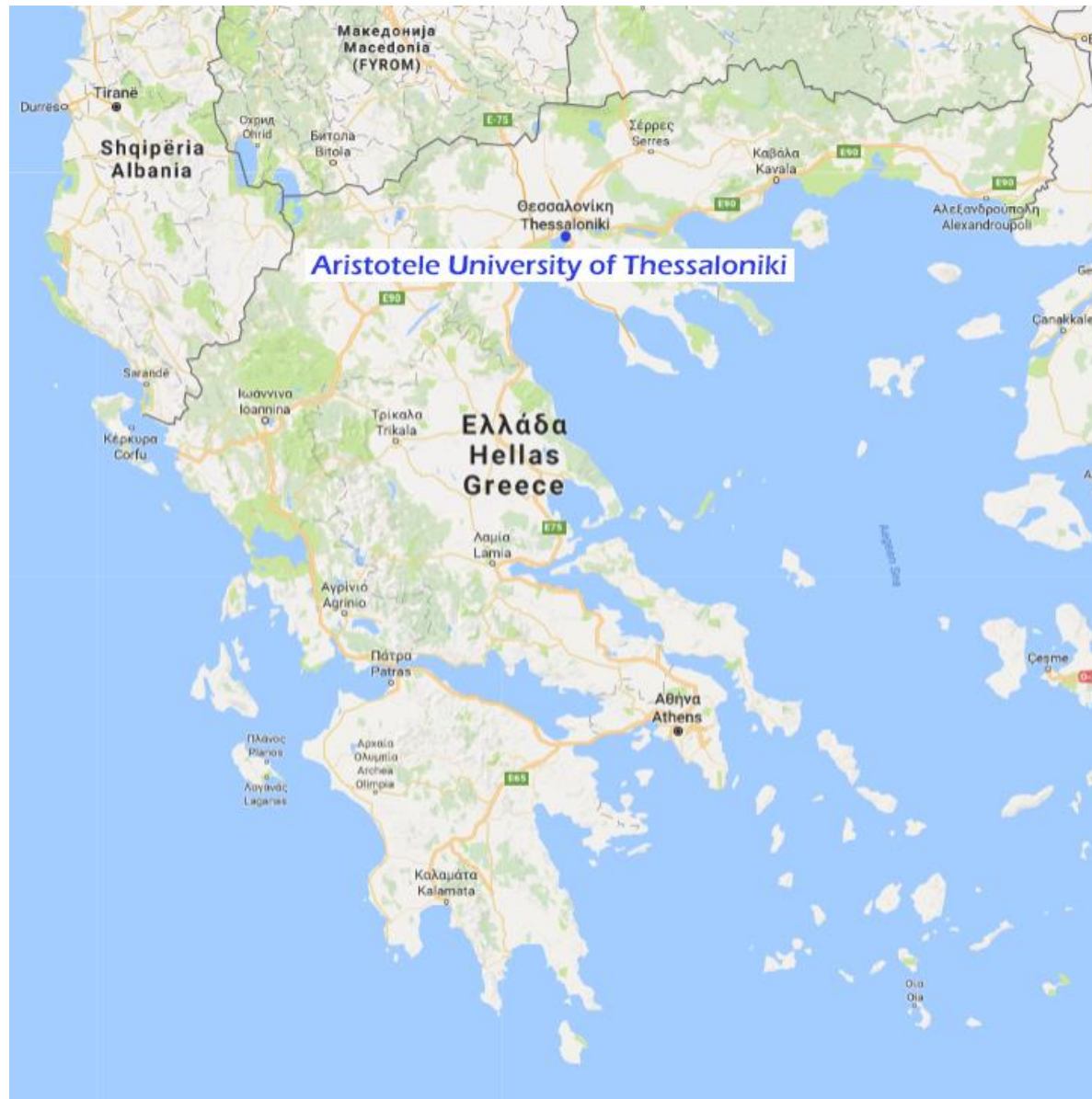
course, so you can take it to improve yourself or to get the basic vocabulary and grammar needed for buying groceries during your stay.

The main reason for taking this course,

however, is meeting a lot of international students with whom you will have a whole month of socialising and getting together even before the semester starts. I have met many English native speakers thanks to this course and I basically spent my whole Erasmus stay speaking mainly in English – there were some Irish and British people, but mostly Americans as the Juniata college has an agreement with Marburg.

It is hard to tell you whether to go to Marburg for the autumn or the spring semester – an autumn semester means enjoying wonderful Christmas markets throughout a lot of German cities, but then a spring semester is full of barbecues on the river Lahn. I can definitely tell you, however, that whenever you go, it will be worth it.





Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

Lenka Žárská

The city I chose to spend my Erasmus in was Thessaloniki in the north of Greece. It is the second biggest city of Greece – I deliberately didn't choose Athens because I prefer smaller cities to huge ones and Thessaloniki was, according to my research, comparable to Brno. Before I arrived there for my Erasmus, I had never been to Greece and one of the first surprises expecting me was the fact that Thessaloniki did not look like the catalogue of a travelling office with turquoise sea and tiny white houses on a cliff. However, even though my first impression wasn't the best, I absolutely learned to love it and now am very happy to have chosen to spend my Erasmus there.

The city is full of little cafés which were despite the crisis always crowded with Greeks drinking their favourite frappe or playing tavli (aka backgammon). If you order something at a café, you usually get water with it for free and sometimes even some free candy. Greeks are mostly very friendly people, the owners of the cafés would stop by the guests' tables to talk and were very appreciative if you tried speaking some Greek, although to my surprise almost everybody in the city spoke English.

All over the city there are historical monuments to be found and I was absolutely astonished that less than ten minutes from my dorm I would come across buildings from both ancient and medieval times which just stood right in the middle of the street. And of course, Thessaloniki is a port which means one thing: the sea! I couldn't even count the days I spent sitting on the promenade by the sea, reading, studying, talking to friends, drinking or playing guitar.





Thessaloniki is a student city and there were many things that surprised me about the university: firstly, the canteen was free of charge for the students. Every day they provided three meals and although sometimes the quality wasn't amazing, who would complain? It was free. Secondly, many materials were provided by the university: in my literary class, the teacher apologized that we could not keep the two books which they have given us during the first lesson, but since Greece is in crisis, they unfortunately need to be returned at the end of the semester. Then she let us keep them anyway. (Many times during my stay I was faced with a feeling that Greeks don't actually realize what a crisis is.)

The usual class took three hours which is a lot but because they're Greeks, they would start fifteen minutes later, finish twenty minutes early and make a smoking break in the middle. There were some strange things about it too: it seemed ridiculous to me that they actually smoked in the halls of the university and since the staff had to be let go, not all of the buildings were always clean. The university was not locked at night, so I

have actually once been to what strongly resembled a rave party right in one of the buildings at about one in the morning. Definitely an interesting experience. Talking about parties, Thessaloniki has an ESN club which organizes parties in a club every week and also many other activities, especially at the beginning of the semester, such as a city game, board games night or laser game, and of course trips.

Being a student in Thessaloniki is great not only around the university, but also around the city and the whole of Greece – once you obtain a special student card. All buses are half the price, including those that go out of the city and to the beautiful beaches of Chalkidiki (the bus leaves several times a day for just five or seven euro), all museums and historical places are free of charge (even Acropolis in Athens) and you can buy a full access to the student gym for 15 euro per semester.

Overall, I think there are only a few other places where you are as lucky to be a student as you are in Greece!





University of Lodz

Jan Sebera

Oy! You interested in Erasmus? You interested in Poland? My sixth sense tells me you're not. Nobody is really. The more so with Lodz. I was actually able to travel between Lodz and Brno only to learn from the stewardess that "it's the (f)ugliest city in all Poland" to which I say: Aye, that's correct.

What would then be the reasons not to go there? Yep, it's ugly. They claim you need to support the right football club in the right part of the city to please the taste of the locals and leave the conversation with all teeth in your mouth. The name of your dormitory could be "Hades" and the reference to the underworld sets the right form of expectation. Sometimes you'll feel tortured with the constant disco polo (use Youtube to find more!) songs playing, an acquired Polish taste, I'd guess.

Studywise, the administration of your Erasmus stay might seem to be impossible as the dedicated coordinator only has two hours a week for all incoming and outgoing students. My tip? If you get there two hours earlier, your issues will most certainly be solved.



In case previous paragraphs weren't scary enough for you to consider running away to another much better-written story from someone's Erasmus, than I can promise you to hear only the reasons why to GO TO LODZ.

If you're diligent in the administration of your stay and submit your application for dormitory soon enough, you might get to the Babylon dormitory (no Zion I'm afraid) full of Erasmus students. It's much nicer and presents a more presentable face of the unpolished Polish tertiary education. You'll get lots of foreign friends and perhaps even very enjoyable stay with a bunch of cool people.



Remember the notes on administration? That's because Polish Universities POUR MONEY into the education itself. The institute of English Language and Literature consists of seven departments: pragmatics, linguistics, translation, general linguistics, applied linguistics, British literature, American literature, Medieval literature and drama. Sounds like a great variety of choices, right? That's because it is. You can choose from the whole variety of subjects and learn whatever great things you wanna learn from teachers who are excellent at what they're doing and which have my respect for the great job they're doing. Studywise, I did my research and I have to say that...

LODZ IS THE BEST STUDY OPTION FROM EASTERN AND CENTRAL EUROPEAN PARTNER UNIVERSITIES

So, let's get more towards living conditions. The Erasmus scholarship can quite well cover the whole stay and you can even travel a bit. The position in the heart of Poland gives you plenty of options from Krakow (nice), through Warsaw and Wroclaw (with all the dwarves in the city) up to the Gdansk (which could be majestic and beautiful, but also a horrible terror depending on the weather and your tendency to do seafaring). If you take it even further, you could try to go to Mazury or Baltic countries to enjoy some of the most beautiful nature you've ever seen with lakes as clean as... I'll let you finish the simile. Very clean.

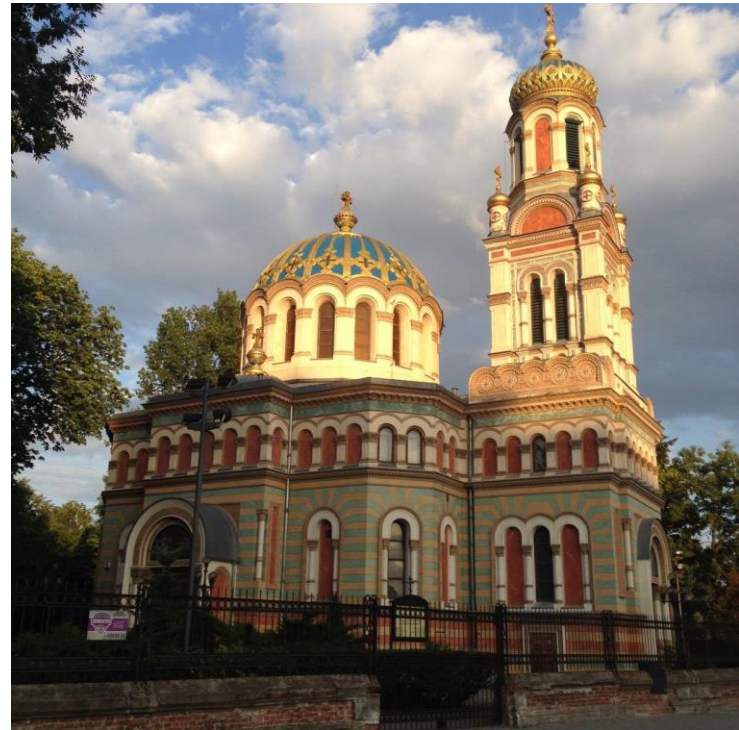
Let's have a test: 1) I want to be close to my mummy, GF/BF

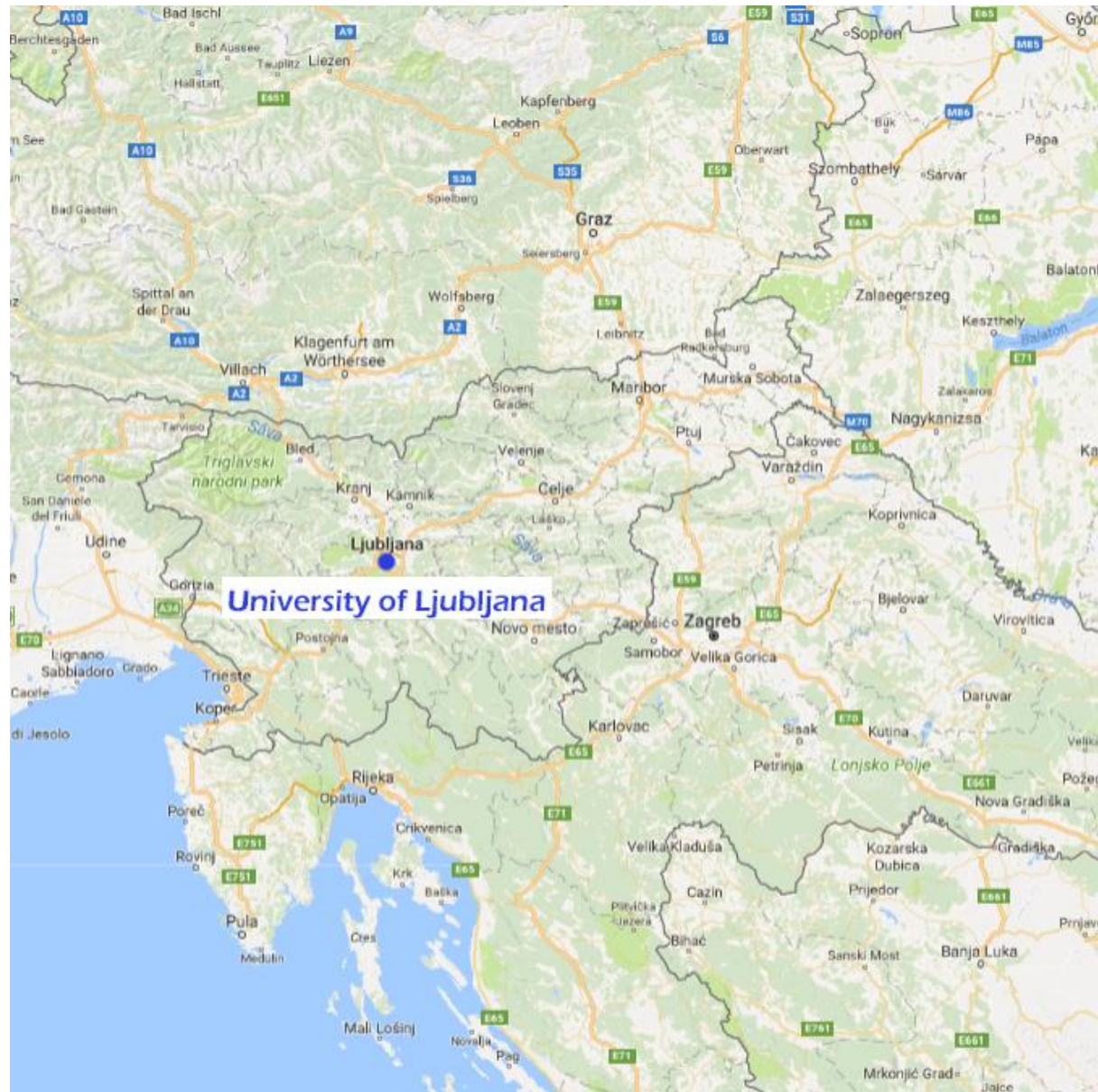
2) I want my stay to cover the whole expenses and sponge off the EU

3) I really really want to study something interesting

4) I'm great at administration of my school stuff

If you answered 3 out of the 4 questions with "aye!", then GO TO LODZ! The ugliest city in Poland.



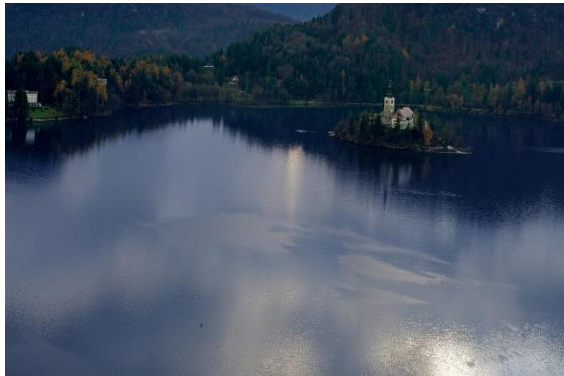


University of Ljubljana

Agáta Buganská

The fall semester 2014 meant for me a half a year of traveling, meeting amazing young people from all around the world, and discovering the loveliest city I have ever seen – Ljubljana in Slovenia. I am convinced that whichever destination you choose for your stay, it has a great potential of becoming your second home and you will be sad to be leaving it when it is all over after the short 6 months. In my unavoidably subjective opinion, Ljubljana, though, has a few highlights that make her a very attractive destination for international students.

The city lies in the heart of Slovenia, the bridge between Central Europe and the Balkans – the mystical lands of rakija, corruption, unemployment and a brain drain, burek on every corner, bad highways and untouched nature. It is a great starting point for trips around the region; both



mountains and the sea are within one hour drive from the capital. I did most of my trips around Slovenia during the first few weeks of my stay when it was still warm enough to camp and hitchhike (a very easy and budget friendly means of travel there) with my classmates from the intensive three-week language course.

Learning Slovenian language is where we, the speakers of Slavic languages, have an advantage over our Spanish, Turkish and German friends. Ordering “še eno pivo prosim” soon feels natural, no matter whether you join team Laško or Union (the two forever competing biggest breweries in Slovenia). Lots of discussions on that were held in

Rožná Dolina, the student dorms where the party hardly ever ends. And if it does, there is still one very special place to socialize called Metelkova, a strange and a little creepy social center with several music clubs playing many different kinds of music, concerts, and galleries. Just grab your Bicikelj (Ljubljana’s system of city bikes) and it should not take more than 10 minutes to get there from the dorms or directly from the faculty!





Filozofska fakulteta, the Faculty of Arts, was my temporary alma mater and studying there was not completely different from our faculty in Brno. It is not the most modern or well-equipped establishment but the teachers are all experts in their fields and very kind too. The head of the Department of English at the time, Dr. Jason Blake, a renowned specialist on hockey literature, takes care of each Erasmus student's enrollment in the courses and their learning agreement, and his classes on Canadian culture and literature were one of the most enjoyable ones.

And still, in case that all the traveling, learning a new language, international friends, parties, totally chilled out life style, and fun but not too demanding studies sound only mildly appealing, then the system of student meals, which I have been keeping as a bombshell for the end of this praising, must be the one thing to truly convince any poor student that Ljubljana just rocks. Študentski boni (student vouchers) are available to each university student in Slovenia. One voucher is about €3 and you can use

20 of them in a month. So, if you go to eat out in a restaurant, have a square dish for €7, as a student you will only pay €4. And if you buy a sandwich which usually costs €1, you get it for free! At least at most places in the city where they offer student menus it works like this. What a life!

To conclude with a deeper thought (deeper than thinking of delicious Balkan cuisine...), in all honesty, I can tell you that taking an Erasmus Study Exchange was one of the best decisions I have made in my life so far. It is surprisingly difficult, probably even impossible, to convey the impressions and feelings from an Erasmus even after a couple of years. Study exchange can simply teach you a lot, and it is what they say – an eye-opening experience. Today I approach with gratefulness and humility the opportunity for adventure, self-development and broadening of our knowledge that is given to us completely gratis, and the most crucial thing that I personally learned on my Erasmus is, I believe, that we are all the same – Erasmus people, students, friends, humans who see beyond the boundaries of states and the prejudices prescribed by them.



SPAIN



University of Alicante

Martina Krénová



Alicante is not the most beautiful city in the world, but it is located near places worth visiting (Valencia, Murcia, Barcelona). Being one of the cities in the autonomous community Valencia means having signs in two languages, Spanish and Valenciano. Valenciano is a dialect of Catalan, though some locals might argue that it is another language, not a dialect. And if you sign up for the course History of English language, you might get to have a debate on this topic (provided it is still taught by the same professor).

Although they do not offer as many courses as we have at DEAS here, and passing the exams was a piece of cake, some courses were actually interesting. Aforementioned course had a professor who was a fan of American debates, so we had a different topic for debates every week. What is worth mentioning is that you get to have one course twice a week, usually the first lesson being theory and the second practice. My biggest shock came when I was handing in my first assignment in literature and no one was using our beloved MLA style. I found out that they learn MLA in the second semester of the third year!



Even if you are not a party type, there are plenty of opportunities to meet a lot of new people and become friends. If you choose the fall semester, you will spend the first two months on the beach playing volleyball, football, swimming, snorkeling (there is a beautiful island with caves nearby that is worth visiting if you like snorkeling). Sunny and warm weather is a huge advantage during the first two months (unless you love rain), but beware of winter! It might be 22 degrees during the day, but the apartments are not equipped with central heating, so you will probably be wearing two jumpers and using three blankets when sleeping. Try to spend as much time as you can outside!

Overall Erasmus in Alicante was a wonderful experience, as I met a lot of interesting people I still keep in touch with and my Spanish improved a lot!

One more thing, once in Alicante, visiting the chocolate place called Valor is –a must! You will not get better chocolate than the chocolate there!



University of La Laguna

Tomáš Varga

When I was deciding on going on Erasmus, I thought Canary Islands were a great choice. I imagined myself lying on the beach all the time, spending very little or no time at school, in other words, I thought it's gonna be a paid vacation. It was almost like that... well, not really, it was nothing like I imagined.

Location: *San Cristóbal de La Laguna* The town itself is remarkable. Tenerife's traditional architecture is generally characterized by masonry load bearing walls and stone slabs at the corners, using pine wood for features and Arabic roof tiles or the more typical Spanish curved tiles. As for official religious architecture, which is plentiful, Tenerife is home to an array of buildings that reflect the different artistic trends of their times, from Baroque churches to Neoclassical and modernist constructions. These influences were also taken on by the wealthier families, who included them in their homes as a form of ostentation. It's lovely, but as the name suggests, the town was built in the vicinity of a lagoon, which makes it damp and humid throughout the year. This is not a problem during the summer heatwaves, but winter and early spring might get too chilly. Moreover, drizzles are more than common all around the year. So if you expect a nice weather, La Laguna is not the place. Also, they don't have heating, so if it's 15 degrees outside, it's 15 degrees inside. Take warm clothes!

University: *Universidad de La Laguna* The university itself is not located in the town, but around 3 km downhill. You can either walk (the hill is quite steep) or take a tram, which goes all the way to Santa Cruz de Tenerife. The size of the university is comparable to Masaryk University. However, the quality of the English studies is not. The North American Studies section, which offers courses on Master's level, has two main foci: Canada-USA and Mexico-USA. Students then select the courses based on the focus. Beware, many subjects are taught in Spanish! The classes are extremely small, in Spring 2015 there were only 3 students focusing on Canada-USA, two of them were from Brno.



People: [deafening silence] If you're a woman who speaks some Spanish, you're good to go. Spanish men will take care of you, smile at you, help you and stuff. However, if you're a man who doesn't speak Spanish (even though you really try to improve!), you're left to rot in the sun. No matter what you do, you just cannot succeed because you're a *guirí* (a derogative title assigned to foreigners). Other Erasmus students might save you, but they might not. It depends on whom you befriend. Most of them will want to improve their Spanish, so they won't want to hang out with someone who doesn't speak Spanish and is not of their kind. However, you might be lucky and meet some wonderful people (as I did) and spend some memorable time with them. Needless to say, I consider myself extremely lucky to have met them in the first place.

Nature: *balances all the bad things* The nature on Tenerife and the whole Canary Islands is oftentimes breathtaking. I think that Tenerife stands out from all the other islands because it has everything. There's a rainforest to the East, volcanic land to West around El Teide and nice warm and dry climate in the South-West. I personally visited four islands: Tenerife, Lanzarote, La Palma, and La Gomera. As I mentioned earlier, Tenerife is the diverse one. Lanzarote is pure volcano and it's also the hottest one of all (although it was really chilly when I was there). There's very little vegetation and most of the land is volcanic rocks. I recommend seeing Timanfaya volcanic park where you can have chicken grilled above a pit—the air from the underground is so hot it cooks the meat. La Gomera is quite small with small bushes and banana plantations. The villages and towns are small and authentic. La Palma has one of the lowest light pollutions in Europe, thus it offers a spectacular view of the night sky. If you have a chance, spend a night on a beach stargazing.



[Life-saving instructions](#) for students going to the University of La Laguna

University of Zaragoza

Zdeňka Dvořáková



I spent the spring term of 2017 in Zaragoza – “the city with the longest name in the world.” It was a perfect fit for me. Smaller than Prague, yet a bit bigger than Brno, Zaragoza is great in size and also location – 3 hours ride from Madrid, 3 hours from Barcelona, 4 from Valencia... It is a calm place during the day but full of life at night. Two students’ clubs are active there, providing entertainment for the incoming students – ESN Zaragoza and AEGEE Zaragoza. Well, you can go out drinking every day with ESN, as there is a party Monday to Friday in one or two of their “partner” clubs. However, that was a bit too much for me, so I spent more time with AEGEE, who seemed to concentrate a bit more on culture and well, not simply getting drunk.

The greatest thing for me was that Zaragoza is a city full of nature and history. There are many parks, wide avenues with trees and of course the river Ebro. El Parque Grande is a great place for running and it is pretty close to the campus of San Francisco (where the Faculty of Arts is located). Apart from nature in the city, Zaragoza is not far from the Pyrenees. Don’t waste your chance to see the amazing mountains and spectacular views where vultures seek their prey among steep slopes. I have visited the Pyrenees various times and they’ve never ceased to amaze me.

You can use the public transport in the city, or it is possible to get around by bike or simply on foot if you don’t mind longer walks. Next to the second largest pedestrian square in Europe, there is its main dominant feature – La Basílica de Nuestra Señora del Pilar. Modern Zaragoza is built above an ancient city of Caesaragusta which can still be “visited”. Thanks to the Roman museums of Zaragoza, you can walk between walls built by Romans two thousand years ago.





Of course, I shall never forget juepincho – an event that takes place every Thursday. The Spanish love food and the best is to share it with friends. So, every Thursday there are two areas where you can get a “tapa” plus a “caña” (a small glass) of wine or beer for just 2 euros. People walk from bar to bar, taste various types of food and simply enjoy themselves. It has a very specific atmosphere and you never know whom you’ll come across. Even though your English might be perfect, it may not be enough. I knew some people who didn’t speak Spanish when they came to Zgz and they managed to get around just with English, however, I was really happy that I spoke Spanish at least a bit. It was quite hard at first but then I got used to it and I would like to encourage everyone who wants to get better in Spanish to go to Zgz. The “maños” do not have a strong accent so it is not difficult to understand them. Their Spanish is nice, really clear, and everyone appreciates your effort. I can’t even count how

many times I was told that my Spanish was great even though I knew for sure it wasn’t. The language was also one of the differences between ESN and AEGEE – ESN simply expected you to speak Spanish, yet people from AEGEE at least tried to communicate also in English.

If you go in spring, don’t worry when everyone travels during Easter holidays but you stay in Zaragoza. La Semana Santa is incredible in the city. Las cofradías participate in processions every day, sometimes even at night and they can be really scary! Especially when drums wake you up in the middle of the night and the walls of your room are shaking. And the main procession on Sunday is a real spectacular.

I am definitely going back. So, see you in Zaragoza!! :o)

Jaume I University

Petra Seidlová

My Erasmus experience started with an impulsive decision – I drank a glass of wine, filled in the form and handed it in thirty minutes before the official deadline without telling anybody. And I am forever grateful to my past self that I did it!

I have always loved languages and wanted to try living abroad, but during my Bachelor's studies I found out that sometimes Erasmus can complicate things a bit. I studied a double subject programme – English and Spanish philology, which gave me more options to travel, but it was also clear that I would have to prolong my studies at least a semester. At the end, I decided to choose one of the offers from the English department (especially for practical reasons) and applied for a spring semester at Universitat Jaume I in Castellón de la Plana, Spain.

The first thing I had to do after I received the acceptance letter was to google where Castellón de la Plana actually was. It is situated on the eastern coast some fifty kilometres north of Valencia. The position of the city is one of the biggest advantages – it has beautiful beaches with very little tourists, it is situated in Valencian community, so the weather is warm (but not hot) all year and it almost never rains. The region is famous for its cultivation of oranges and rice, healthy lifestyle is thus practically unavoidable (and delicious!). The food in general is one of the things I miss the most (besides my friends, of course), it was amazing (oh yes, I gained weight... a lot).

The location also influences the mentality of people, especially in Spain, and that is another huge plus when going to Castellón. People are relaxed, but quite surprisingly, everything works – streets are cleaned almost every day, buses go at the right time and the university is very well organized. The only problem that can emerge is the language barrier. The two official languages in Castellón are Valencian and Spanish, and unfortunately almost nobody speaks English. However, I personally considered it a great opportunity to actually practice my Spanish – there was no way out.





The Jaume I University is a very nice place, there is a big campus with all the faculties in one part of the town. The English department is well-organized, but one should be aware of the fact that not all courses are taught in English, even when it says so in syllabus; sometimes they are taught in Spanish and when you are really “lucky”, even Valencian. However, the teachers were helpful and when there was a problem, they always helped me with a smile. Most of the subjects I studied were based on projects, which was a nice change and a challenge that I really liked. I also enrolled in an additional Spanish course, which was absolutely fantastic, nothing else has ever developed my Spanish as much and I would highly recommend it to everyone.

However, the most important and influential of all things were, of course, the people. Since Castellón is not a big city and has only one university, all Erasmus students gather at the same department of foreign studies. During the first few days they organized nice introductory activities for us and we quickly got to know each other and became friends. I have to say that I was very lucky that I could meet so many great

people from all over the world there. And although it sounds like a typical Erasmus cliché, I really think my friends were very special. We travelled, partied, prepared international dinners, participated in local festivals, supported each other and helped each other in need. We also got tricked by one of the infamous “Erasmus” organizations and went on a trip that almost turned out to be a disaster, but since we were together, we had the best time. One thing that nobody had told me before I went was how much community support exists among Erasmus students. It was something I never experienced before or after – people you barely know help you in tricky situations without any ulterior motives and without wanting any repay. I also lived in a shared flat with three Spanish (Valencian) girls, who showed me the Spanish world, mentality and helped with the sociocultural differences.

To summarize it, do not overthink the potential complications Erasmus can bring and just go! No university degree will ever give you so much experience, confidence and great memories as Erasmus. Believe me.



THE UNITED KINGDOM



University of Keele

Markéta Šonková

First of all, you will probably have to have a good look in Google maps and thoroughly zoom in to figure out where you are actually going to spend your Erasmus. Nice thing Keele did at my time was that they picked the international students up at Heathrow, provided you arrived on the first day of intro week, so we did not have to worry about finding the place on our own. So definitely do sign up for the intro week activities. Not only it will help you get used to the new place and system, but it will also help you find new friends quite fast. For example, I met my Canadian friend Melissa at the airport shortly after arriving and we have been inseparable since, even 4 years after we parted.

Keele is an amazing place for all the countryside lovers. There is a farm, several lakes, deep woods, you name it. It is supposedly the biggest campus in the UK. The old Keele Hall is just splendid, and you feel like visiting the set of Downton Abbey when roaming the rooms. Though, after visiting the lakes and woods for a few times, you will realize that it is just the same lakes and the same woods over and over again, so you might quickly run out of places to go. Also, once it starts raining – and it does and never stops, especially if you go there in fall – then unless you are a fan of drowning your ankles in mud and having your back sprayed with random mud particles as you walk while the mud fabulously squishes and splashes on everything you wear, you will stop going there / out once October starts. Nonetheless, the somewhat central position of Keele on the map of the UK gives you a decent base for travelling. And once you work out the discount system and special offers – which the Britons just love – you will be able to afford traveling on weekends as well as in mid-week in the afternoons. It is a stone's throw to Manchester, Birmingham, Liverpool, Chester, or Nottingham and not even London is too far.

Accommodation in the UK is expensive, so because of the budget reasons, I opted for the cheapest place possible and hoped for the best – that is that they will give it to me. And they did. However. There were 15 rooms in my all-girl block, each on a separate semi-floor and I was on the very top. Probably to further my seclusion from British students – but at least it compensated for my inability to go jogging in the woods, as I had to climb the stairs many times a day.





The showers and facilities were shared, so meeting random boyfriends was a norm. Norm in my room was also poor heating, moss on the outside of the windows, and from time to time also mold, but hey, a butterfly hatched in my room in mid-November and I bet you never saw that coming! Thus, seeing Melissa's en suite always made me cry a lot on the inside. I was also asked to pay for the whole semester (that is till February), although the Erasmus students took their exams and left before Christmas, so most of my grant went into accommodation nonetheless.

I met many very friendly exchange students while at Keele, but getting to know the locals was not that easy, at least not at first. I was probably more successful in being friends with the MANY squirrels on the campus before managing to become friends with any of the locals. So don't be put off if it takes the Britons a bit longer getting to know you. On the other hand, the university staff is welcoming and tries to be helpful, however, you might come across administration-related issues. Especially so during the application process and then whenever dealing with the Accommodation Office. Also, try not to get ill, because making a GP appointment will remind you of The Twelve Tasks of

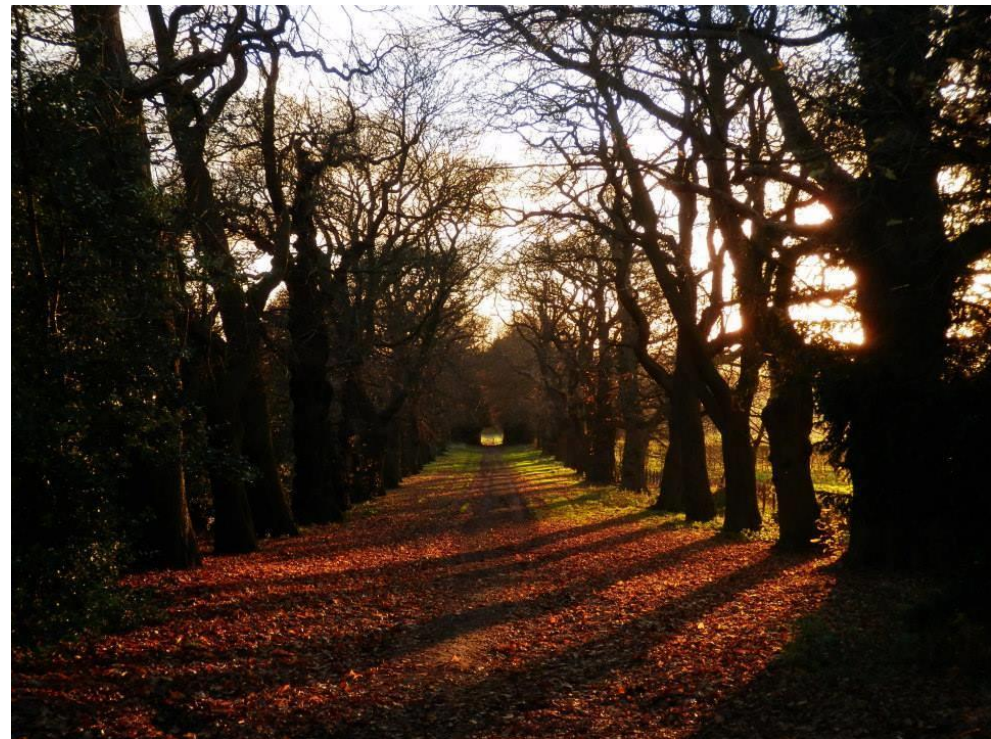
Asterix and unless you are on the verge of death, you won't see an MD until about two days after you call in. Although that seems to be an NHS-wide phenomenon.

Academically speaking, Keele is a nice place to go. They let me enroll into any module I wanted, so I took classes across various departments. At the same time, they let you take four modules only, so choose wisely. There is usually a lecture and then a seminar, so within one module, you have two sessions per week. The library is open 24/7 which was great, especially during writing midterm papers and exams. But it also meant you could see students in various stages of shapeshifting, bringing in their own pillows and in extreme cases also sleeping bags. The teaching staff was from most part really kind and helpful and I could also consult my BA thesis there, which was the main reason why I picked the UK, as my focus was on British studies.



The campus style of life has many pros but also many cons. There is all you might need on the campus: a bookstore, a student union, a gym and sport facilities, once a week there was a farmers' market, a small food store, several fast food places, and a coffee shop. There are MANY student societies you can join, including a Quidditch team, so you can really get the taste of British campus life. On the other hand, if you have any dietary restrictions, it might get tough, as the veggies in the cafeteria will taste the same every day, and the shops on the campus are rather pricey. There are several clubs and pubs and there is also a typical English pub in the nearby Keele village. But at the end of the day, if you are not a club or bar person and not into sports, there really is not much to do. And then there is Stoke, the nearest town. Arriving there for the first time, I quickly understood why Robbie Williams left at the age of 16. But if you are into formerly industrial places with a special interest in pottery and one of the highest "Leave" percentage, then go for it.

All in all, Keele is a good place to go if you want to get a taste of the campus life and to do research. But do think twice whether you can handle seclusion in the many senses of the word. I met some amazing people and made friends for lifetime, so in that sense, the Erasmus adverts are not just a cliché. But it really was not all nice and shiny. After all, a fall in the UK – especially so in the countryside up north – will definitely make you re-evaluate what you consider to be a rain.



University of Bristol

Tereza Pavlíková

Bristol is a buzzing international place known for its artists, musicians and Banksy graffitis. I spent an autumn semester there, which actually turned out to be a good choice for a confused exchange student! One of the reasons is that more Erasmus students come in autumn than in spring. Also with lots of freshers starting at the university, everyone is being extra kind and helpful, and you can sneak into lots of student societies which are looking for new members at the time. Some of the societies stop being active around Easter, so if you want to enjoy some hiking, playing Quidditch or you want to appreciate the benefits of the wine tasting society membership, autumn is the way to go :)

Accommodation & Bristol

Bristol University doesn't officially provide dorm accommodation to Erasmus students. So, sadly, you must find a place to live by yourself. For that I recommend the Spareroom website. However, if that proves to be difficult, you can always visit Bristol's Accommodation Office and they might be able to find a place for you in the dorms after all. But be warned: the dorms can be quite expensive!

If you find a place that's within walking distance of the university, you're lucky. Why? Because Bristol's public transport is terribly inefficient and also quite expensive. Bristol's roads are clogged, several places are always being under construction and bus delays during peak times can reach up to 60 minutes. It took me 45 minutes to walk to school and often I chose that over taking the bus, that's how terrible it was. Several Bristolians try to solve this problem by cycling, but Bristolian hills are very steep, so perhaps if you were going to buy a gym membership you can kill two birds with one stone.

School

The unusual thing about Bristol is that the partnership is not with an English department, but actually with a Czech Department at the School of Modern Languages. Your coordinator will be the lovely Jana Nahodilová who is absolutely amazing, really kind and helpful. If you want to, you can take part in the Czech courses, where you can practise some Czech to English translation and meet students learning Czech. You can also join the university's Czech society called Ponožka :)



Unfortunately, as an Erasmus student you aren't free to join any course you like. You are limited to a number of courses, all of which you can find at the School of Modern Language's website in a pdf file. Nevertheless, there are quite a few choices. There are language and translation courses, you can also join courses at the English Department, the History Department and at the School of Modern Language, or courses created specifically for Erasmus students. These are not as demanding and you can make quite a few Erasmus friends there. Unfortunately, these courses are generally not as interesting as the non-Erasmus ones. Contrastingly, the non-Erasmus courses are more demanding, but usually really interesting and you can meet local students. (Disclaimer: the opinions expressed here are all mine, some other people have actually enjoyed the courses created for Erasmus students very much.)

For my term at the university I chose the Literature 3 course at the English Department, which was time-consuming but absolutely amazing, and then the Anguish in Eden and British Cinema courses (these were the courses created for Erasmus students I mentioned) and they were not as enriching in my opinion, but still quite nice. I also used to sneak into the lectures of another course at the English Department – the Approaches to Poetry – and the lectures were absolutely delightful.

PS: In the university town, you can find the Bristol International Students Centre. They host events and lunches every week and you can meet lots of lovely international students there. I especially recommend their soup lunches.

Places to See, Places to Go

Bristol in itself is in a strategically good location – if you feel like it, you can pop off to London, Cardiff, Bath, Cornwall or Wales anytime. But that doesn't mean that there aren't places to see in Bristol. You should definitely check out the famous Clifton Suspension Bridge and observatory. In fact, Clifton in general is really lovely and full of beautiful posh houses, so it's an ideal place for taking a walk. At the university, you should definitely see the Wills Memorial Building – the inside looks truly Harry Potter-esque and I highly recommend using the library there for studying or reading. Near the university there is also the Cabot Tower observatory, ideal for those sweet panoramic shots.



Bristol also has a beautiful harbour and waterfront, and at the weekend there is always something happening there. Also on weekends, St. Nicholas Market is open in the centre, where you can go buy some trinkets or just enjoy a pie in Pieminister. If you are more interested in the more hip parts of Bristol, definitely visit Stokes Croft, the artsy hub full of graffiti murals. And if you are a cat lover, you must definitely have a pint at Bristol's cat pub called Bag of Nails.

If you feel like seeing some culture, Colston Hall hosts various events like stand-up shows or concerts, you can go see a musical in Hippodrome or go to Watershed for some indie (and non-indie) films – it's quite like Scala, actually. Or you can see exhibitions at Arnolfini or party on Thekla, probably the only club on a ship I've ever seen. There are quite a few other clubs to see, but as a shy and broke introvert I chose to avoid them.



We would like to earnestly thank all the students from our English department who responded to our request for sharing their Erasmus impressions and experience and writing so many helpful and informative contributions for this catalogue. We appreciate their effort and believe that it will help other students in doubt about their future Erasmus adventures.

The message that unites all the stories shared above is clear: Erasmus is worth it, go for it!

English Students' Club

