

Experience Report- Study Abroad Stay

University of Zaragoza, Spain

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(EUREC: 2019-20)

I'm a masters student pursuing European Master in Renewable Energy (EUREC). I completed my core semester at the University of Oldenburg, Germany on 31st January 2019. I started my specialization semester at the University of Zaragoza, Spain on 10th February 2020.

Preparation:

For the documentation process, I had to complete the 'ERASMUS Learning Agreement- Before Mobility' by Mid-November 2019. I had to fill up the form stating the modules and correspondingly the number of credits which I would gain during my semester abroad and similar information from the core University. After completion of the form, signatures were required from the responsible person at sending institution and from the receiving institution.

We got an email from the director of the specialization according to which we were supposed to email certain documents like Passport copy, CV and our University transcripts and deposit the admin fee of €62.50.

Travel & Arrival Scenes:

I organised my trip one month before my travel, (in the last week of December 2019) making reservations for my flight, train and bus tickets. I planned my travel as follows:

- Oldenburg to Köln: RE Train until Münster using the semester ticket. *Flix Bus* from Münster to Köln.
- Köln to Barcelona: Ryan Air
- Barcelona to Zaragoza: ALSA Bus Service

For my luggage, I used DHL service since I wanted to travel care free.

Accommodation:

The best accommodation one can get in Zaragoza, being a student is 'Vivienda'. It's just €105 per month including utilities. You are supposed to do some voluntary work in order to being a part of this housing. I was a bit late to apply for this housing so I got their offer in February. But it was too late, since I already signed a contract with another apartment. Apart from this, there are some online websites (Idealista) and some agencies where we can easily get accommodations offer.

Study at University of Zaragoza:

Our lectures were held at the 'Rio Ebro' campus. The teaching staff is very well versed and we had high quality lectures and presentation from their side. Although sometimes there were some issues with language while clearing the doubts but it was manageable at the end. We got to learn some software and simulation tools which helped a lot to deal with the renewable energy and grid related problems. The assignment that were given to us also made a great impact for self-learning. A lot of excursions were planned for this course.

We went to Hydro Central and ABORA Solar which was a worthy experience to get insights of the renewable sector. Many other trips were also organized but due to COVID-19, the trips were cancelled and the lectures were also conducted via online platform on Google Meets from Mid-March 2020. By the end of the course, online presentations were also conducted where each one of us was supposed to present a particular topic related to the module which was really helpful to get an early idea to present our thesis presentation in Brussels in December 2020. Apart from the technical knowledge, I honed a lot of skills that are required to work collectively in a group and how to move together as a team if you are in a project work.

Everyday life and Leisure time

The weather in Zaragoza is sunny during February until the end of May. I really loved the weather since, when I was doing my core semester in Oldenburg, the weather was rainy for most part of the course. I lived close to Rio Ebro Campus where the grocery market, shopping complex, gymnasium and parks were nearby, so it was a perfect location for me. We all used to go out on the weekends at the city center and really had a good time with our fellow colleagues. We celebrated birthdays at each other place and also planned a trip to Madrid and stayed there for 3 days and went to nearby places (Toledo). The landscape and the natural beauty of the Country is amazing and the friendly behavior of people ready to socialize and share their culture is what I'll miss the most.

General Experience:

In a nut shell, I really had a great experience while pursuing my semester in Zaragoza. I learned new technologies, gained new skills, made a lot of friends, got to know them, their culture and their opinion on many of our random conversations and I hope to stay in touch with them.

Just do whatever feels right to you. Make yourself adaptable to the environment, stay positive, be organized- it helps a lot to get things done efficiently. Seek advice from your seniors and don't hesitate to ask any doubts to the faculties.

Following, I've attached some pictures describing how beautiful I found the places I visited and how the lockdown helped most of us to discover that we could be a good cook as well :D.



Toledo



Zaragoza



Real Madrid- Stadium Tour



I'm a good Cook (I think so)