

Zaragoza – SoSe23 - Master in Renewable Energies

Personal Information

I applied and studied for the 2023 winter semester at Zaragoza as part of the EUREC Master in Renewable Energy. I am an Industrial Engineer with a specialization in Finance and I had previously worked for 5 years in different companies. I have Spanish and Argentinean citizenship and I speak English and Spanish. The program allowed to choose from a variety of options depending on the specialization, but I chose Zaragoza as I was interested its curricula: Smart Grids and Renewable Energy Integration. For additional information I recommend EUREC's site about the university: <https://master.eurec.be/universities/core/university-zaragoza/>

Preparation (planning, organisation, and application at the host institution)

The application to the University was mainly managed through Oldenburg's International Office without problems. My classmates and I applied for Erasmus+ grants which came in handy as the travelling costs could be very steep depending on the options you consider. The application was submitted 4 months before the beginning of the classes and there were any problems.

Travel and arrival

To reach Zaragoza from Oldenburg there were plenty of alternatives to choose from, however, there are not direct means of transportation, and we all chose different options depending on our preferences. In my case, I booked a flight to Madrid and from there I travelled by bus to Zaragoza. In general, the three more adequate alternatives were:

- Travel by plane to Madrid or Barcelona and travel to Zaragoza by bus or train (there are several cheap high-speed alternatives if you book in advance). The duration of the trip is approximately 4 hours by bus and 1.5 hours by high-speed train.
- Travel by plane to Zaragoza. To do this you might have to choose a specific city to fly from different from Hamburg or Berlin.
- Travel by bus to Zaragoza by doing some changes. This alternative is covered by European funds if you apply (100 eur.)

The city's airport is located 20 minutes away by car from the city center (there are some buses connecting it every half an hour) and the train station has several bus lines to choose from and go wherever you might need.

Accommodation

The University has dorms, but they are usually reserved for long term students. However, there is a wide offer of apartments to look to rent for a semester or two. The main website to look for accommodations is <https://www.idealista.com/>. I would strongly recommend renting a temporary room before the semester starts and look for the best options in person. In my case, I rented an apartment from Germany and once I arrived the conditions were not the best. Everybody else first checked in person and didn't have any issue.

The University has two campuses one in the middle of the city (Campus San Francisco) and the other in the northern outskirts (Campus Rio Ebro). It is key to check where your classes will be before renting as they are far off from each other.

Studying at the host university (courses, academic performance/credits, support, credit transfer)

In my case, I studied at Campus Río Ebro, but I visited in my free hours the rest of the facilities. The campus had two canteens and two libraries. It is recommendable to quickly apply for a student card to be able to access all the premises.

The credit transfer and recognition of courses was swift, the usual day would last from 14/15hs to 18/19hs.

Strong knowledge concerning Matlab and PowerFactory would be an advantage if you are planning to do the same course as I did. I would recommend researching which type of programs will your program rely on.

Previous Spanish knowledge would be an important advantage: there was a wide disparity between those professors who had a good level of English and those who did not.

Everyday life and leisure time

Most of the city most important landmarks and leisure spots can be reached by walking. Zaragoza has a well-developed public transport system, with several buses lines, bicycle lanes and a tram line that connects both campuses and cuts the city from north to south. The fares are accessible if you get a transport card (0.4 eur the ticket).

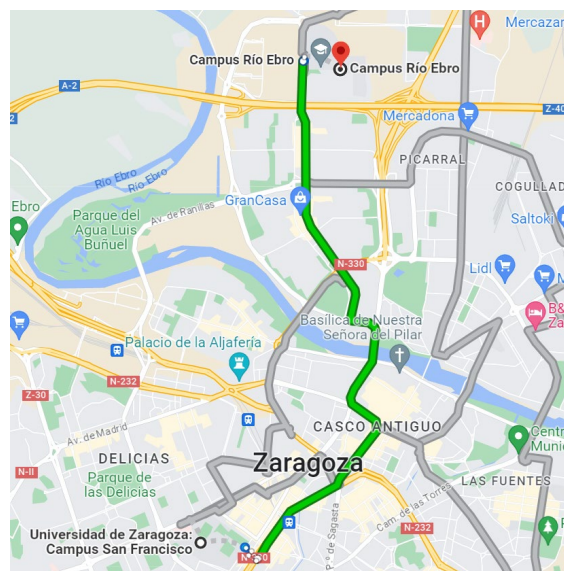


Figure 1. Tram itinerary between the two campuses

The city has several gyms, clubs and bars scattered throughout its neighborhoods. For students, the best place to would be near San Francisco Campus, as it is where most students apply to live. There is a huge park (Parque Grande) near it and a great running track at the shores of the Ebro River if you wish to exercise.

General experience, credit transfer, conclusion (tips for other students, DOs and DONTs)

In general, I really enjoyed Zaragoza. It is not a bustling metropolis as Madrid or Barcelona, but it is big enough to have more than enough stuff to do in your free time. The city has a beautiful and rich historical heritage and is fully prepared for national and international students. Its location allows you to visit either of those cities if you wish or even the Basque Country (Pamplona, San Sebastian, Santander) or the Pyrenees for a hike: it is right in the middle of all those options.



Figure 2. Zaragoza is less than 2 hours away from Barcelona and Madrid

The University's facilities were adequate but depending on your studies, a previously knowledge of Spanish and the systems and programs you might use could play a huge factor in your academic experience. The locals do not speak fluent English in general so you will learn Spanish (at least the basics) in order to get around.