

Erasmus Experience Report @ Instituto Superior Técnico, Lisboa

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As part of the EUREC Master Program, it is mandatory to study the second semester of the Master Program in a foreign university other than the core university. Since this was already a part of the program, the procedures were quite easy to get admission to the foreign university. UOL was very helpful to connect us with previous students who studied the same course as the foreign semester and who were part of UOL like us. The preference of the university was selected based on the specialization course which you wanted. Since I was looking for a specialization in Ocean energy and Offshore wind I choose Instituto Superior Técnico, Lisboa. When looking back now, I feel that the decision was right and I am very happy that we had a very good semester abroad in IST both academically and socially.

I wanted to use green travel for my Erasmus program, the new additional grant from Erasmus is motivating students to prefer green transport modes, but unfortunately, since the destination was Portugal and was a bit far from Germany I had to fly into the country. Accommodation facilities are pretty good and available. I booked the accommodation with Uniplaces, but since that website charges a commission I would suggest going with Idealista. Even in Uniplaces, you can end up in bad places even though they say the properties are inspected and verified by them. So it is always better to look for reviews before choosing the place to stay. Idealista can have fraud advertisements which we should make sure of before making any payments by requesting an online viewing or if you have some friends in the university they can visit the place and make sure. But it is always better to start looking at the flats at least one or two months before to get the best and cheapest options. One main issue which I found was the university was not providing any option of a university dorm for the foreign students for short term due to lack of availability. Normally a room in a flatshare can cost from 350 - 450 Euro all including. I was staying in a six-room flat share, I was staying with students from Italy, Brazil, Slovenia, Rwanda, etc. Those flat mates were very warm and friendly. So had a good time together and it was the best opportunity to know different food, practices, cultures and people.

The university campus was comparatively small, but it had all facilities required for students. Most of the services like cafeteria and stationery store had subsidized prices for students. The course was very well designed with a perfect mix of both ocean energy and offshore wind energy. By going into the required depth of the subject, they will make you capable of securing what the industry expects from you from different job perspectives. The course had 4 compulsory papers and one elective. All the subjects were having a continuous evaluation with 2 mini-tests, a final exam, lab or practical projects, and a few assignments. This way of evaluation made more sense and students had to study timely and regularly to appear for the tests or assignments rather than making one final exam with complete topics which are normally happening in some other specialization semesters, where a student will try to rush to study till the last moment and once exam is done they don't memorize much. The semester was divided into two quadrants and at each end of the quadrant, there was a test and a submission of assignment for each subject. The exam and valuation were very reasonable and the workload was a bit higher side, but was also manageable even after having a very good social life.

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Being the capital city Lisbon is very well connected with public transport, trams, metro, and railway. Since many foreign tourists and students are visiting the country, most of the locals were also able to communicate in English and almost everything was available in near reach for shopping. Living expenses were also cheaper than in Germany and the city had a lot of different supermarket options with almost all countries' foods and ingredients including, Asian, European, Arabic, and Latin American supermarkets. Which were also very close to each other making it very convenient to buy the items with short travels in metro. Lisbon is a very happening city with a lot of warm people around for partying, with beautiful beaches and magnificent landscape of cliffs. So it was very convenient to travel around and go to beaches to get some sun and surfing. The climate was initially convenient not very cold or very hot. This made it very suitable for sight seeing and trips around the country.

Only one thing that we face now is that since most of the professors are very busy with their academic activities and researches, it is a bit time taking to get the grade sheets and other documents from them.

Altogether it was a very well spent Erasmus semester with a lot of new experiences including cultural sharing and making close friends in many places in Europe and Latin America. It was a good opportunity to become a part of an international group of students and learn and improve ourselves by self-evaluation as a person and academically the course was a really good specialization with almost all relevant areas covered in the Ocean energy and Offshore wind subjects keeping justice to the expectation of the students choosing the course.
