

ERASMUS

STUDENT GUIDE | 2019

FIND YOUR DESTINATION

Learn how to find opportunities abroad

ENJOY YOUR STAY ABROAD

Make the most out of your Erasmus experience

FIGHT THE POSTEXCHANGE BLUES

Survive coming back home after your exchange

 eurosender

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WELCOME TO YOUR ERASMUS STUDENT GUIDE!

First of all, thank you for trusting **Eurosender** to give you valuable advice for your next adventure abroad!

As you may already know, **Eurosender** is a modern digital platform that combines advanced automation for companies to create their own digital logistics department and increase their performance. At Eurosender, we are building the industry's most comprehensive logistics platform that can capture the digital demand of shippers in different geographies, draw prospective clients and identify the best logistics solutions for their shipping needs. Each day, we help expats and international students to move their belongings to the next destination of their choosing.

We have all been there – when on the move, you look for simple solutions. Relocating abroad, be it temporarily or permanently, can seem frightening at first. And then it does not matter whether you are an international student going on a **study abroad**, planning to do an **internship** or other. It is important to get proper guidance, and that is why we have created this guide to help you prepare in the best way possible for your next big adventure.

Our Erasmus Student Guide aims to prepare you for your exchange, whether you wish to study or work abroad. Simply because there is no such thing as too much preparation!

We have covered all the important topics – from making up your mind and choosing the right opportunity, to dealing with paperwork and making the most out of your stay abroad. We hope that with a little help from Eurosender, your Erasmus will be unforgettable.

ENJOY!

YOUR EUROSENDER TEAM

HOW TO FIND OPPORTUNITIES ABROAD

Going abroad may seem like a big deal, but in reality, it is fairly simple. Travelling has never been easier, and you do not need an awful lot of money to get started. Just take advantage of the opportunities that are right in front of you!

There is one word you should know by now: **Erasmus**. It is a European funding program established in the late 1980s, offering grants to students who wish to study abroad up to 12 months per cycle of studies. Sounds appealing? Then I suggest you read on!

STUDY

Universities usually have a so-called **International Office**, which takes care of partnerships with other institutions of higher education around the world. Sure, it depends on your school, but there is a high chance that you have at least a couple of universities to choose from.

And that is not all. If for some reason, you have no interest in Erasmus (highly unlikely), you can always find a more suitable program for yourself. Whether it is **CEEPUS**, **Double Diploma Programme**, or simply a bilateral agreement between your university and a university abroad- the choice is yours. The only thing you should do is to make an effort- find the right opportunity and apply for it, probably with a little help from your university. There is often some serious paperwork involved- but do not get discouraged. Studying abroad will surely be worth it and offered scholarships will not put a strain on your budget.

INTERN

Again, Erasmus. The program allows you not only to study but also to work abroad (check out **Erasmus+ Traineeships** or our partner **Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs**). This time, though, you have to be more proactive because it is entirely your job to find an employer willing to hire you. If you struggle to find opportunities abroad, there are plenty of search engines that could help you. Probably the best one for finding a job opening suitable for Erasmus funding is **ErasmusIntern.org**, but do a little research and do not forget to polish your **LinkedIn** account, just in case.

Apart from going abroad via Erasmus network, you should take a look at international student organizations. **AIESEC**, for example, offers a range of **internships** and **volunteering opportunities** in every corner of the world. Of course, being an intern can be a lot more challenging than studying, but it is a fantastic way to add some relevant experience to your **CV**.

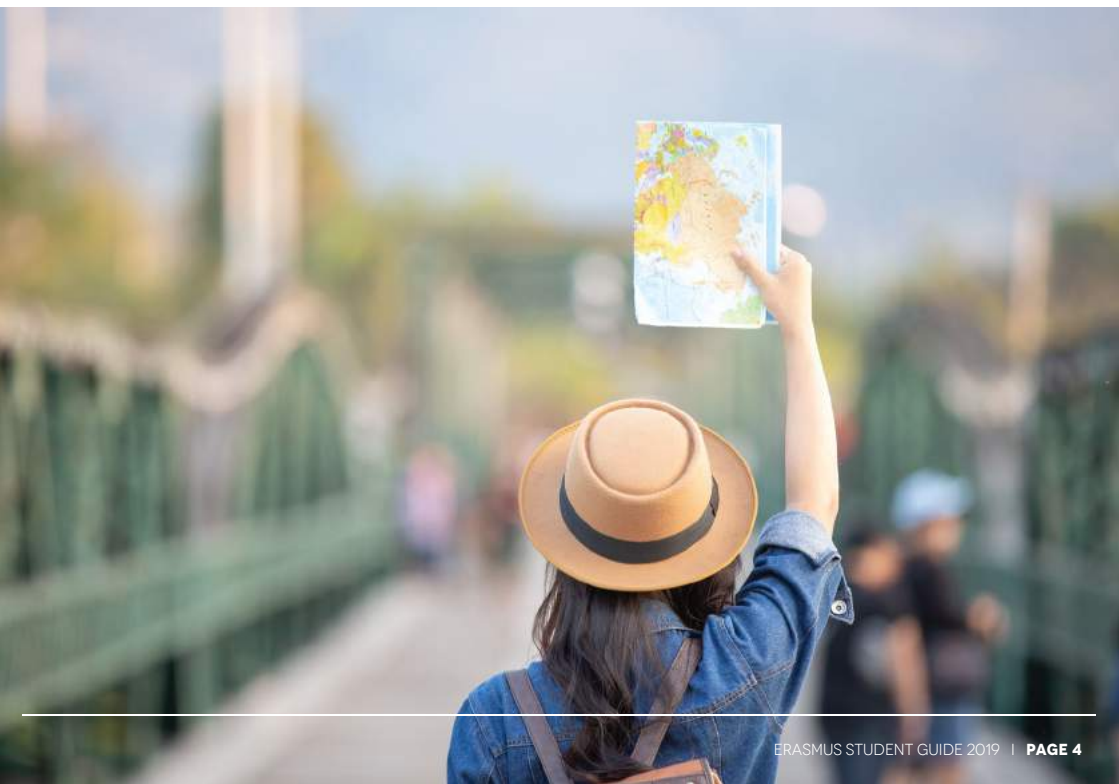
VOLUNTEER

Speaking of, becoming a volunteer is also an option if you want to go abroad. You may not receive any financial compensation, but often there is free accommodation and many other benefits on the table. You might want to check what European Voluntary Service (EVS is all about, see your local AIESEC committee or read an exhaustive list of volunteer projects abroad prepared by VolunteerForever.com. There has also been dedicated an [Erasmus+ grant for volunteering activities](#) when you are a little turned-off by the idea of not getting any financial compensation. It is not much but remember that money is not everything – devoting your time and skills to a good cause is something that everyone should try at least once in a lifetime.

What's more, if going abroad is not really an option for now, you can still give it a shot and become a member of a local **ESN** section. International experience guaranteed!

STILL NOT SURE HOW TO FIND OPPORTUNITIES ABROAD?

There are plenty of mobility opportunities in Europe and beyond. Check out [Mov'in Europe](#) website or **Work&Travel Programmes** (available in the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Ireland), and make sure you stay tuned in to our [blog](#).



10 BENEFITS OF ERASMUS EXCHANGE PROGRAMME



The decision to move abroad is a big step. Getting out of your comfort zone is not always easy, but it can boost your personal and professional skills. **Erasmus exchange program** is a great opportunity for you to experience something new, whether you choose to study or work abroad. Maybe you are feeling uneasy and cannot decide whether you should go on Erasmus or not, but that is totally normal. The most difficult part is making up your mind. And just to make it easier for you, we listed **10 benefits of Erasmus**.

1. GETTING TO KNOW THE COUNTRY YOU ARE PLANNING TO MOVE TO IN THE FUTURE



Many people have an idea of what it might be like living somewhere else. However, you will never know how it feels unless you try. About 40% of former exchange students moved to another country after graduating, and about 93% of exchange students imagine themselves living abroad in the future. So, before making any commitment, you can go on Erasmus and see it for yourself.

2. INCREASING YOUR EMPLOYABILITY



It is proven that an exchange programme boosts your CV and helps you stand out in the job market. About 64% of employers consider an international experience to be important for recruitment*. Furthermore, an exchange programme will let you develop your language and soft skills – such as adaptability, proactivity and taking initiative, which are crucial for any job. Many members of Eurosender’s team participated in an Erasmus Programme. Check out how **international** our team really is.

*The above-mentioned facts and numbers were taken from a study of the impact of Erasmus. Check out the page of [European Commission](#) to learn more details about it.

3. EXPERIENCING DIFFERENT LEARNING AND TEACHING PRACTICES

When you study in the same country for your whole life, your learning practices are not exposed to many changes. When you go abroad, though, you will understand how teaching and learning methods differ from country to country. Hopefully, you can combine those different techniques in order to learn more effectively.

4. FIGURING OUT WHAT YOU WANT TO DO WITH YOUR LIFE

Even after choosing an area of studies, many students are still unsure which career path to choose in the future. One of the benefits of Erasmus is that some situations you may go through, or even the courses you take abroad, could give you a few hints of what you really like doing. Maybe going on Erasmus will simply inspire you! About 1 in 10 Erasmus trainees have started their own company, and 3 out of 4 plan on doing it in the near future. Actually, Eurosender was created when the co-founder, Tim Potočnik encountered some problems shipping the luggage to his home country when returning from an exchange abroad. [Learn more](#) about the idea behind Eurosender's creation.

5. TRAVELLING AROUND

One of the most popular reasons to go on Erasmus is that you will have the opportunity to visit new places. Whether you travel in a group or alone, going to different sights will show you how big and amazing the world we live in is. You will probably realize how little you are compared to so many unknown world beauties.

We have already covered some of the most popular destinations across Europe on our [YouTube](#) channel. See for yourself!

6. STUDYING ABROAD WITHOUT PAYING ANY TUITION FEES

When you participate in Erasmus exchange, you do not have to pay any tuition fees at your new university. Besides, the EU Commission provides you with an Erasmus Grant to help you with your expenses during your time abroad. This is one of the biggest benefits of Erasmus. If you wish to do it without being an Erasmus student, you will probably have no financial support.

7. LEARNING TO TRUST YOURSELF

When you are in an unfamiliar place, outside of your comfort zone, you have no option but to learn how to deal with unexpected situations. In such cases, you will have to believe in your capacity to face and solve any problems you might encounter. Despite being quite uncomfortable and sometimes frustrated, you will have more self-confidence and know what to do in the future.

8. BALANCING YOUR FINANCES

You will be in charge of everything during your stay abroad: shopping for groceries, accommodation and transportation, just to name a few. Although it might be hard at first to stick to your budget, you will quickly become independent and start doing it like a pro. This experience will definitely prepare you for the future if you plan on living on your own later on.

9. GAINING INTERNATIONAL AND INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCIES

When you go to live in a new country, a lot of things will be different. When people have dinner, how people interact with each other and more. To learn and experience these things helps you understand better that you must adapt when you are in a culture that is different from your own. This newly gained experience will help you in your further life, since you will be able to communicate easier with others and understand better what is going on.

10. MAKING NEW FRIENDSHIPS THAT COULD LAST A LIFETIME

You will get to know many people who will be in a similar situation to yours: alone in the unknown and out of their comfort zone. In such a setting, we tend to rely on each other and join forces to face adversities together. You will create strong bonds with your Erasmus family, and most likely find friends for life. As you can see, the benefits of Erasmus are unlimited. By the end of your exchange, you will have plenty of stories to tell and many memories that you will keep close to your heart. Although you might be sad when it all comes to an end, you will realize how lucky you were to be able to have this opportunity. So, what are you waiting for?

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CURRENT EVENTS REGARDING ERASMUS

Living such a global lifestyle, also brings some continuous changes along with it. As an Erasmus you are an international student and the world is different every day. This means that you have to be prepared for the unforeseen, which be both positive and negative. Of course, this is easier said than done. Therefore, we are going to help you a bit to keep you up to date with the current things happening and surrounding Erasmus, so you will not encounter any surprises.

BREXIT

You can barely go around it anymore, you come across some news about Brexit at least once a day. Whether it is in the newspaper or somewhere online. But what happens to Erasmus+ once Britain eventually does leave the European Union? Luckily, they have already thought about that themselves as well. Even though Brexit affects a lot of people, for people going there on Erasmus or when you are a UK citizen going on Erasmus nothing much will change. The Government recommends that applications are submitted as normal for the upcoming deadline for funding for Erasmus+. So that means that even with the withdrawal of the UK from the European Union, you still have every right to receive an Erasmus grant as any other student going on a study abroad in Europe. So, you still have every reason to go and send an application to a British university and have an amazing time!

PROPOSING TO DOUBLE THE CURRENT BUDGET OF ERASMUS+

Every 5 to 7 years, the European Union revises and approves of its long-term budget. Within this budget is also taken into consideration the amount of money that will be used for Erasmus+ grants and with that the amount of money that you could receive when going abroad. The current budget plan is soon coming to an end in 2020 and they will have to start renegotiating a new budget, for a period of seven years (2021-2027). The Commission is committed to Erasmus+ and refers to the programme as one of the European Union's most visible success stories which will continue to create opportunities for the education and mobility of young people. Therefore, a proposal by the Commission that has been out for a while, is to double the budget of Erasmus+! This would mean that you could get double the money for your grant than in previous years and spent it on even more great trips, activities and so on that will make your Erasmus an unforgettable experience.



WANTING TO MAKE IT A COMPULSORY PART OF THE STUDY

So as mentioned before, the Commission thinks of the Erasmus programme as one of the greatest opportunities to further educate and mobilize young people. Therefore, a topic of discussion for quite a while now has been whether going on Erasmus should be a compulsory part of every degree. While no one wants to be that friend who jumps on a “when I was on exchange” anecdote at every chance they get, there are definitely some vital life lessons that come from spending a period of time in unfamiliar territory!

IN THE FUTURE ALSO ERASMUS FOR WORKERS

Although Erasmus programmes for young professionals and entrepreneurs already exist, a discussion has been going on whether it should also be available for people who have been working for some years already. Although people with a part time or fulltime job already have some more income than when someone is still studying, the big group of people that is Erasmus could also be beneficial for them. Imagine having an Erasmus colleague from a foreign country that has 15+ years of experience in the field of work you just started in. You could learn a lot from that person.

BEST UNIVERSITIES FOR YOUR ERASMUS

An Erasmus experience is much more than just a degree. However, choosing a good university can open a lot of doors for you. Combining good education with international-student-friendly destinations, you are bound to have an experience of a lifetime. Based on the **2019 ranking of the best European universities to study in**, here is a list of some of the best universities for your Erasmus adventure.

1 UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD, UK

Oxford is a university hard to get in to (simply because not all schools have Erasmus agreements with Oxford). Nonetheless, whenever you have a possibility to study there, do not even hesitate. Oxford is currently ranked as the best university in the world, and thus, one of the best universities for your Erasmus. It would definitely make you stand out in today's job market. You can choose various courses from the fields of Humanities, Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences, Medical Sciences, or Social Sciences. The university itself has a big range of activities. It has 85 sports clubs and 150 societies to choose from, and many student events. What's more, Oxford students have access to many transportation discounts, so you can also explore other cities nearby.

2 ETHZ, SWITZERLAND

Everyone knows how dreamy living in Switzerland can be. It is a place where several languages and cultures blend together. Due to its great living conditions, many people chose Switzerland to work and study. Zurich has great rail,

road and air connections. It is surrounded by many theatres, museums, and other interesting places. Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich (ETHZ) was created back in the 19th century as a centre of knowledge and innovation, and its research is focused on solving society's needs. It makes it a great environment for productive research and independent thinking, and that is why it is one of Europe's top universities.

3 CHARLES UNIVERSITY, CZECH REPUBLIC

Charles University was founded in the year 1348. During the almost 670 years of its existence it has undergone a number of changes. It is currently a publicly-funded university which comprises a total of seventeen faculties, of which three are theological, six are faculties of the humanities and social sciences, five are medical and three are dedicated to the sciences. The university is located in Prague, ranked as one of the best cities for students with a vibrant night life. Along with that, it is a city with a lot of beautiful things to see and do and you can easily access everything by foot.

4 LUDWIG MAXIMILIAN UNIVERSITY OF MUNICH, GERMANY

Founded in 1472, this university is one of Europe's best academic and research institutions. But generally speaking, Munich is one of Germany's hub for higher education and research. It offers the perfect mix of fast-paced

urban lifestyle and charming countryside. Apart from its well-known city life, Munich is close to the Bavarian Alps and it has a large range of lakes, castles, and many other attractions. These beautiful places will certainly keep you occupied during your free time.

5 ÉCOLE NORMALE SUPÉRIEURE PARIS, FRANCE

As if there were not enough reasons to go to Paris, one of the most prestigious universities and research institutes in Europe is located there. Paris is one of the main targets when it comes to Erasmus exchange programmes. If you are one of those students who dream about the French capital city, then École Normale Supérieure is one of the best universities for your Erasmus. Founded during the French revolution, this university's offers elite study programs and gives their students great preparation and training for research activities. In total, it has already shaped 13 Nobel Prize winners. Not to mention that the famous Louis Pasteur was one of their administrators and directors of scientific studies. With the residential campuses located in Paris, it offers their students a close proximity to a large variety of restaurants, cafes, museums, bistros and many attractions that only Paris could give you.

6 UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE MADRID, SPAIN

Who does not love Spain, right? Eating some fresh tapas or paella late in the evening and drinking sangria until the sun starts to rise again. With more than 25.000 students and 3.000 academic staff members, this university has two campuses: the prestigious Faculty of Medicine, close to Madrid's La Paz Hospital, and the Canto Blanco Campus, which is situated 15 km to the north of Madrid, immersed in nature. In addition, this campus has an excellent connection with the city

centre, including a train station, with direct line to Puerta del Sol in 20 minutes. It has, as well, several service buildings, like a sports complex, Music and Language Learning centres, student residences and a Doctoral School. Of course, the capital of Spain also has some of the greatest places for nightlife.

7 UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS

This university's international reputation attracts students from all over Europe. It is one of the leading universities for research in the region. Bearing in mind the growing need for staff with international competencies, University of Amsterdam aims to equip its students with knowledge suitable for today's international job market. With many years of history behind, its studies are organized in 7 faculties: Economics and Business, Law, Science, Medicine, Dentistry, Social and Behavioural Sciences, as well as Humanities. Amsterdam is a city that has a perfect environment for academic studies. With their welcoming and friendly inhabitants, beautiful architecture, cultural attractions and river canals, this city will certainly not disappoint you.

8 UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI, FINLAND

As Finland's oldest university, the University of Helsinki aims to prepare their students for "a better tomorrow". Seeking solutions for global challenges, it encourages new ways of thinking of a brighter future for the humankind. Every year, about 1000 exchange students enrol in many of its faculties. And when it comes to the city, Helsinki was in 2014 awarded City of Design status by UNESCO. English is spoken everywhere, and the variety of city attractions can amaze you. It is a beautiful seaside city, with incredible islands and great green parks. With a big diversity and quality restaurants and

restaurants and nightclubs, Helsinki might be one of the best choices for your Erasmus.

To know if you will be able to study at any of these universities, contact the responsible office at your home university. But in case none are available for you to choose, do not worry! There are plenty of others that could be right for you. If you are looking for some more inspiration, check out these other cities that offer the *best Erasmus experience* and our tips to choose the *perfect Erasmus destination for you*.





BEST ORGANISATIONS HIRING ERASMUS STUDENTS

If you think that Erasmus Exchange Programme only allows you to study abroad, you are mistaken. Many companies and organisations across Europe have already learnt why hiring Erasmus students is worth considering. Erasmus+ supports internships abroad for both current students and recent graduates. No matter your background, participating in the exchange programme is for everyone. You can not only gain valuable work experience. Language, inter-cultural and soft skills will definitely follow.

Although internships are recognised by more and more companies across Europe, there are still certain types of organisations known for their interest in hiring Erasmus students. You will probably encounter many Erasmus jobs if you study tourism, have an interest in teaching or look forward to testing your language skills as a customer support agent. Nonetheless- if you are not sure how to choose your Erasmus destination, this might help you narrow your choices.

UNIVERSITIES

The opportunities range from research positions, assistantships or regular work placements in different departments. For example, University of Vienna frequently offers Erasmus internships at its **Research Centre Human Rights**, but it is also very common to find job openings suitable for Erasmus in international offices – such as at **Universidad Cardenal Herrera** in Valencia.

MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS

Some of the biggest companies in Europe may have their own internship programmes, but many of them offer Erasmus placements as well. **Accenture**, a management consulting, technology services and outsourcing company, has many internship positions – and some of them may be just right for Erasmus students. The same applies to multinational engineering and electronics company **Bosch**, which quite regularly offers Erasmus jobs of different kinds.

COWORKING SPACES

Organisations seem to be more likely to hire Erasmus interns if their team is already international. There is no better place to experience cultural diversity than in a coworking space – become a community manager at **Locus Workspace** in Prague or **Poligon Creative Centre** in Ljubljana and get ready to meet lots of self-driven individuals from all over the world. Polishing your language and communication skills guaranteed!

ORGANISATIONS FOR STUDENTS

Once again, multicultural organizations simply favour Erasmus students over their local peers. There are plenty of companies offering services to expats and international students, hence they often look for some help from the natives. Check out **Smart Insiders**, providing different services to the young internationals in Madrid, or **CoLanguage**, which aims to teach foreign languages via online sessions. Besides, you can always choose an **ESN** department for your internship.

STARTUPS

Newly emerged and fast-growing ventures are usually much more exciting than well-established companies. It is because working for a start-up usually means learning new things at a fast pace and truly contributing to the team – and an internship can be a perfect opportunity to see how well you respond to such a busy work environment. As a start-up capital, Berlin seems to be a safe choice if you do not know how to choose your Erasmus destination. And not to brag about our own internship openings, but **Eurosender** is hiring Erasmus students throughout the year.

Finding Erasmus jobs may seem challenging at first but remember that an internship is just one of the options available if you plan to live abroad for a while. You can always find more opportunities abroad – all you must do is to figure out how to choose your Erasmus destination.

HOW TO APPLY FOR ERASMUS

It seems that you have just decided to take part in an exchange programme! But the most burning question remains- how to apply for Erasmus and deal with all the paperwork afterwards?

As you may already know, Erasmus is a European funding programme. It promotes student mobility, amongst other objectives. And the great thing about it is that the application process is much easier than you think. If you are wondering how to apply for Erasmus and successfully complete your stay abroad, we may have some answers for you.

BEFORE THE MOBILITY

- CAN I APPLY FOR ERASMUS? -

First things first, in order to participate you need to be studying in an Erasmus+ programme country. In addition to that, your school has to sign the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education Institutions (ECHE). So, before you get excited, make sure your university is part of Erasmus network and you are eligible to apply for the programme.

Moreover, the age you have to be to participate in any Erasmus mobility activities is 18-30 years old. However, you do need to fulfil the selection criteria for the programme you are applying for, as defined by your higher education institution or participating organisation. So, it is smart to read into that a little bit before you are going to apply. Also, remember that you are only entitled to 12 months of Erasmus grant in total. When you want to do Erasmus for a period longer than 12 months, it is still possible, but you will not be getting any more financial compensation. Make sure you keep that in mind.

- WHAT IS IN IT FOR ME? -

If you decide to go on Erasmus, you will study or do an internship abroad. However, since it is all part of your studies, your exchange has to be planned well. Remember that in order to graduate from your studies, there are some mandatory subjects you simply have to pass. That is why, if you want to spend a semester (or the whole academic year) abroad, it is better to choose a period of time when you have more optional and less mandatory classes scheduled. However, when doing a study abroad is obligated for your study, you do not have to worry about this.

- SO, WHAT SHOULD I DO TO APPLY FOR ERASMUS? -

It is important to know all the deadlines and eligibility criteria that your university dictates. Usually, there is one specific time frame when you have to apply for Erasmus (fill in a **form** and submit your **documents**). This is when it matters if you are a good student or not- if you plan to go on Erasmus, it is better to work on your grades and language skills beforehand. Letter of motivation may also be needed, so think of the right reasons before you choose a university you wish to apply for. Some universities might ask for a language certificate, whereas the others would invite you for an interview first. For more information on the application process, you should ask the responsible person at **International Relations Office** of your university. Remember that the fewer spots available, the more competitive the process becomes.

- BUT HOW DO I CHOOSE A UNIVERSITY FOR MY EXCHANGE? -

First of all, you should check the list of institutions available to you. Choose the destination wisely- check not only the study programmes but also the cities you would live in. Make sure the chosen university will meet your expectations and seem of the right educational level to you. When in doubt, just check out our list of best universities for Erasmus (which you will be able to find on **PAGE 10**).

- WILL I RECEIVE A SCHOLARSHIP? -

Going abroad through the programme means that you are eligible for an **Erasmus grant**, which can help you fund your stay abroad- at least partially. The amount of the grant varies from country to country and is meant only to support your stay abroad. Being accepted for Erasmus does not necessarily imply that you will receive the grant, and even if – it may not cover all your expenses. It depends on your university and how competitive the whole application process is.

- WHAT IF I GOT ACCEPTED? -

Being accepted for Erasmus does not mean that you will receive the grant. First, you will get confirmation whether you are accepted by the chosen university. For each country, there are different amounts of funds available for your Erasmus grant. You could get a lower Erasmus grant than your friend who is going to a country where it is more expensive to live. Usually you will not receive your Erasmus grant immediately, but a while later when all papers are signed. Now the actual preparation begins! Once you are selected, you should start working on your **Learning Agreement**. It is probably the most important document, which has to be signed by you, your university and the receiving institution. It will include all the details about picked courses, along with the number of **ECTS** allocated to them.

- AND WHAT DOES ECTS MEAN? -

The **European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System** (ECTS) was created in order to transfer the grades obtained abroad during Erasmus student mobility between universities. Each course should have a specific number of credits- and usually, in order to complete the semester successfully, you need 30 ECTS. Keep that in mind when you choose the subjects for your Erasmus. Speaking of, almost every university has a list of courses available to international students on their website. Compare those to the subjects you would normally have at your host institution and try to find the courses that are not only interesting but can also be easily recognised after your exchange is over. It is also important to check the schedules- as an Erasmus student, you are often allowed to pick from many different courses, which may overlap sometimes. Do not worry too much, though. You can still make some changes in your Learning Agreement after you start your exchange.

- FINE, I PREPARED MY LEARNING AGREEMENT. WHAT NOW? -

Your plan of studies abroad has to be accepted by your Erasmus coordinator at the International Office. Once again, make sure you know all the deadlines. When it comes to your exchange, you have to be proactive. Do not wait for any notifications. Instead, check all the requirements yourself (on your receiving institution's website, for example) and do not forget to complete any registration procedures on time.

- WHAT SHOULD I DO BEFORE YOU GO ON ERASMUS? -

There are a few things you should take care of. First of all, once you are accepted, you will have to undertake an online language assessment. Do not worry – it will not determine whether you should go on exchange or not. Depending on your score and your language level, you will be offered an **Online Linguistic Support course** (OLS).

Then, you should consult with your International Relations Office before going abroad. Participating in a student exchange does not mean that you will have fun all day long- make sure you understand all the rules, including what could happen in case you do not pass exams on Erasmus. Every university has different regulations and their own consequences for what happens when you do fail. For example, if you fail exams on Erasmus, you may be asked to return some part of your grant or pass substitution exams once you are back home. Remember that you have to sign a contract with your university before you leave for your exchange. Failed exams and not enough credits on Erasmus may mean that you were not able to stick to the terms you agreed on, so make sure you are actually studying on Erasmus.

Also, you will need some additional insurance. You can easily apply for the European Health Insurance Card, issued by your national health insurance provider. It gives you access to state-provided healthcare during a temporary stay in any of the 28 EU countries, Iceland, Lichtenstein, Norway and Switzerland- under the same conditions and at the same cost (free in some cases) as people insured in that country. Remember that the card is not an alternative to travel insurance, as it does not cover any private healthcare or costs such as a return flight to your home country or lost/stolen property and does not guarantee free services.

- DOES A SIMILAR PROCEDURE APPLY TO THE ERASMUS INTERNSHIPS? -

To some extent. To take part in an **Erasmus+ Mobility for Traineeships**, you will also need to apply at your sending institution within a specified time frame. However, each university has its own application procedure. You will most likely need a CV, motivational letter and a proof of your language skills, but any additional achievements are welcome.

The selection process is usually a bit different. First, you should find out if you receive the Erasmus grant, and then the search for your employer begins. It is entirely up to you to apply for suitable job openings. But once you are selected for an internship, you will have to prepare a Traineeship Agreement, agreed between and signed by you, your university and your employer.

You also have to sign a contract, undertake the online language assessment and take care of adequate insurance coverage during your traineeship abroad.

DURING THE MOBILITY

- WHAT SHOULD BE MY FIRST STEP AFTER I ARRIVE? -

As soon as you arrive, you should get in touch with your coordinator at the International Office (or your employer). Find out what your schedule will look like and if any changes to the Learning Agreement are necessary. You can request them within the deadline specified by your sending and receiving institutions in exceptional situations – for example, if the previously chosen courses are not available or they overlap. Ensure that all changes are accepted by both the sending and receiving institutions/enterprise via e-mail. Once again, the exact procedure depends on your university.

Changes in your **Traineeship Agreement** are also possible, in case there is a major change within your internship, or the responsible person is different than stated before.

- HOW DO I ADAPT TO A NEW ENVIRONMENT? -

Your receiving institution/enterprise is obliged to treat you in the same way as all their students/employees. But you should also make some effort to integrate. Take advantage of all student groups or organisations in your new city, such as the local section of **Erasmus Student Network**. ESN works to improve the integration of international students, so make sure you reach out to them.

- HOW AM I GOING TO PASS ALL EXAMS? -

Studying on Erasmus may seem challenging at first. Are you wondering how are you going to pass exams on Erasmus with that many distractions around you? Make sure to prioritise and manage your time wisely, because student exchanges are not only about partying. Of course, it is important to socialise in your free time, but you will also have to pass exams.

Failing them and/or having not enough credits on Erasmus usually means that you were not able to stick with your agreement. However, not passing all the subjects does also happen sometimes, even if you studied. Do not worry, when the subject was too difficult for you to pass, just discuss this with home university to see what your options are.

- CAN I EXTEND THE ERASMUS STAY? -

Yes, you can extend your Erasmus stay. As mentioned earlier, you are still able to make some changes even after you start your exchange. However, if you wish to **extend the duration of the mobility period abroad**, you should first consult the International Office – both at the sending and receiving institution (or the company you are working for). Make sure everyone is on board to extend your Erasmus stay. Some universities may agree to do so, but without offering you any financial support.

- WHAT IF, FOR SOME REASON, I WANT TO QUIT ERASMUS? -

In case you experience any problems during your stay abroad, you should identify them as soon as possible. Check your rights and obligations according to the signed contract, but do not be afraid to ask for help. Leaving Erasmus earlier is an option but think twice before you quit Erasmus. Simply because feeling down is a part of a culture shock. Once you manage to cope with your problems, leaving Erasmus earlier may not be needed anymore. It could be possible that you feel like it is absolutely necessary to go back home. There is no shame if you want to quit Erasmus, as long as you do not regret your final decision.

- IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE I SHOULD TAKE CARE OF DURING MY STAY? -

Make sure you take care of the required documents before you come back home. The last part of your Learning Agreement, as well as a letter of confirmation (stating how long have you actually stayed abroad), should both be signed by the responsible person in the receiving institution and brought back home. At the end of your stay, you will also be asked to undertake another language assessment online, in order to see how much your language skills have improved during your mobility. Remember that in some countries, knowing a local language may be beneficial (or even necessary).

AFTER THE MOBILITY

- WHAT SHOULD I DO ONCE I AM BACK HOME? -

After arriving home, visit the International Relations Office and let your Erasmus coordinator know that you are back. Bring all necessary documents with you and ask about the next steps. You are entitled to receive full academic recognition from your sending institution for successfully completed courses abroad. However, you need to obtain the **Transcript of Records** first.

It should contain all educational components you have taken abroad, the number of ECTS assigned to them, as well as all grades you have been awarded in the receiving institution. If grade systems do not match, your achievements should be converted at sending institution afterwards. Technically, you should receive the Transcript of Records within five weeks after the end of your evaluation. Sometimes, however, the process may take much longer. Make sure you stay in touch with your coordinators – both from receiving and sending institutions.

All courses in your Transcript that were included in your Learning Agreement and successfully completed abroad, should be recognised as a part of your studies. If you decided to extend your stay on Erasmus, make sure you have collected all documents. Contact your International Office if you are worried you did not obtain enough credits on Erasmus.

- WHAT IF I FAILED EXAMS ON ERASMUS? -

In case you did not pass all your courses, you should contact your International Office. Every institution has different regulations, so make sure you are aware of the consequences if you failed exams on Erasmus.

- IS THERE ANYTHING SPECIFIC I SHOULD DO TO COMPLETE MY INTERNSHIP? -

Apart from performing all your tasks, make sure the company will sign a Traineeship Certificate with a summary of your internship once it is over. Whether you study or work abroad, you have to fill in a questionnaire to provide feedback on your Erasmus mobility period, which should be sent to you via email.

**FOR MORE TIPS ON HOW TO PREPARE FOR
YOUR EXCHANGE, KEEPING READING OUR
ERASMUS STUDENT GUIDE!**

HOW TO GET READY FOR YOUR ERASMUS

Congratulations, you are finally accepted for an exchange program. After the excitement wears off, you might get anxious or nervous, because you do not know how to get ready for your Erasmus. There are a few things that we believe are important to take care of, as soon as your Erasmus scholarship is confirmed.

Leaving things last minute will probably stress you out even more. Start by making a list of what you need to do beforehand, scratching off the tasks you have already finished. This will help you keep track of what is missing. Here are some tips on how to get ready for your Erasmus exchange and prepare for the unknown.



• **START SAVING NOW**

This is one of the most important things to do. Although Erasmus grants are a huge help, saving money will help you with the first expenses, like accommodation, important documentation, any fees, etc. One trick is to start saving money once you get your confirmation. Challenge yourself by saving 1€ every day, as an example. Starting one year in advance will save you 365€! You can also look for a part-time job before you leave and save that money for your semester abroad- you will not be the first one to do so;

• **CREATE A DAILY OR WEEKLY BUDGET**

As soon as you know exactly how much money you can have, set yourself a daily or weekly budget that you need to stick to. Once you arrive in a new city, it is also important to take notes of how much you are spending. Do not forget to compare your expenses with your initial budget;

• HAVE AN IDEA OF WHAT THE CULTURE IN THAT COUNTRY IS LIKE

Cultural shock is the real deal here. Get ready for your Erasmus and do your own research. You will less likely suffer from cultural shock;

• JOIN ERASMUS GROUPS ONLINE

There are some websites and forums where you can find locals or students going to the same place as you are, You can ask former Erasmus students for some advice and tips on how to get ready for your Erasmus, how to survive the first days, ask about places like supermarkets, restaurants, nightclubs, etc. Another option is to join Erasmus groups on Facebook: you will stay updated on any events that might take place and you can also step up and organise meetings yourself. Also, do not forget to check out a local ESN section;

• CONSIDER TAKING A LANGUAGE COURSE BEFORE LEAVING

Knowing the basics of a language is crucial for daily communication, such as talking to your neighbours, shopping, or asking for directions. It is recommended to take even a short language course to give you some basic knowledge of the language.

DOCUMENTATION

• CHECK IF YOUR ID, PASSPORT OR CREDIT CARDS ARE GOING TO EXPIRE SOON

There is nothing worse than realizing that your documents and cards are expired, during your exchange. Remember that these might take a while to be renewed, so do it in advance;

• CHECK WHAT DOCUMENTS YOU WILL NEED

For example, whether you need a visa or not, any documents that prove your income, Erasmus confirmation of arrival and departure, any declarations or contracts. You can ask your home university and your host university about what is necessary;

• MAKE SURE TO HAVE YOUR ERASMUS+ GRANT READY

One of the perks of living in the European Union and doing your exchange in one of the partaking Erasmus countries, is that you will receive an Erasmus+ Grant. The amount of money you receive depends on the country you are living in, but it is still a nice thought to know that you have some extra money coming your way. Making sure your Grant documents are signed and ready, will also mean that you get the first sum of money faster. A little extra cash during your first month abroad definitely does not sound too bad, so we suggest making sure everything is set before you leave;

• HAVE YOUR EUROPEAN HEALTH INSURANCE CARD READY

Even if you think you are not going to get sick during your stay abroad, you need to be ready for any unforeseen situations;

• TAKE COPIES OF ANY IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

No matter if you are the most careful person in the world. When it comes to important documents, accidents might happen, and you may end up losing your papers. Make some copies

of the most important ones (yes, all of them!). Leave a copy of each one at home. Then take with you the originals and put another copy in a different bag. Better to be safe than sorry!

- **BRING OR APPLY FOR YOUR OWN *ESN card***

Okay, it is not as crucial as bringing your passport but still very important to have with you. With this card you get all kinds of different perks. Think of discounts for flight tickets, bars, restaurants, accommodations and much more. All available with only one card! If you want a little bit of extra information about which companies take part in these discounts, you can find them [here](#). Did you also know that **Eurosender** works very closely with ESN? That is why you can find a nice 10% discount off on your order at Eurosender as well. The discount you can find on their [website](#), ready for use.

You can find ESN in almost all student cities, because they are the hub for all Erasmus students present there. Find your local ESN section [here](#).

BEFORE TRAVELLING

- **DO NOT BOOK YOUR TICKETS LAST MINUTE**

As soon as your stay is confirmed, book your flight, train or bus ticket. It will be one less thing to worry about, and you will probably find an affordable ticket if you book it in advance;

- **CHECK THE ROUTES YOU WILL NEED TO TAKE WHEN YOU ARRIVE**

If you need to take a bus or walk a bit to get to your new home, check it in advance. It might happen that you will not find any tourist information or there might be a language barrier. Note down the streets you will need to take, as well as the location of the stations you will need to go to. The best thing would be to have a map and mark where you need to go with a different colour;

- **USE WEB MAPPING SERVICES OR APPS TO GET AN IDEA OF WHAT THE STREETS LOOK LIKE**

Some apps have a “street view” option that enables you to see the streets from pedestrians’ point of view. This will come in handy if you are not that good at dealing with maps. At least you will know that you are in the right place;

- **START LOOKING FOR ACCOMMODATION EARLY**

Just like flights, accommodation is something you should start looking in advance for. Prices usually do not change whether you are early or not. However, places like student dorms are very popular and get booked very quickly. Get ready for your Erasmus by knowing your options when it comes to accommodation;

- **DISCOUNT CARDS**

As an Erasmus student, you are lucky enough to join in on some great deals offered from discount cards. These cards often are specifically targeted towards students and offer you cheaper options for flight tickets, accommodation, restaurants and many more. With all these discounts, you could cut back quite a lot on your expenses for travelling and other fun activities. Want to know more

about the discount cards that are available out there? Later in this guide we wrote a piece about the 5 best student discount cards you can use for your Erasmus!;

- **FOR ERASMUS STUDIES, START LOOKING FOR THE COURSES YOU ARE GOING TO TAKE**

It is important to check if the courses you want to take are compatible with your home degree. Also, there is a possibility that some courses will not be available for you. In this case, you will need to meet with your Erasmus coordinator and see what your options are. Some Erasmus students need to do individual work to compensate for the missing courses. Do not forget to check accreditation as well. Again, do it in advance, as some courses may have application deadlines;

- **FOR ERASMUS INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME, ASK YOUR EMPLOYER FOR ANY IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

Get ready for your Erasmus internship by knowing where the office is located. This might be a huge help, especially since you will probably want to find accommodation close to the office. Other pertinent questions would be about dress code, if you need to take your computer with you, or whether you need to read some documents before you join the office;

PACKING

- **CHECK IF YOU HAVE WEATHER APPROPRIATE CLOTHES AND SHOES**

This applies when you go to a place where the weather is very different from where you live now. If you are not used to the cold, for example, you can start by gathering clothes and boots appropriate for colder weather;

- **THINK ABOUT WHAT YOU ARE GOING TO TAKE WITH YOU**

This might seem like an obvious tip but choosing which articles of clothing you are taking and which ones you are leaving at home is harder than you might think. It happens quite easily that you will want to bring all four black shirts you own, because “who knows, I might need it”. Packing for a long stay abroad could be a real challenge. One trick is to take clothes that are easier to combine and that enables you to create several outfits. You can also buy something later if you need to. And if you do not want to compromise on the number of clothes you take with you, why not you send your items with [Eurosender](#)? When you choose for Eurosender, this will make your Erasmus adventure much easier.



Be the other person.
SHIP YOUR STUFF!

Use the code

ERASMUSGUIDE

and get a **10% discount.**



• CHECK WHICH GADGETS ARE INDISPENSABLE TO TAKE

Take with you any gadgets that you will be using on a regular basis. For example, if your mobile phone has a good camera, you can leave your actual camera at home. E-books (like Kindle are good for those who like to read but cannot afford taking loads of books with them. Do not forget to pack your laptop and charger, but if you have a tablet and you would not need a laptop, take it instead. If you are interested in knowing more about gadgets that could be useful for you, read our blog post on [Best Travel Gadgets For Your Next Trip](#);

• VACUUM BAGS WILL BE YOUR BEST FRIENDS

If you need to take bulky clothing with you like coats and jackets, put them inside vacuum bags and you will instantly have more space in your suitcase. You can easily use a vacuum cleaner to take all the air out;

• USE TRAVEL-FRIENDLY BAGS OR SUITCASES

If you go alone on Erasmus, you probably will not have anyone else to help you carry your suitcases. Check if your suitcases are in good shape, to make sure you will be able to take them on your own. Additionally, take with you a backpack or a small trolley that could be easily used for short trips.

This might seem like a lot to take in, but there is no such thing as “too much preparation”. The more you prepare yourself for your Erasmus, the better. However, even if you have everything planned in your head, it is important to know that unforeseen situations can happen. Although you should be prepared as much as possible, you also need to be ready and open for any situation you did not predict. That is why Erasmus is great for you: You will learn how to be independent and how to deal with anything unpredictable. At least one thing that does not have to be unpredictable, is how to get your luggage to your Erasmus destination.

Remember, with the code ERASMUSGUIDE you get 10% off your order.

GOOD LUCK!



HELPFUL APPS TO MAKE YOUR STAY ABROAD EASIER

Nowadays, you will be able to find thousands of helpful apps in your phone's app store that will make your stay in a foreign city or country so much easier. All kinds of information, discounts, transportation options and more are available in that little device you got with you everywhere you go. Below you will find our must-have apps during your stay abroad!

ROUTE PLANNER

Perhaps the most obvious one but having a route planner like **Google Maps** on your phone is a definitive must to easily navigate through the city. If you also want to save your internet data while out and about, Google Maps has the option to download maps for offline use. Very handy when you are planning to go to a city and have the map already on hand when there is no WIFI to be found.

LOCAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT

When arriving in a new city, it could be quite confusing when and where you can get on buses, trains and other public transport. Therefore, looking for the local public transport organisation on the app store could be helpful, perhaps they have an app with all their current public transport times. If this is not the case,

you can also try out Moovit. You are able to get directions to any place with public transit in over 90 countries. Just set your location in the app and you are good to go.

OMIO

When you do decide to get out of the city, perhaps look into this app to get your travels going. Omio is an app that helps you travel through Europe with ease. You can easily compare and book train, bus or flight tickets all with only a few clicks. They also show offers of the big intercity bus company **Flixbus**, which offers bus rides in over 28 countries in Europe for a very low price and perfectly suitable for students on the go.

REVOLUT

Being abroad also brings challenges in your financial life. In some countries you will have to pay extra fees, exchange rates or other extra financial expenses that make everything more expensive than you want it to be. With Revolut you will be able to spend abroad or withdraw money from an ATM with no fees! With the card being specifically targeted towards those who can often be found somewhere else in the world than home, Revolut makes it easier and

cheaper to spend money worldwide. P.S. They are officially a bank, so even more advantages come with this app – multifunctional bank card, bank account, travel insurance etc.

SKYSCANNER

As an Erasmus student you will not stay put for too long, which is why being able to compare the cheapest flights all in one app is an absolute necessity for your stay abroad. With Skyscanner you will get all the important information of all low-cost departures to and from your Erasmus city and will help you to save the money on more important things, such as planning even more trips.



HOSTELWORLD

Of course when travelling, you also need to think about accommodation. And what is more fun than staying in hostels and meet even more people from all over the world? With HostelWorld you will be able to compare all the hostels in a city and see which one best fits your needs. You can easily see what grade the hostel gets through hundreds of reviews by people who stayed there before you and with how many people you are going to share the room with.



LONELY PLANET GUIDES

Your parents probably still have an old and heavy Lonely Planet Guide lying around somewhere on the attic. But now you have the great availability of having all those Lonely Planet Guides conveniently in one app! In the app you will be able to download guides for your favourite cities and get offline access to the best local travel advice found in its traditional guidebooks. With suggestions of what to see, where to eat, sleep, shop, go out and more you will always know what great activities are close by looking at their map with pinpoints.

SPLITTR

There is nothing more fun than travelling with friends but keeping up with who paid what can be quite the hassle. With Splittr you will be able to create a group with everyone on your travels included and put in the app who paid what when, so you know exactly which friend has been trying to get out of paying for dinner for the past few days.

FINDING ACCOMMODATION

After you choose your destination, your next concern might be where you are going to stay. Finding accommodation abroad might be challenging at times. You might feel overwhelmed, not knowing where to start. Knowing the basics of finding accommodation is a good starting point and could come in handy. There are a few things that need to be taken into consideration – hopefully, it all might help you find the best place that fits your needs.

START SEARCHING AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

Rent does not usually change if you are early, but it would definitely be one less thing to worry about. Some places, like student dorms or apartments close to your university, will most likely be the number one choice for most students. For this reason, they might be fully booked a few weeks before the semester begins.

OPTIONS YOU HAVE REGARDING YOUR ACCOMMODATION

Would you like to have some more privacy? Or maybe you do not mind sharing a room with someone? Would you rather live close to the city centre or to the university (and often pay a little more)? Would you prefer saving some money but live far away? You will need to choose the best place for you, based on your personal preferences and also on your budget. Here are some pros and cons of living in student dorms versus private apartments:

STUDENT DORMS



Usually, living in student dormitories is much more affordable (well, maybe except for the UK). You will get to know people from all over the world and in a similar situation as you. Most dorms are close to the university, so you will not have to wake up super early to be there. Also, whenever you feel homesick, sharing a room with someone could make things easier;



If you are sharing a room and/or bathroom, you will probably realize that you do not have as much privacy as you would like. You will also have to deal with someone else's capacity (or lack of it) to clean after themselves. Additionally, if you are a person that needs some peace and quiet, especially if you need a good night's sleep, living in a student-filled dormitory might not be the best option.

RENTED APARTMENTS



Having an apartment for yourself, often means having some privacy. This is perfect for someone that needs to be alone after a long day at work or university;



You can get a bit lonely at times. Prices tend to be much higher, especially if you want to be close to the city centre or to your university. You may also have more responsibilities, such as paying the bills (i.e. for water or electricity) separately.

ASK ABOUT YOUR OPTIONS

Sometimes, universities provide assistance when it comes to student accommodation. If not, your Erasmus coordinators they could simply tell you what you could do and what documentation you will need.

GET IN TOUCH WITH PEOPLE WHO HAVE ALREADY BEEN THERE

You can use social media groups or online forums to read about personal experiences. If you know someone that has been there, do not be shy to ask them about their opinion. Find out what are your options and what you would need to consider when moving to your new home. Some of these groups even have categories for people renting their own rooms.

BEWARE OF SCAMS

In some cases, you may be asked to pay a deposit before you move. Before you do that, make sure the landlord is trustworthy. Unfortunately, it is easy to get scammed when you think you found a perfect place to live in and later find out that it does not exist or match the description. If you are facing a similar problem, it is very important to report false landlords. You will protect someone else from being scammed as well. One way to avoid it is to book a hostel for the first days. This way, you will be able to see a flat with your own eyes before committing to anything.

PAY FOR WHAT YOU GET

This applies especially to cheap accommodation. Remember that it might be cheap for a reason: far away from the centre, no bills included, external fees and taxes, or poor facilities – just to name a few. Sometimes it is better to pay a bit more than to regret paying at all.

READ ALL THE CONDITIONS (AND THE CONTRACT) CAREFULLY

Yes, I know it could be boring to read all the terms and conditions, but at least you will know what you are getting yourself into. Check if all bills are included in the price, are there any extra fees applicable, or any other maintenance costs. Everything, even a possibility to host a friend, should

be taken into consideration and be clear from the very beginning.

IF YOU ARE AN ERASMUS INTERN, ASK YOUR EMPLOYER

Some companies provide accommodation for interns. They might have their own accommodation facilities, or they could even help you paying the rent. If you are not that lucky, you can ask your employer for any tips on finding accommodation in the city. Knowing where your workplace is, could also help you finding a place close by.

CONSIDER USING ONLINE PLATFORMS DEDICATED TO EXCHANGE STUDENTS

Some websites are specifically designed to help you find suitable accommodation. It is important to know that a big part of them charge administrative fees for using their services. However, these websites usually have quality standards and check beforehand if the landlord is trustworthy. A good example of such a website is [Student Room Flat](#). They are specialized in co-living with its offer of flat shares and studios for international and Erasmus students, interns and young professionals. All apartments are renovated and fully furnished, and the rent includes all charges and utilities. The properties are all well located close to the city centre, universities, public transports and all amenities. Whether you choose to live in an international flat share and enjoy Prague's life with roommates from all around the world or by yourself in one of our nice studios, our international team will be happy to help you before your arrival and throughout your stay.

- Examples of similar websites are [UniPlaces](#) and [HousingAnywhere](#). When you know that you are going to one of the bigger cities in Europe (for example London, Madrid or Berlin), maybe give our partner [Spot a Home](#) a try!

EXPLORE HOUSING WEBSITES FOR LOCALS

If there is no language barrier that could stop you, ask people you know (or simply your university coordinator) for websites used by the locals for finding accommodation. You could also check local newspapers once you arrive in the country.

SURVIVING YOUR FIRST DAY OF WORK OR UNIVERSITY

The date is coming closer and you have been counting down the days. You may feel a range of emotions. Happiness and excitement, fear and panic. However, having such feelings is always a good indication. It means that you are really looking forward to your internship or exchange at a foreign university. It is something totally different and new, and you feel pressured to make a good impression.

Moreover, working or studying abroad seems very frightening in the beginning. But there are a few things that could help you to survive your first day, whether it is an internship, a regular job or your courses. Especially in the case of working abroad, preparation is crucial and could affect your performance to a great extent.

BEFORE YOUR FIRST DAY

- **Move into your new city a few days in advance** – It would be better if you could move to the new place a few days before you actually start. You should have enough time to unpack and settle down;
- **Get to know the surroundings** – As soon as you have the chance, go around the city and find out where your job or university is. On the first day abroad, you will already know where you have to be and how much time it will take you to get there;
- **If you are planning to use public transportation to get there, test the routes you will be taking** – It would be awful if you got lost (or late) because you did not know which bus to take. Before you start, put public transportation to the test. Find out which lines you will have to take. Check whether they are late or not, see how much time it takes to get there, be aware of ticket prices, etc. Remember that timetables tend to change on weekends, so try to choose a week day for your test journey;
- **Check the weather forecast and pick an outfit accordingly** – Having an outfit prepared will save you time getting ready in the morning. Check online what the weather will be like, so you have an idea. However, do not forget to look out of the window before you leave. As we all know, weather can be unpredictable sometimes;
- **Go to bed early** – There is nothing better than a good night's sleep before a big day. Even though you are probably going to be too excited to sleep properly, being early in bed will help you relax survive your first day.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR YOUR JOB

- **Ask your boss about the basics** – Contact the responsible person to get important information, such as the dress code, working hours, lunch breaks, or if there is any kitchen (in case you would like to bring food from home);
- **Get to know the company before you start working** – If the company you will work in has a website, explore it. Read it carefully and note the most important information, especially if it is related directly to your position. If you have any additional questions, feel free to ask your employer or manager, whenever you meet them personally. It will show them how interested and proactive you are. Make sure you know who your supervisor is going to be and who the CEO is of the company you will be working at, so you will avoid any awkward situations not recognizing your boss;
- **Do some research on the business etiquette in the country** – It is crucial to know what you should or should not do in a business environment in certain countries. Business etiquette varies depending on the country and its culture. Knowing it beforehand will help you avoid any misunderstandings. For example, in some countries, humour and jokes are welcome and used as a way of “breaking the ice”. However, other countries find jokes inappropriate in a business setting, and you would not be taken seriously by your work mates;
- **If you have paperwork to be filled in by your employer, do not forget to prepare it** – If it is an Erasmus internship, do not forget to organize all the documents you need to take with you, such as your learning agreement, confirmation of arrival, etc. The documents you need depend on your Erasmus agreement and also on the company;
- **Be there early** – You do not need to arrive 1 hour in advance but be there at least 10 minutes before your shift starts. Being punctual is always well-regarded by employers;
- **Do not forget your manners** – As soon as you arrive, do not forget to greet and smile to everyone you bump into in the office, be it the reception or even the elevator. Do not forget that you are new there and this is your first day at work, so you probably do not know who you are talking to. Even if people you meet are not your closest workmates, being nice can actually affect your mood and confidence, apart from giving everyone a good impression;
- **Be mentally prepared and open-minded** – You will probably be asked to do some tasks outside your field or that you have never dealt with. Even though it might seem scary at first, accept it and let your employer know that you will do your best. Being an intern is the best opportunity to try new things and learn a lot;
- **If possible, note any tips your colleagues or employers may give you** – On your first day at work abroad, you should act like a sponge: absorb as much knowledge as possible. Writing it all down will help you to remember every detail, especially if you tend to forget things easily;

- **Do not be afraid to ask for help** – You have just started working, so do not be so hard on yourself. When a task is given to you, take the opportunity to ask your employer or colleagues how you should do it. If you are struggling with something, be polite by apologizing and asking for help;
- **Be positive and confident** – Even if you are not sure how to do your task, do your best and stay positive. If you are given something important to do, it means that they believe in you and in your knowledge, so you should too;
- **If your colleagues or boss ask you to have lunch with them, go for it** – Having lunch with your colleagues is a good opportunity to relax a bit and get to know them better. Ask them not only where you could have your lunch, but also about all the must-go places in the city;
- **If you are asked to go for a drink after work, consider accepting the offer** – Any opportunity to hang out with your colleagues should be taken into consideration. You do not have to do it every day, but every now and then it would be nice to meet them in a different environment.

When you are feeling homesick, uncomfortable or when times get rough, remember the reason that took you there in the first place. Living and working abroad is not easy. If you are living alone, you might feel lonely at times, and that is alright. Remember that this is a unique opportunity, and things will start getting better over time. Just make sure you get the most out of this experience.



BIGGEST ERASMUS EVENTS

Being abroad of course does not only mean that you have to be studying all day. It is also a time of making new friends, travelling, exploring new cultures and partying. When it comes to partying, as an Erasmus student you are all set. Every year **ESN** – Erasmus Students Network – prepares many parties the whole year through to make your stay abroad unforgettable. Here are a few of the biggest Erasmus events that happen each year!



ESN IBIZA TRIP

Each year, ESN organizes this trip to give students doing their semester in Spain the opportunity to go to exclusive parties on this amazing island. Students from over 35 different universities all over Spain will be there, which means that you will be able to party with over 2000 other Erasmus people. This 5-day trip gives you the opportunity to party in the best clubs, have never-ending adventures and some unforgettable memories to look back on. All with the transport and accommodation included. If studying in Spain did not seem fun enough to you yet, **taking a look at what this trip has to offer** should definitely change your mind.



ESN SEA BATTLE

Having Erasmus in Northern Europe? Spain is great, but of course there are so many more beautiful countries to do your Erasmus in. And when you decided for Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Latvia or Lithuania, you are in luck! Every year the ESN Sea Battle gathers about 2100 international students from these great places to be part of one of the best Erasmus events of the year. Usually in November and April, students studying here get the opportunity to get on board and cruise between the capital cities Stockholm and Tallinn or Stockholm and Riga! Additionally, students from Stockholm have the possibility to visit one of the capitals in the Baltics (Tallinn or Riga) for half-a-day. Cruising has never sounded better, especially after you have seen their **aftermovie**.



THE CRETE TRIP

Time to come back to the sunny South again! Every year since 2011, ESN Greece organizes The Crete Trip. Since then it has become the biggest Erasmus encounters in Greece and one of the most popular ESN events in Europe. Erasmus students from all over Europe meet on the beautiful island of Crete to spend 5 unforgettable days and create memories with more than 700 international students. Not convinced yet? Then watch this [awesome aftermovie](#) that was made after the 2018 Crete Trip.



CROATIAN ERASMUS EVENT

If you want no party to be the same, you should definitely consider doing your Erasmus in Croatia and joining the Croatian Erasmus Event in May. The Croatian Erasmus Event is held on the Island of Pag, Novalja. You can choose from parties on the water with a boat, parties on beaches, in clubs and many more. Every year more than 250 Erasmus students from all over Croatia and beyond gather for four days of great times. ***Join the rest of the students in the most amazing trip*** and explore the island, play games, challenge yourself and hang out with all of Erasmus from Croatia on the same spot!

OF COURSE, THESE ARE ONLY A FEW OF THE BEST ERASMUS EVENTS THAT YOU CAN EXPECT. WHETHER YOU WILL HAVE YOUR SEMESTER ABROAD IN SPAIN, SWEDEN, GREECE, CROATIA, IRELAND, GERMANY, POLAND OR OTHER, THERE WILL BE PLENTY OF EVENTS ORGANIZED BY ESN TO HAVE THE TIME OF YOUR LIFE ON YOUR ERASMUS!



HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR EXCHANGE

Erasmus is a great opportunity for you to live somewhere else and broaden your horizons. When you tell people that you are going on Erasmus, their answers tend to be the same: “Make the most out of it” or “Enjoy it as much as you can, because you will miss it afterwards.” Your mind will be set on making the most out of this experience even before you leave, but probably you will not be sure of what you could do to accomplish your goal. Here you will find more information on how to get the most out of your Erasmus.

JOIN ERASMUS GROUPS ONLINE

Explore social media or any online forums. By doing this you will be up to date with Erasmus or other interesting events that might happen in your area. You could read all about other people’s doubts and personal experiences, and you could also post some questions yourself. Ask for any useful tips and they will tell you how to get the most out of your Erasmus in a new city.

ATTEND EVENTS

Usually, student associations (i.e. ESN) organise welcoming parties, trips or events, especially for international students. Just to give them a chance to get to know more people and enjoy the time spent abroad. These events are affordable and sometimes even for free, which means you have no excuse not to go. Check out our YouTube channel and see how amazing **ESN events** are!

TAKE INITIATIVE

What if you organise a karaoke night in several languages so that everyone learns about other countries' culture through music? Or an international dinner where people would cook a special dish from their hometown, for everyone to taste it. Let your imagination flow, the possibilities are endless.

TRY LOCAL FOOD

Speaking of food, there is nothing better that could give you an idea of the country’s rich history. Even if it looks weird to you, you will never know unless you try it. The same applies to beer, wine, or any other kind of alcohol or drink.



KEEP A DIARY

It would be nice to have written evidence of your adventures. Write not only about the good times and travel experiences but also about your feelings and any rough situations you have gone through. It can end up being therapeutic. You will have something to remind you all the obstacles you have already overcome. Also, reading you have already overcome. Also, reading it after a few days could help you see the situation from a different perspective.

CONNECT WITH LOCALS

Exchange students tend to group together and avoid talking to local people. One tip that could help you make a local friend would be asking them to show you their favourite places or to exchange some language skills.

EXPLORE!

Get the most out of your Erasmus and take advantage of the options available to you by visiting different places. Visiting famous cities is a very surreal experience, but it is in the lesser-known places that you usually find some hidden treasures. Do not forget to ask your friends to come with you. But if they cannot, do not be afraid to do it yourself and experience true freedom along the way. Solo travelling is not something to be ashamed of and can bring you all kinds of new insights about yourself.

STAY OPEN-MINDED

Sometimes, we tend to judge people based on their cultural background. It is important not to judge a book by its cover. Free yourself from any prejudice by allowing yourself to get to know them better, and then make your own assumptions based on your experience. Erasmus is a great opportunity to learn multicultural skills and to break the cultural stigma.



IMPROVING YOUR LANGUAGE SKILLS

Of course, it is easiest to just talk in English with your classmates and friends, but if you are in a country like Spain or Germany, it would be a shame to not improve your language skills other than English. You have the opportunity to speak, listen and read in a foreign language that is all around you and put it to practice more than you ever would in a language class. Make use of that! Maybe suggest speaking in another language than English when you are with your friends. It will only help you in the end and who knows, even make you fluent in a language that is not your mother tongue.

STICK TO THE BUDGET

When you want to take advantage of every possible experience and get the most out of your Erasmus, you tend to spend a lot of money. One trick that could help you would be to set a monthly or weekly budget for regular expenses (like food, transportation, etc.). Whenever you manage to spend less than your budget, treat yourself with something you really would like to do or buy.

THINK OF A NICE SOUVENIR

This is something almost all Erasmus students do, and there is no better souvenir than a few words from the people that went through this experience with you. It can be a flag, a t-shirt, or even a notebook – do not forget to ask your friends to write something for you.

TAKE A LOT OF PHOTOS

Do not forget to take pictures of your favourite places, but more importantly, take pictures with people you met. It is nice to go back and see all the places you have been to. However, you will probably miss people more than you will miss the place itself. So, make sure you ask your friends to take a group picture to have as a keepsake.

5 BEST DISCOUNT CARDS WHILE BEING ABROAD

One of the great advantages of being an Erasmus, is that you can get discounts for almost anything. Flight tickets, accommodation, restaurants, you name it. All these discounts are obviously much wanted by not only Erasmus, so to be able to get them you need to prove that you really are taking part in the programme. The following cards will offer you the best deals with the highest discounts!

1

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT IDENTITY CARD (ISIC)

With this one single card, ISIC students gain discounted access to products, services and experiences of all sorts that are beneficial for you as a student. From software licences to cinema access to Bed & Breakfasts, you will be able to book and do everything with a major discount with the use of this card. Some activities you can even do for free! You do need to pay a one-time price to get the card, but all the benefits you receive from it are more than worth it. ***Check out all the discounts you will be able to get with your ISIC card [here](#).***

2

EUROPEAN STUDENT CARD

The ESC is each university's current student card adapted to take on a European dimension. Once your university has joined this platform, you will be able to easily verify your student status anywhere in Europe. See it as your own student passport that helps you travel easier. The ESC does not have a fee and gives you

immediate access to the university and book borrowing, which means there is a high chance you will not have to buy the books you need in your Erasmus classes anymore. All information is stored on the card and this way it allows easier cooperation between universities and provides access to specific services and discounts for all students in the institution. So, since every university has different discounts, it is recommended to go and see what great things your chosen university has to offer to you with this card!

3

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH TRAVEL CARD (IYTC)

Of course, when you are not currently enrolled in a university, you still want to join in on all these discounts and perks. The company behind the ISIC card has created the IYTC specifically for people who are young (between 12-30 years) and still want to take part of the great ISIC global community, even when they are in between studies, currently working or for whatever other reason. Just like with the ISIC, you get a wide range of youth travel discounts. Not quite as many with the ISIC though, but it may be worth having when you plan on traveling and hoping to save some money.

4

STUDENT ADVANTAGE CARD

The Student Advantage Card provides student travel, retail, and entertainment discounts for

an annual membership fee. As for whether it is worth it, it really does depend on how you will be traveling. You can gain 15 percent off Amtrak and Greyhound fares, and you get booking fees waived if you use HostelWorld. That all sounds great, but you should bear in mind that you can get a Greyhound student discount without the card and that Amtrak gives the same discount to ISIC cardholders. The main bonus is saving on the HostelWorld booking fee. So, if you are planning to save some money on accommodation by staying in hostels, getting the Student Advantage Card could be a really good deal for you.

5

ESN CARD

As mentioned briefly earlier, ESN – Erasmus Student Network – also has their own card with many benefits to students doing an exchange abroad. This card you will be able to use in every city that has an ESN section, all sections you can find on their [official website](#). The card gives discounts on all kinds of local restaurants, accommodations and transport in the cities ESN is present in. You will also be able to get some really good discounts on flight tickets of airlines like Ryanair. Because Eurosender and ESN have very close bonds, we were able to get you a great deal of **10% off your order** on Eurosender with your ESN card. Saving money has never been easier!



OBSTACLES YOU MIGHT NEED TO OVERCOME

Studying or doing an internship abroad is a great opportunity to learn something new and get out of your comfort zone. It can be a once in a lifetime experience. And the ones, who already participated in exchange programmes in the past, seem to agree with this statement. They have many benefits- both for your professional and personal life, however, exchange programs also have a dark side that is not mentioned too often. Of course, the advantages of going on Erasmus or any other exchange programme outweigh their disadvantages. Nevertheless, it is important not to get deceived. Erasmus experiences are not always rainbows and butterflies. The downsides of exchange programmes should be taken into consideration, so that you are not caught off-guard.

- HOMESICKNESS -

Even before you leave your country, you know that you are going to miss your loved ones. Many people think this is something temporary, that only happens in the beginning of the experience, when you are still getting used to the new environment. However, this might not be your case. The realness of the whole situation might affect you more than you expect, to the point that you reflect whether you made the right choice. This is probably one of the biggest downsides of exchange programmes for those who find comfort in routines and familiarity. Even though talking to your family and friends won't bring you back home, it will certainly make you feel better. Video-chatting apps will become your best friends.

- CULTURAL SHOCK -

In most cases, living in a different country means adapting to a new culture. Whether it is the food or the way people treat each other, you will constantly find yourself comparing your own culture to the one you are trying to adapt to. Be ready to get out of your comfort zone, and don't be afraid of trying new things.

- DISAPPOINTMENTS -

Maybe you painted the wrong picture about your exchange country. In general, having high expectations is something to be avoided. The higher the expectations, the bigger the possibility of being disappointed. Remember, everyone perceives experiences in a different way. It is how you cope with them that eventually makes whether you look back at it with a good or bad feeling.

- FINANCIAL PROBLEMS -

Even though most Erasmus students and interns receive a grant to support them financially, most likely it will not cover all the expenses. Living abroad might get expensive, especially if you are not keeping track of your expenses. The cost of living might end up being much higher than what you initially thought. You might feel the need to have an extra job to pay for your expenses, or even to ask your parents for some help. Budgeting is the key here. Consider choosing a country that best suits your needs and will be able to afford living in.

- INCOMPATIBLE STUDY PROGRAMS -

This is one of the biggest downsides of exchange programs. Erasmus students often have problems finding courses similar to the ones they would have had at home. Apart from the schedule itself, there is also the biggest nightmare of them all: credits or ECTS. Even if you might end up finding courses similar to the ones you take at home, accreditation could be very different in your host university. Some students are lucky enough not to have credit limits, but it is not always the case. There are many Erasmus students who were forced to apply for more courses in order to compensate the lack of credits. Big tip: research the courses as soon as possible. Also, do not be afraid to ask your coordinators for more information.

- TROUBLE WITH LEARNING A LANGUAGE -

More than half of all Erasmus students claim their main goal was to learn or to improve a foreign language. It might sound very easy in theory. In practice, things do not usually go this way. Improving your language skills is not that easy when you are surrounded by an international group of people, all using English. Also, a big part of Erasmus students chooses courses taught in English, to ensure that all exams are passed. Connecting with locals sounds intimidating, and you might end up joining groups from your own country. One thing that could help you is to exchange language classes with a local: you teach them your language, and they help you learning theirs.

- WHEN THINGS GET TOUGH, YOU MIGHT START FEELING DOWN -

Studying in a foreign country, surrounded by people you do not know and missing home on the top of that, can be overwhelming. Anxiety, panic, or even feeling depressed are serious conditions and could happen to anyone. The most important thing here is not to suffer alone: if you do not feel well, do not be afraid to ask for help. Many universities have psychologists, that could help you understand what is going on, free of charge. Talk to someone you know. Even if you feel like this is only happening to you, it is important to know that there are many other students facing the same issues in silence.

Just like anything else in life, exchange programmes have certain disadvantages. Even though it is crucial to be aware of these downsides, try not to focus too much on the negative aspects. After every storm, there is a rainbow!

COMING BACK



Bad news. If you ever go abroad, you are bound to suffer from the post-exchange blues afterwards. It is inevitable, but here is how to survive coming back home after Erasmus.

Going abroad, people often think about how hard it is going to be to adapt to the new environment. Indeed, you will probably experience some problems during your exchange, but coming back home after Erasmus may be even more problematic. It will feel like the end of an era. After you manage to build your life in a new place, a life that your family and friends back home know very little about, it is already time to leave. This moment is usually bittersweet because you are both excited to see your loved ones and heartbroken to say goodbye to all your Erasmus friends. On the one hand, you cannot wait to taste your favourite food and stop making grammatical mistakes when talking, but on the other – you already start to miss what you are about to leave behind.

The thing about travelling and going for an exchange is that it is all quite temporary, and it certainly feels that way. However, being away usually means missing out on a lot of things that happen back home. Coming back home after Erasmus is tricky because you think that nothing has changed. Even if that is the case – you have. You might not realise it or be prepared for it, but this is what usually happens.

Some of your friends may lose interest in hearing all the Erasmus adventures, whereas the others would like to understand everything you went through. The problem is that it is usually impossible to explain. And it may also be difficult to summarise. Sadly, it is not only people, who change – but also relationships. Sometimes, your spot might even be filled by somebody else. All of it makes it harder to come back home after Erasmus. But, despite experiencing a reverse culture shock, coming back home after Erasmus can also feel great. As long as you do not let the post-Erasmus melancholy take over, everything will work out just fine. Remember, you are not the only one suffering from it. That is precisely why we have some tips that should make coming back home after Erasmus easier.

SAYING YOUR GOODBYES

Do not leave without saying goodbye. Although your last days are going to be extremely busy, try to spend as much time as possible with your friends and do not forget to visit your favourite places in town. It can bring you a sense of closure, before embarking on your journey back home after Erasmus. Remember that when it is over, you can find it hard to meet all your international friends in one place again.

ACCEPT THE CHANGES

You may want to stay in denial for a while. But an attempt to understand what has been happening to you is usually a better solution. Acknowledge the changes, which are an important part of coming back home after Erasmus. You are not alone, and you are definitely not the first one to experience those. And while you are at it, you may want to find a way to cope with your problems instead of giving in.

DO NOT NEGLECT YOUR LOVED ONES

Even during your exchange, you should stay in touch with your family and friends back home, just to keep up with any changes and novelties. However, especially when you return home, you cannot just cut them off and alienate yourself. Just because they did not experience the same things, it does not mean their friendship is less worthy right now.

STOP COMPARING

At the beginning of your exchange, you were probably advised against comparing the habits in the host country to the ones you know from home. Now the same rule applies. Endless comparisons between the respective countries will do you no good – it can rather seem like you are criticizing your own culture or reminding everyone of your stay abroad.

FIND THE RIGHT BALANCE

Do not be afraid to talk about your exchange. However, you should avoid all anecdotes beginning with “When I was in (insert the name of the country)” whenever possible. Do not drop any discussion immediately but share your stories with those who have an actual interest in them. Also, do not forsake your new habits in order to make coming back home from Erasmus easier. Try to find a balance and embrace the new version of yourself.

KEEP YOURSELF OCCUPIED

It might be hard fitting back into your old life and not being able to explore new things every day or travel whenever you have the time. Surround yourself with your favourite people and activities, but also stay in touch with your foreign friends. And if you really miss your host country or the intercultural environment, find a way to continue your international lifestyle. Whether is keeping up your language skills, finding a new hobby or joining an international organisation (such as ESN), the choice is yours. You should also make new memories- perhaps by doing things you have never done in your hometown before or revisiting your favourite places after some time.

MAKE NEW TRAVEL PLANS

There is no such thing as getting the travel bug out of your system. And after coming back home from Erasmus, you will want to travel even more. But that is okay! Planning new adventures is probably one of the best ways to cope with the post-exchange blues. The next thing you can do it is to behave like a tourist – explore the new sights and let them amaze you. You should also consider going abroad again. Whether to reunite with your friends or to go on exchange again.

Coming back home after Erasmus should not be the end of the adventure, but the beginning. Stay curious and find a way to put your new knowledge into practice. It can be difficult, but it is definitely worth it. Do not let the post-exchange blues take over your life back home after Erasmus!

AND AS ALWAYS, WE ARE HERE TO HELP.
YOUR EUROSENDER TEAM



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Any comments or suggestions? Get in touch with us!

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