



ERASMUS+ STUDIES

UU Report 2014-2015

e-mail address	<i>optional; only if you don't mind students preparing for study abroad contacting you directly</i> arienvoogt@gmail.com
faculty/college	Science
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Physics & Astronomy

destination city & country	Istanbul, Turkey
name university abroad	Boğaziçi
start date	28 / 01 / 2015 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	30 / 05 / 2015 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process	Application process was not exceptional, no special comments.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	The support in general was excellent, only for visa procedure the international office couldn't help me. I can understand that, because it was a special case. It would be better if the contact with former Erasmus students from the same destination is more close
academic preparation	Not relevant
language preparation	Language was english, so not relevant
finances	The procedure for the request of financial support instead of free transportation for students could be more clear. However, this is not related to UU.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)	The enrollment and registration procedure is horrible: it is only during a few days and for most courses you have to be quick, otherwise the course will be full. When your internet connection is slow, you have trouble registering at all. You have to spend a lot of time talking and mailing with teacher in case you really want a popular course. Most courses are not well organized. No online course content, no schedule, no clear description of learning goal. Semester schedule is strange, the spring break in the middle almost feels like the end of the serious part. After that even the teacher don't take the class serious anymore.
academic quality of education activities	



Varies a lot. Teachers were good, students are motivated, but the organization and facilities are bad. Especially for science courses, not a lot of problem classes, which makes it hard to practice.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

Didn't apply for much counseling or support. However, my advisor was not helpful in the registration period and the information for the residence permit procedure was horrible. Not even lacking, but wrong. Help from local students is to be preferred above university support.

transfer of credits

Not relevant yet.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

Welcome talk not that interesting, too much focus on the less interesting topics (such as rape prevention) and little attention for useful topics. Activities organized by ESN club were fun, but not that interesting also. Too much directed at partying. But I didn't need it, you have to find it out yourself anyway.

accommodation

I had my own accommodation off campus. The search for accommodation was easier than I expected, through Facebook I found a room easily enough. I'm glad I didn't choose for Superdorm (on campus accommodation). Bad rooms, bad location and quite expensive. Accommodation near campus makes you feel trapped and far away from everything. I lived in Besiktas and that was nice.

leisure & culture

The city has loads to offer. The country is amazing. You can't be bored. Even the university has nice events and there are some clubs which you can join. I joined a rock choir for example, with which I did a tour through other cities, giving two concerts.

suggestions/tips

Deciding in which neighbourhood you want to live is very important to your time. If you focus on studying, live close to campus. If you focus on culture or having a good time, live more to the south. Besiktas, Mecidiyekoy, Beyoglu are good in that case.

Residence permit sounds hard, but you will get there. Just don't trust one source, always check with other people. Also don't necessarily trust people who already did it last year, the procedure changes constantly.

Learn Turkish (not with the Turkish 1 class in university, it's worthless). Try to do Turkish 2 or learn it through another way.

Join a club or whatever to intermingle with locals. Living with Turks is also a good idea. In the end, making friends with locals will be the most interesting and lasting thing you can do in your time.

Travel. The country has amazing places. Try to go to the less touristic places, it will make your time more interesting.

Above all, think beforehand what you want to do and what you want to have learned (not just in academic sense). It is a special time in your life, so don't waste it by just going with the flow, making some superficial friendships and partying all the time. It is finished in the blink of an eye, don't think that you will have time in another month.



CONCLUSIONS

would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain

Yes. Education is not good, country will be one of the most difficult countries you can choose, but its all worth it. The culture is so different from Europe, the people are amazing, the history is very special. You will feel at home in a city of 17 million, with its history going back to 5 different empires, with unlimited ammount of places you can visit and things you can experience. Also the university (except from its bad education) has a lot to offer. A beautiful campus, very nice activities and clubs, small and cosy feeling. My time here was more valuable than if I wouldve gone to a 'normal' European destination.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

You can contact me for information about some issues, such as visa/residence permut