



ERASMUS+ STUDIES

UU Report

2017-2018

faculty/college	Betafaculteit
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Physics and Astronomy

destination city & country	Bilbao, Spain
name university abroad	Universidad del Pais Vasco (UPV)
start date	11 / 09 / 2017
end date	28 / 01 / 2018

PREPARATION

exchange application process

The application process was not always very clear. There seems to be more paperwork and deadlines than needed.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

There are always people who you can reach if you need help for anything. Good support.

academic preparation

One of the main goals for my exchange was to learn Spanish, so for this I have studied for myself before the exchange. For the other courses there was no need for preparation (also no information on what to prepare for).

language preparation

As explained above, I did study a bit Spanish by myself before the exchange applications, music, movies and verb conjugations.

finances

I managed my finances by some savings and my student loan.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

The available courses are interesting, but it's hard to find courses such that the timetable fits. It's also not very clear who to contact whenever there is something not right.

academic quality of education activities

The level of the courses at the mathematics department was quite high. The Spanish course was not well thought through. I learned more by teaching myself than the course during the semester.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

The counseling and support were sufficient.



transfer of credits

Considering the intensity and amount of content of the mathematics courses at the UPV (which were high), I think they deserve more than 6.5 ects.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

The international students community is very big. There is always things to do as an exchange student.

accommodation

I found a really nice appartement via a boy from Bilbao who did his erasmus en Utrecht. I had a really nice room in an appartement in the city center shared with locals.

leisure & culture

There is a lot of interesting things to do in the city (visiting Museums etc). Also in the area there is beautiful nature and coastlines. There is a lot of opportunity to surf, although its still 30 minutes from the city center with the underground metro.

suggestions/tips

Visiting the coast and visiting the surf spots. The nearest surfspot is 30/40 minutes with the underground metro. Try to find someone with a car, this makes it a lot easier. You have to be dedicated if you want to surf in the area.

CONCLUSIONS

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

I would recommend this destination if you plan to travel around the area and the coastline/surfspots. Especially if you are interested in surfing Bilbao is an interesting choice. City wise I think there are more interesting cities in Spain to live in.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

No further comments.



ERASMUS+ STUDIES UU Report 2017-2018

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

destination city & country	Bilbao, Spain
name university abroad	Universidad de pais Vasco
start date	01 / 09 / 2017
end date	26 / 01 / 2018

PREPARATION

exchange application process

Very easy and straightforward. I expected a mess, but if you keep an eye out for e-mails and just follow the steps in osiris you will be fine.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

I went to the international office a couple of times with questions. Just send them an email and tell them about your question. During office hours you can always stop by. Very helpful people!

academic preparation

This was hard in my case. There is no clear course description on the subjects at UPV. And I am a physics major and I had to do mainly math courses there. This was somewhat of a leap of faith. It was harder than expected, but it is doable for sure.

language preparation

I speak English fluently and my courses were in English. Spanish is not needed. Had almost 0 sufficiency before going to bilbao.

finances

Expenses there are the same as here. I just worked a bit more to save money since you will want to be traveling, going out and doing fun stuff with the people you meet there.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

When I arrived I realized I was taking some courses that were just too hard since I was lacking proper background. Luckily this could easily be changed there and they are very helpful looking for courses suiting your program. I did have some organisational issues, but if you talk to the professors this should not be a problem.

academic quality of education activities

The quality of mathematical education is extremely high at this university. I was pleasantly surprised.



counselling & support at receiving university abroad
Very good. Very helpful. Just make sure you e-mail on time! It still is Spain, and sometimes people are on unexpected vacations.
transfer of credits
Not finalized.

STUDENT LIFE	
welcome & orientation programme	
Very good. Not only at the university, but also the Erasmus-bodies. You will be taken care of. You will meet plenty of people.	
accommodation	
Takes about 2 or 3 days of intensive looking and you will have an accomodation. Not too hard. Swiftflats is pretty good I heard. Casco Viejo definitely the best part in the city to stay at!!	
leisure & culture	
AMAZING. You will 100% have an amazing time. The erasmus organasations are very active, and if you want you can do stuff every day. Culture ; spanish. Great food, great people.	
suggestions/tips	
Do it. Don't worry, you will have an amazing time.	

CONCLUSIONS	
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain	
I would 100% recommend this destination. Mathematical education is top notch, very active student life and Bilbao is a very vibrant and hight quality of life city. You can do stuff every second of the day.	
do you have any additional advice or comments?	

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UU Study Abroad Report Form 2017-2018

Faculty/college:	Science
Level:	bachelor master PhD other
Name degree programme:	Mathematics

Destination city & country	Bilbao, Spain
Name host institution and/or company/organisation	University of the Basque Country
Purpose of exchange	study/courses
Departure date	27-08-2017
Return date	23-01-2018

Preparation

Exchange/placement application process: I could go to my first-choice-destination, thus it was totally fine.

Counselling/support at home university: The support from the home university was fine.

Academic preparation: No academic preparation.

Language preparation: I didn't study Spanish before arrival (a little bit with duolingo). But the courses were English, so that was not a problem.

Finances: Bilbao is quite an expensive city in Spain, but a little bit cheaper than the Netherlands. You'll make a lot of trips/eat in restaurants, so you need more money than in the Netherlands.

Study/placement abroad period

Study programme/work plan (concerning content and organisational issues): There are a lot of English courses in all fields of study. I would recommend the Basque Culture course for every Erasmus-student.



Academic quality of education/placement activities: The math-courses in Bilbao are really hard. Don't underestimate this, math is math anywhere in the world.

Counselling/support at host institution/organisation: They were really friendly, but you have to fix everything by yourself.

Transfer of credits: I don't know, this hasn't succeeded yet.

Student life

Welcome/orientation programme: There is no welcome/orientation programme.

Accommodation: It's not really hard to find a room in Bilbao. My room was 300 euro a month, I started looking for a room after my arrival. When you are looking for a room in advance (from the Netherlands), you will pay more.

Leisure/culture: Bilbao is beautiful, nice buildings, near to the sea etc. The Basque culture is really interesting.

Suggestions/tips: ESN and HappyErasmus are two student-organizations who organise a lot of nice parties and trips.

Conclusions

Would you recommend this host organisation/destination to others? Please explain:

Yes, Bilbao is beautiful and there're a lot of students/student-organisations.



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faculty/college	Science
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Mathematics and Applications

destination city & country	Bilbao, Spain
name university abroad	University of the Basque Country (UPV)
start date	28 / 08 / 2017
end date	28 / 01 / 2018

PREPARATION

exchange application process

It may seem like it's difficult to apply, but the hardest part is finding information on the University where you go. In my case the site of UPV was really bad, with a lot of things not even in English. Luckily the coordinator there was really helpful and her English was good. So I just emailed her if I had any questions.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

I could always email for some advice and I got responses quite quick, so this was fine for me.

academic preparation

I just followed some mathematical courses that they also teach in Utrecht, so I didn't have any academic preparation and I think this would not be necessary.

language preparation

I followed a Spanish course in Utrecht three months upon leaving. Here I learned some basics, but not really enough to handle myself in Spain. The university offered a two week intensive Spanish course before the start of the semester. This was really useful, because your level really improve if you practice five days a week for five hours. Also, I met a lot of people here already which is quite nice.

finances

Spain is in general a cheaper country as the Netherlands, but this is mostly the case in the south. For me house prices were quite similar, groceries a bit cheaper and alcohol a lot cheaper. But in the end I spend quite some money, because I did go quite some times and I wanted to do a lot of nice things like making trips.

With a maximal loan, some money saved it is pretty do-able.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

They offer courses in Spanish, Basque and English. If your Spanish is above B1 level I think it is possible to do courses in Spanish. Mine wasn't so I did them in English. I could see in a document I got which courses were given in what language and in what semester. I followed Numerical Methods I, Discrete Mathematics and Algebraic Structures.

academic quality of education activities



In every class there are at most 25 students in a small teachingroom. They had lectures of 50 minutes, sometime two in a row. Sometimes the lecture were about the exercises, where the teacher would just do exercises on the blackboard. In some courses we had seminars. There you had to present either a paper, or exercises you had to do. This counted towards your final grade. Two of my three teachers were good in English and the other one not so, but I could still understand him. I didn't like the teaching methods of one teacher, but the other two were fine.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

It was pretty easy to contact the teachers and they were always really helpful. Also they had understanding if you missed a lecture sometime because there was a trip or another course during the same time. Only one of my teachers did put everything on a website like BlackBoard. The others handed mostly everything printed out.

transfer of credits

Three weeks after leaving Spain I got my transcript of records. On this file all my grades were noted and the amount of ECTS I would receive. Now, I still have to wait how this transfer is really going. I don't really have a clue how this works. If this is just being checked in Osris or if I have to send it to my exam commision myself.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

There were two associations that helped you if you had any questions and organised parties and trips etc. I joined one of them, Happy Erasmus Bilbao, purely because I had found them before I went to Bilbao on Faceook. They organised some nice parties, and nice trips which weren't too costly. Also this was very nice because a lot of people joined this organisation so it was really easy to make some friends. I joined a Whatsapp group before I even got there, so it was really easy to meet with people. Because they organised most of the events in the beginning of the semester it was really easy to make a lot of friends immediately and see what there was to do during weekdays.

accommodation

There was a facebook group for finding rooms, but there were really few rooms on here. The university had also a list of available rooms, but this was poorly organised. You had to call people in Spanish, because they don't speak a lot of English, or wait for two people of the university to call them for you (but a lot of people needed a room, so not ideal.) Eventually a lot of people just started looking on sites like idealista, or even through agencies to find a nice place. It took me about one week to find a place, and I think a lot of people found something within a week.

leisure & culture

Bilbao is in the Basque country, which is an autonomous state. So culture wise there are some nice things to visit. It is possible to visit this city in two days, because it is not that big. However, I could never get enough of the old centre, eating the local food there.

In my own time, I did go out a lot, made some nice trips to cities close to Bilbao and some far away. I played soccer with some internationals from time to time, followed a surfcourse and even bought my own surfboard to go surfing. As you can read there are so many nice things to do!

suggestions/tips

Try to go to a lot of events organised by Happy Erasmus Bilbao and/or ESN Bilbao at the beginning of the semester. In this way you get to know a lot of people that also study in the city and you know what these organisations have to offer. I would also recommend to make a lot of trips to the surrounding cities, to get the most out of your time in Bilbao!

CONCLUSIONS



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

Yes I would, the main reason is that I had a great time here. I loved the city because it felt pretty relaxed and there were lots of nice people. After five months of studying it kind of felt like home. However, the courses taught by the math department are pretty hard. So you have to work quite hard to get your points.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

I would advice to do the intensive language course before the start of the semester. Also, if your Spanish is good enough, try to do a course in Spanish. This will help you to improve your Spanish even more!