



ERASMUS+ STUDIES - UU Report Spring Semester 19-20

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

destination city & country	Istanbul, Turkey
how did you travel to and from your destination?	Plane
name university abroad	Bogazici University
start date	06 / 02 / 2020 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	17 / 07 / 2020 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

For the application process it was clear what information was needed because both Utrecht University and the university abroad provided clear information on their web pages about this. However, many documents were required in order to complete the application. Be aware that you start the application process well in advance before the deadline. Many signatures are needed from both universities, and it may take a couple days sending documents back and forth. Even though I started the process months before hand, I still almost did not get the documents ready in time.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

There was plenty of options for counselling & support at Utrecht University. The information days of the International Office at the University were very helpful. It was also always possible to make an individual appointment to come and talk to someone of the International Office for any additional questions.

academic preparation

The only thing required for academic knowledge was that I had to pursue a Bachelor or Master degree at the moment I applied. Therefore no academic preparation was necessary.

language preparation

Since all courses at the Bogazici University were given in English, it was required to be proficient in the English language. For this I had to complete an online test. But since I passed the test, no language preparation was required.

finances

For finances I could make use of the Erasmus+ grant, which covered part of the costs. I also made use of the DUO study loan to cover the rest of the costs.

(interrupted) STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

welcome & orientation programme



study programme (content and organisational issues)

I was part of the Department of Management of Information Systems, so I was required to take at least two courses from this department. However, for the rest of my courses, I chose ones from other departments. In total I was following six courses, in order to get the 30 ECTS I still needed to complete my Bachelor. The application for the courses was quite difficult. There were a lot of issues with the online registration systems, so be prepared you cannot follow all the courses that you want to. Besides that, it also took a while before my courses were again approved by Utrecht University (I could not follow any of my courses in my original study plan) which did not make the registration process any easier. Also, six courses might be a little too much if you also want to enjoy your time as an exchange student.

academic quality of education activities

The courses given at Bogazici University were easier than what I was used to at Utrecht University. However, given the fact that I was following six courses at the same time (and in Utrecht University I was used to following two at the same time), it still required some work. Most of the instructors spoke English well, and most of my courses I found interesting. The quality of the education varied greatly for each individual course and it was very dependent on the teacher, so it is difficult to make a general statement about it. My exchange ended abruptly after a short while due to COVID-19, so I feel I did not get to experience the courses long enough to properly judge the academic quality. After the switch to online, content of courses was greatly adjusted.

transfer of credits

At the moment of writing, I am still not sure about the transfer of credits. The semester end date is postponed due to Corona, so it will still take a while before I receive any grades.

CORONAVIRUS CONSEQUENCES

support guidance of host university

As a consequence of COVID-19, the spring break that was supposed to be in May was moved to March. All educational activities were delayed for a very long time. During this period, it was very unclear what was going to happen. We did receive some updates from the host university, but most of the time they mentioned they were also not sure what was going to happen (which is understandable since no one knew how the virus would develop). Overall, I felt we were given updates about online education (when the course would continue, how it would continue, how finals would go, etc) quite late.

support guidance of home university

The home university provided regular mail updates. They were also very quick to respond to any questions we had regarding the Corona outbreak. Overall, support guidance of the home university was fine.

online offer and quality of digital courses

It took quite some time before the courses were made available online. Although every teacher tried to made the best of it and did the best they could, some were not sure how to give online lessons and how to deal with the online system. As a result, the digital courses were relatively chaotic. Often it was not clear how the course would offer finals, how we could get a grade, or even if there was an online lecture on a specific day. Again, this differed greatly for each individual course.

suggestions/tips on digital exchange

Try to get in contact with other exchange students who are following the courses digitally. It will help to share your experiences with people who are going through the same thing.

CONCLUSIONS

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



I would definitely recommend the Bogazici University to others. Even though academic quality of courses may not be as high as we're used to in the Netherlands, the experience of going to a Turkish University will for sure make up for that. The location of the campus was incredible, and it was great to get to know a different culture. Unfortunately I could not stay in Istanbul as long as I planned to due to COVID-19. However, the short period I did stay there were the best weeks of my university experience so far.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

I would recommend to go a bit earlier to Istanbul before the original start date of the semester. During these weeks, you can already get to know some other Exchange students and get to know the city a bit. Knowing other Exchange students will definitely help with the first weeks of University. Also, it would be nice to join the ESN student association where you can meet other exchange students.



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