



UU Report form - Erasmus 2022-2023

faculty/college	Social sciences, Psychology
level	<input type="checkbox"/> bachelor's
name study programme	Psychology

destination city & country	Bern, Switzerland
how did you travel to your destination?	By train.
name university abroad	Bern University
start date	12 / 09 / 2022 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	26 / 01 / 2023 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

The application process went very smooth, you just have to keep up with the emails about the exchange and make a checklist with things you want to know and things you have to do.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

Didn't ask for help or more information at the university.

academic preparation

None, I had already finished my first two years of psychology and followed one year of molecular life sciences prior to my exchange.

language preparation

None, with English you could come an end, I applied for German courses when I arrived, but I needed to do some grammar tests which I failed. The German spoken in Switzerland is completely different than in Germany and I could still follow courses which were given in 'normal' German so it didn't matter.

Finances

The scholarship that I got from Switzerland was quiet a lot and calculated in total I would have spent roughly the same amount or even more money if id stayed in the Netherlands. (I live in a shared appartement approximately 500 euros rent per month)

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

I followed courses at many different faculties. They have faculties which don't even exist in the Netherlands like sport sciences which is very nice.

I did have some problems with applying for courses, they sent me a folder with how and when but left out the case of needing a code to apply for a course. Almost all courses I wanted to follow needed such a code, therefore I couldn't do any courses with limited capacity because I was too late, in the third week of university I still wasn't sure if the courses I was following were okay and that came with some stress but in the end the teachers were really relaxed and I followed courses which I found interesting.

Lesson is that you directly email someone from the host university if something seems different than what they



say it should be.
academic quality of education activities
I think the level is quite similar as here, but they teach differently, courses are only lectures and seminars are more similar to workgroups (this might differ for economic courses I heard). You follow more courses at the same time but have every class only ones a week which I found quite nice. Furthermore they don't really learn from books but give all the information in their slides so I didn't have to buy any books.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
The coordinator of the exchange students was very friendly and always replied within one day! You could come with any questions even regarding your stay and insurances and stuff like that. The teachers were the same, you could always ask and they would try to help you with anything.
transfer of credits
They have the same credit system so it was easy, different grading than in the Netherlands and courses can have already as much as 1,5 ECTS so it might be a little puzzle to come up with the needed credits.

STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme
There was an introduction week with activities (you had to sign up for the activities). These made you familiar with other exchange students, the city and with the university. The Erasmus student network (ESN) organized a lot of activities throughout the semester which was a really nice way to spend the time while exploring the country and make some new friends.
Accommodation
I found my room via a website that was provided by my host university; studentlodging. I think the rooms they provide are nice, you have enough space for yourself. How the stay further is depends on your floor, there are mostly international students in the building so everyone speaks English. The exchange students they are most likely gonna be your new friends. There are also quite some phd students or doing their post-hoc, I noticed that they are in their room or at work most of the time so it might feel empty if you have a lot of those students on your floor. Nice thing about the building was that we had a lobby in which you could play some games and organize parties. They charge quite a lot and also do some checks whether things are clean and you have to pay for cleaning services if it is not clean but it is quiet good organized overall.
leisure & culture
I had quite some free time, I had time to think about how my live was at home and this 'restart' gave the opportunity to completely do what I wanted with my time, I did a lot of training and sports and spent time traveling and exploring the country with hikes and city trips. Some of these were organized by ESN (Erasmus student network) and they also organized a ski and a hiking weekend, pub crawls, parties and things like a brewery tour and a fondue night. Almost all exchange students were into these trips so you just had to find these people and you could do and go wherever you want!
suggestions/tips
Go to the alps as much as possible haha

CONCLUSIONS
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
Yes I would, the way of teaching in Switzerland is a really nice one I think. Teachers are more free in what they can teach which also made me more interested and motivated to learn and to attend classes. I always loved the



alps and hiking and skiing which is the perfect place to do so. Living so close in a country which has beautiful nature I felt at home really quick.

If you want to go out a lot and party with really open minded people you might have to reconsider. The city is not as most student cities are here and going out is mostly in bars. The people in Switzerland seem a bit more shy than Dutch people so you have to approach them differently and then you will see they are very kind. One of the problems with that might also be that not everyone speaks English as well as we are used to, because French and German (all their dialects) are their native tongues.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Stay a bit sharp in the application process so you don't have to fix much after your arrival and you can just enjoy living abroad.


UU Report form - Erasmus 2017-2018

Faculty/college:	Social sciences
Level:	Bachelor
Name degree programme:	psychology

Destination city & country	Bern, Switzerland
Name host institution and/or company/organisation	Bern University
Purpose of exchange	study/courses
Departure date (dd/mm/yyyy)	01-09-2017
Return date (dd/mm/yyyy)	02-02-2018

Preparation

Exchange/placement application process:

The application process went quite easy. I had to fill in a motivation letter, my study program and a financial plan. It only took me some time to figure out to which place I actually wanted to go in the first place.

Counselling/support at home university:

I received a lot of help from international office with my questions. If I asked a question by email, they responded always very fast. Also, The college about studying abroad was very helpful for me.

Academic preparation:

I didn't need any academic preparation for my study abroad.

Language preparation:

It was possible to sign yourself up for a German class provided by the host university, but it was not necessary. I followed all my courses in English. However, if you want to study Psychology, then it is necessary to speak German, since they don't offer English courses in Psychology

Finances:

I saved almost 5000 euros before I went to study abroad. Also, I did receive a grant from Switzerland of almost 2000 euros, because they are not part from the EU. Therefore, it is not possible to receive the normal Erasmus grant

Study/placement abroad period



Study programme/work plan (concerning content and organisational issues):

I filled in a workplan before I went to Switzerland. But when I arrived, I took other courses, because it was not possible to follow psychology courses in English. After I chose my courses, I filled in my learning agreement. I followed courses from Sociology, theology, social anthropology and sport sciences.

Academic quality of education/placement activities:

I chose courses from a lower level. Therefore, the academic quality of education from the host university was a little bit lower than the academic quality of education from Utrecht university. I received an online account from my host university wherein I had to upload all my placement activities, which was very easy and showed clearly all the steps I had to fulfil for an official placement at Bern University

Counselling/support at host institution/organisation:

The international office from the host university was very helpful and responded fast to any questions I asked by email

Transfer of credits:

I still need to receive my credits, so I can't tell anything about the transfer of the credits yet

Student life

Welcome/orientation programme:

The orientation programme was very nice. During this program, you get the chance to meet other exchange students and I would recommend all future students to take part in these kind of programs if that is possible. We went for example to a nice city trip in Bern and another one nearby, we had some parties organized by the ESN and we received also some general information about studying at Bern University and all the formal things we had to fill in.

Accommodation:

I stayed in a student lodge with a lot of other (international) students. In this way it was very easy to get in contact with other people. For example, I shared the living room, kitchen and bathroom with 17 other people. The most Erasmus students were staying in this place, so it was easy to meet each other and to go to party's together. However, the rules of the house were quite strict and we were not allowed to make noise after 22:00. If you do, there is a change the police will come and charge you some money. If you want to throw a party, you have to ask the landlord and then it will be okay.

Leisure/culture:

The culture in general is not that different from the Netherlands. It is really nice to see how different Italian, French and German cultures are mixed in Switzerland. In every canton they have different habits, cultures and languages which give you the feeling that you are in another country. The only thing that annoyed me was the fact that grocery stores were closed on Sundays and during the week after 7 p.m. But I loved all the chocolate and the cheese fondue. Furthermore, It was possible to join a lot of sports at the university for free, which was very fun! Also the gym and



fitness lessons were offered at the campus for free.

Suggestions/tips:

Go hiking! The nature is amazing with the combination of mountains, forest and lakes. I tried skiing for the first time, and I think that the swiss alps are really amazing for winter sports.

Conclusions

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

I definitely would recommend this place to others. It may not be the best party place, (the city of Bern only open up the clubs on Friday and Saturday and a beer is 6 to 7 euros) but you can make some nice party's with the other students at someone's place. Also, Switzerland is one of the most beautiful countries I have seen so far, because of the diversity in nature and cities. Furthermore is Bern University a really nice place to study. The university is very helpful if you have any questions and you can chose any course you like. However, If you really want to study Psychology, it is important that you speak German on a High level. Otherwise, you might have to consider another place to study abroad.

Do you have any additional advice or comments?:

Make sure that you saved enough money to join all the activities in or outside the country. Furthermore, don't stress to much about which place you want to go. In the end, I think that the experience of living abroad will be the same. Even if you are not that far from home, you will meet people from all over the world who are. So you will get in contact with different kind of cultures and people anyway. I think that the place won't decide how much fun you will have, but that you'll make the fun yourself with all the other people who want to fully experience the Erasmus life.