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**2023-2024**

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**Report 1**

faculty/college	Humanities
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Language and Culture studies

destination city & country	Cologne, Germany
how did you travel to your destination?	Train
name university abroad	Universität zu Köln
start date	04 / 10 / 2023 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	31 / 03 / 2024 (dd/mm/yyyy)

**PREPARATION**

exchange application process

There are quite a lot of steps to go through, but there are enough people to help you. It might take a little bit of time to get to the person who has the answer to specific questions, but the people from both universities are open to help. They also tend to have documents to guide you step by step.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

The support by UU was great. You do have to make your own decisions in the end, but UU is always ready to help, guide and answer questions. UU also organised an event to inform all UU students in general about Erasmus.

academic preparation

Keep in mind to check what level the given courses will be at. I personally felt like the level at my receiving university was a bit higher, which was probably because of the different formats. At UU they also switch courses during the semester. At UzK they had more time to explain more and also provide more details.

language preparation

You have to make sure to check what kind of languages they speak during the courses. Please check if you have the right language skills in order to get your grades. It also has to be specified on the Learning Agreement. There is also a possibility to follow an extra language course.

finances

There are a lot of options for financial help during your time abroad. There is the Erasmus+ Grant which you can apply to, but you can also request the Travel Green Grant if you are planning on going to your destination by train or bus.

**STUDY ABROAD PERIOD**

## study programme (content and organisational issues)

Every student follows a different path. I was able to follow a few different courses and spoke to a variety of students. There were a lot of different courses to choose from. Not all course descriptions were as clear as they could be, so sometimes it was hard to tell if they really fit your programme or your interests.

## academic quality of education activities

The wifi is not always great at the university, but the professors do use the online platforms quite a bit. Not all information that is shared in class will be shared online, but students generally have to make their own decision in attending or not. Some classes had additional informational courses where more questions could be asked. They were not all necessary to successfully end the courses.

## counselling &amp; support at receiving university abroad

The help from UzK was pretty good. They answered my mails as soon as they could and gave the information I asked for. I also thank them for all the walk-through documents they made, along with the FAQ's and the personal help.

## transfer of credits

All the grades were put online and they also sent an email every time a new grade was added. All the grades were also added to the Transcript of Records. Please keep in mind to talk to your professor about the ToR deadline. That way the professor can help you by grading your work first.

**STUDENT LIFE**

## welcome &amp; orientation programme

They did have a welcome week at UzK with great activities to get to know other students and the university/city a bit. There was also an online meeting with information according to the semester abroad. Erasmus Student Network also organized a welcome week with fun activities.

## accommodation

I got to rent my room from a family friend, so finding accommodation wasn't too hard for me. However, it can be expensive and hard to find. For other students, I would advise to look for rooms on sites as WG-gesucht. A lot of students live in Efferen or Hürth.

## leisure &amp; culture

I met a lot of people through ESN events. They also organized trips to other cities around Cologne, such as Düsseldorf, Bonn, Maastricht, Venlo and Aachen. In Cologne you can go to the Cathedral (free to enter), walk along the Rhine, go with the Seilbahn, visit the Zoo and enjoy the seasonal events like the Christmas markets and Carnaval.

## suggestions/tips

Follow the Erasmus Student Network Köln, they have a group chat with fellow international students and the hosts will organize events, sometimes twice or three times a week. It is also nice that you can do things like hiking, going out and visiting a christmas market without being all on your own.

**CONCLUSIONS**

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

The university itself wasn't too modern (older buildings, wifi was not too great). The public transport network was well made, but unfortunately there were a lot of strikes when I was there. Cologne itself is pretty and there



is a lot to see in the surroundings. I personally wouldn't go back for another semester, but I think it's a great experience if someone goes there for the first time.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

The university gives a public transport ticket for the semester which was great. It was only for the area (NRW) the university was in. There was also a meeting organized by the mayor of the city, followed by drinks with other international students.

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*2021-2022*

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**Report 1**

faculty/college	Faculty of humanities/ Universiteit Utrecht
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Duitse Taal en Cultuur (German language and Culture)

destination city & country	Cologne, Germany
how did you travel to your destination?	By train
name university abroad	Universität zu Köln
start date	01 / 04 / 2022 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	15 / 07 / 2022 (dd/mm/yyyy)

**PREPARATION**

exchange application process

I also found this a bit confusing at the beginning, but we were well guided. I had a counselor to whom I could ask questions. I also found this a bit confusing at the beginning, but we were well guided. I had a counselor to whom I could ask questions. I also found it exciting, because I didn't know exactly how many people would want to go to Cologne. But in the end it worked out. I did my best on the motivation letter and that helps!

counselling & support at Utrecht University

As I wrote, there was good guidance. Despite some confusion, it turned out okay. The confusion was mainly due to the corona crisis. Because of this I had to wait a year for the exchange and I had already forgotten some things. Because of this, I wasn't always quite sure who to go to with my questions. So it's important to take notes of all the information!

academic preparation

I found most of my courses in Utrecht more difficult than in Cologne, so I would definitely say I was well prepared at the academic level. I was already used to writing essays at the end of each subject, which many of the other international students were not.

language preparation

**Germany– Cologne – Universität Köln**

I was well prepared in terms of language. During the lessons we only spoke German anyway, so I was used to this. We also had a lot of speaking assignments, which also helped me a lot.

finances

We were well informed in advance about the finances. We had already received tips and I already knew that Cologne would be one of the most expensive cities in Germany. Because of this I had already prepared a bit in advance. I saved well and with the help of the scholarship it turned out well!

**STUDY ABROAD PERIOD**

study programme (content and organisational issues)

It was quite difficult to put together a study program. I found it difficult to choose fun/interesting subjects that did not fall in the same period. Because of this, I had to drop a number of courses that seemed very interesting to me. There was, however, a fairly wide range of subjects.

academic quality of education activities

The quality was great, I learned a lot. The teachers made sure that everyone could understand the material. The lessons are quite long, so they have enough time to really dig into the material.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

When I first arrived at school I found everything a bit confusing. But luckily I quickly found the information point, where I could ask for an explanation. The teachers also knew a lot about the Erasmus program and were able to help me. Before the start of the study there was a meeting at which the last matters were explained. I really liked this, because many of my questions were answered. This involved, among other things, registering for courses and matters related to living in Germany.

transfer of credits

My credits are not transferred yet, but the school has explained the process. So I think that everything is clear and I know what to do when the time comes.

**STUDENT LIFE**

welcome & orientation programme

The Erasmus students created a chat group after the school's first online meeting. Everyone introduced themselves in this and agreements have already been made for the lessons. So we already knew who had which lesson and because of that we could meet in front of the building and we knew each other a bit before the lessons started. For example, the first day I went shopping with a girl from Spain, a girl from Greece and a boy from Luxembourg.

accommodation

Ich wohne auf dem Campus einer anderen Schule ein paar Kilometer von Köln entfernt. Auf dem Universitätscampus war kein Platz mehr. Ich wohne in einem brandneuen Gebäude, das erst im Oktober gebaut wurde. Die Miete ist teuer, aber ich habe eine gute Wohnung in einem ruhigen Studentenwohnheim.

leisure & culture

There is a volleyball court and a soccer field next to my student flat and we often go there in our spare time. We also regularly have parties with the other residents, in the building itself. We have a football table and dart board so there is plenty to do. Friends and family also visit occasionally. Together we go to the center of Cologne, for the beer garden and the restaurants along the water.

suggestions/tips



There is a chocolate museum in Cologne, I would definitely go there. Bonn is also quite close by train, this is also a very beautiful city to visit, especially the botanic garden.

### CONCLUSIONS

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

I would recommend this university, they take good care of their international students and make sure we understand the process. The teachers are well informed about the erasmus programm and could help me out, when I was confused.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Make sure to ask questions when you feel lost. There are a lot of buildings, which might be confusing when you first arrive and there are a lot of different websites which might also be confusing. So keep asking teachers or others students for help when you are confused, they know how to help.

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*2015-2016*

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### Report 1

faculty/college	Humanities
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	German language and culture

### PREPARATION

exchange application process

I heard about the exchange application during the information event of the international office. There I was told what I had to hand in. What I thought was difficult, was to already choose courses. That was, because I had to choose from courses of the year before I went to Cologne. The courses would change thereafter.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

I think the support at the Utrecht University was bad. I had problems with my bachelor's thesis and the international office wasn't cooperative at all. For me, it turned out to be a problem in Cologne, because I had to do a lot of work on top of what I had to do in Cologne.

academic preparation

I didn't have preparation on what was expected of me in Germany. However, I could do this preparation in Germany itself before.

language preparation

I studied German language and culture before, so for me that wasn't a problem and I could go to Germany very easily.

finances

I had two grants. The Erasmus grant and a German one. In this way, it was possible to pay for the expensive rooms in Cologne and for the excursions and studies I did there.

**STUDY ABROAD PERIOD**

study programme (content and organisational issues)

I did courses on linguistics and German language. I also did a course on speech therapy, a study we don't have in the Netherlands. That was a big opportunity for me, because I could do something I wouldn't be able to do here.

As I said, for me it was a problem my bachelor's thesis extended. I wasn't allowed to bring it into my Erasmus transcript, so that I had to get all the ECTS beside my thesis. That was a lot of work...

academic quality of education activities

The level/kind of education was a lot different than in the Netherlands. Most of the courses I did were either seminars or lectures, but not a combination of that. That does change the academic quality, because you become less different information on one subject than here (only hearing or practising, but not both).

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

At my receiving university, they tried to help me a lot. They offered courses to learn about the teaching system and the different kinds of tests. Also, the teachers were very helpful and willing to cooperate, if I had to do something different than the German students, because of my Erasmus.

transfer of credits

I don't know about this yet, because I don't have my transcript of records yet.

**STUDENT LIFE**

welcome & orientation programme

They had an information event at the start. I also got a buddy, who helped me the first weeks to find places and to explain, how the system worked. She was really nice and so it also was a good way to learn about Cologne and not only about the university.

accommodation

I did find a room by myself, because the university hasn't enough rooms. It is difficult to find a room in Cologne, but not impossible. It is expensive, though and the chance of living near the university is small.

leisure & culture

In Cologne, they had ESN. That was amazing! I meet a lot of people and made really good friends, with whom I still talk. :)

suggestions/tips

If there is ESN, go and meet them! They will help you a lot and you have lots of fun. They also organize trips to different cities in the neighborhood.

**CONCLUSIONS**

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

Yes, of course I would. I had such a lot of fun and that was primarily because of the people there. They are so welcoming and open and you can ask them anything. They will always help you. The atmosphere is very very nice!

do you have any additional advice or comments?



Just do a semester (or even better: two, when you have the chance) abroad! It will not only be good for your study, but also for your personal development.

**Report 2**

faculty/college	Humanities
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Duitse Taal en Cultuur

**PREPARATION**

## exchange application process

Before the application process, I knew there were only 2 places for the Uni zu Köln. That's why my application was very important, because I really wanted Cologne to become the place to study abroad.

## counselling &amp; support at Utrecht University

I think the counselling and support was good in the way that the International Office responded very quickly and they helped very well. The only thing I think could be better, is that they could have had more specific information about the universities, such as the dates of the semester or the way we had to chose our courses in Germany.

## academic preparation

I didn't have much of an academic preparation, because I was going to attend courses that fitted in my study programma of Duitse taal en cultuur in Utrecht. That's why I was already academically prepared for my stay abroad.

## language preparation

I already studies German, so I didn't have to prepare my language for my study abroad. Before I left the Netherlands, my level of German was C2, so that was sufficient for my stay in Germany.

## finances

I applied for the Erasmus Grand, and also got these months abroad my Stufi. Also, I registrated that I didn't use my public transport card in the Netherlands, for which I got compensation. Finally, I applied for a job in Cologne so I could also earn money during my stay.

**STUDY ABROAD PERIOD**

## study programme (content and organisational issues)

The organisation of the study programmes was very chaotic. At the first place, there were many more students that wanted to attend the course than was allowed, so many students couldn't participate. Also, there were many students from many different studies, and for these different studies, different examinations and different credit points were required. This was not well organized and handled arbitrarily. The content was good, literature was chosen very well, but they went a bit slower than in Utrecht.

## academic quality of education activities

The academic quality varied very much. There were courses in which there was no good teacher and courses where the academic quality of the teacher was very good. The literature we had to read was also of good academic quality. Mostly, I had to read academic papers.

## counselling &amp; support at receiving university abroad

**Germany– Cologne – Universität Köln**

The counselling and support was good. It could have been a bit better organized, but it was okay. The only thing which was difficult, was that the opening hours were a bit short. Tuesday till Thursday from 11:00 to 13:00. When you have courses at that time or other obligations, it's impossible to go to the International Office.

## transfer of credits

The transfer of credits was a bit arbitrary . As said, some students needed other credit point than others. The teacher then thought of something for that student to do in exchange for these points. It was not well written down what people must do for their credit points. The transfer of credit points was not always very fair. Writing an exam was much work for 6 CP and giving a presentation was approximately 4 hours of work and was rewarded with 3 or 4 CP.

**STUDENT LIFE**

## welcome &amp; orientation programme

The welcome & orientation programma was not so well organized. The tour around the campus was cancelled for example and a replacing tour was promised, but this never happened. Also, the information given at the welcome days, were given a little too late, because a lot of things weren't open for changing any more.

## accommodation

I lived in a apartment with two other, German, roommates. I lived a bit outside the city, but with near public transport. The accomodation was not facilitated by the university.

## leisure &amp; culture

I have been to classical concerts and participated in a church choir. Furtheron, I did some shopping in the city centre.

## suggestions/tips

I would recommend a quiet accommodation, because it's a lot to take in and I really needed my rest to handle everything.

**CONCLUSIONS**

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

I wouldn't particularly recommend this university to others, because the university is not very well organized and the classes either. However, I still learned a lot from the classes. I still would say that Utrecht University is a better place to stay than to travel to the Universität zu Köln.

## do you have any additional advice or comments?





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*2014-2015*

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**Report 1**

faculty/college	Faculty of Humanities
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	German language and culture

**PREPARATION**

exchange application process	You must be aware of all the deadlines and all the documents that need to be filled in. Otherwise the application process is quite simple.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	Helpful for the more basic questions, but for most questions you really need to get in touch with the receiving university yourself
academic preparation	Not too complicated, I just had to check the requirements for my study programme in Utrecht.
language preparation	Not applicable, because of my study programme
finances	Needed to make some extra savings, next to the Erasmus grant. I knew on forehand that Cologne is one of the most expensive German cities to study, so that was not unexpected.

**STUDY ABROAD PERIOD**

study programme (content and organisational issues)	Study Programme is much profounder here in Cologne, but luckily the teachers are very supportive and they think with you.
academic quality of education activities	Perfect, broader topics and more focus on newer fields of study like computergames.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad	The support of the International Office in Cologne has been great. My programme did not live up to my expectations, I had to make contact with her myself and in the end I had to arrange everything myself because the buddy never had time to help me.
transfer of credits	



Will hopefully work out fine at the end of July.

### STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

I felt very welcome and everything was clear. Programme unfortunately overlapped with the courses on many occasions

accommodation

Was difficult in Cologne. I had to search for a room myself, because the university had not enough rooms

leisure & culture

You can sign up to many (sport)clubs, also via the university. The amount and the quality of culture that Cologne has to offer is astonishing.

suggestions/tips

Make sure you have enough time for the fun things abroad. I had to write my Bachelor Thesis whilst being abroad, so that was not ideal.

### CONCLUSIONS

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

I would certainly recommend going abroad and Cologne is a great destination. It's not that far away but still living there has been a great experience. Most of the people I've met, have been very friendly and supportive.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

The bureaucracy for getting the Erasmus grant is typical and sometimes frustrating.

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*2012-2013*

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### **Report 1**

**preparation**

exchange/placement application process

I read the information of my home university and subscribed myself on time. After that, I had to fill in a form from my host university.

counselling/support at home university

I didn't directly need a lot of support from the home university, as most of my colleague students went abroad as well. Therefore we all knew a little bit, which most of the time answered our questions. The only time I needed to ask my home university was to check my amount of credits abroad.



academic preparation
None
language preparation
Since I'm studying the foreign language of the country in which I did my erasmus-period, I didn't do any additional language preparation.
finances
I saved a lot of money to be able to do an exchange. I tried to indicate how much I would need by overthinking the costs very carefully.
<b>study/placement abroad period</b>
study programme/work plan (concerning content and organisational issues)
International Office there was very helpful. Especially because in Cologne, the uni uses a programm online to subscribe for the courses which is rather difficult to understand. It took my quite some time at home just to figure out how to do so and what my options were.
academic quality of education/placement activities
It is good: the students are very critical and teachers allow us to have discussions about the topics.
counselling/support at host institution/organisation
As said before, they were very helpfull and always had a solution to my problems very quickly.
transfer of credits
Haven't done that yet, because it isn't possible yet.
<b>student life</b>
welcome/orientation programme
Was good, though I missed a good introduction to the city itself.
accommodation
It took me a lot of afford to get accommodation (it wasn't funny anymore), but in the end I had a beautiful room in a great part of the city. I couldn't have done that by myself, though. I really needed the help of a teacher in Utrecht (she called them several times before something happened).
leisure/culture
I think that in Germany there are more beautiful cities (as in: city center) than Cologne. But, the atmosphere here is great, the people are really friendly and the city has a lot of trees and parks, so you won't feel trapped in the city. Further, there is so much to tell about leisure and the culture: you could be doing something diffent every evening!
suggestions/tips
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## Germany- Cologne – Universität Köln

### conclusions

would you recommend this host organisation/destination to others? please explain

Though I really loved my time in Cologne, I don't know if I would directly recommend it to others. Biggest reason of all maybe is, that it isn't such a lively and exciting city as, for example, Berlin. It really depends on what you are looking for in a city. As far as the uni goes, I would recommend it, because there is a really wide range of courses you can choose from and if you choose wisely, you won't have to sit on any stairs at all. I even had small groups (40 persons maximum), which I liked a lot.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

The cologne university could have been more communicative during the period of preparation. Also I have so many email-adresses (as well as for the UU as for the uni of cologne), that I don't know anymore who is responsible for what or who could answer my question the best. Increasing the amount of emailaddresses and communicating more clearly who you should ask for which problem would be very helpful.