

Université Panthéon – Assas (Paris II)

2021 - 2022

PREPARATION
exchange application process
The application process was from the side of the home university very clear. The university in France is however a little bit more difficult. The website isn't always that clear, but they are working on that. Luckily there is a contact person on the host university who answers to questions very quick.
counselling & support at Utrecht University
I had contact with the exchange coordinator and she was always helpful.
academic preparation
I didn't prepare academically. If you understand the Dutch law system and the European law system, you will not find that much of a difference in France.
language preparation
I did a language course level B2. I strongly advice to do the same, or to follow some sort of language course. If you have level B2 or C1, you will have no problems with CM. But the TD's can be a little hard, those are like the working groups in the Netherlands.
finances
I saved some money and I would advice you to do the same! It can be pretty expensive living in Paris. I also advice you to look into CAF, ERASMUS grant and a Navigo travel card.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD
study programme (content and organisational issues)
You have to chose courses for 23 ECTS. I chose 4 CM courses for 4 ECTS each. Those CM's are just lectures with a test in the end. I have chosen one TD and a TD is 9 ECTS. This is because you have working groups, which requires a weekly reunion with a presentation / dissertation to write. I chose 2 courses in English and 3 in French. Those were mainly courses in political science, law and the organisation of the European Union.
academic quality of education activities
The academic quality is high. I noticed that the students in France worked maybe harder compared to the students in the Netherlands. Especially for the TD you have to do weekly work. The CM's are also of high quality, but if you follow the course and ask for the notes of other French students, you will be fine.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
The counselling and support is not much during the courses itself. But the French students and professors are really helpful. But you have to ask for help! They are not going to that for you.
transfer of credits
I still need to get all my credits back, but it was no problem.

STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme

There is an introduction week. This week focusses mainly on an introduction course in French law and methodology. This is not really a social event, but you can meet the other international students. Besides there was a breakfast organised for international students, but that was later in the semester.
accommodation
I found an accommodation with help from the university in Paris. It was a Crous residency. This is perfect, because you have your own studio and it is not too much money. I would advice you to ask the coordinator of the university in Paris that. It is also an option inform Cité Universitaire. They also offer accomation for Dutch students.
leisure & culture
There of course a lot of things to do in Paris. Like museums, picnics and nice places to go out. You can meet other international students with ESN or la voyagerie Parisienne. Those organisations are focused on international students. They best way see the city is just to start doing stuff!
suggestions/tips
All museums and a lot of other things to visit are free under 26.

CONCLUSIONS
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
Yes, if you are prepared to study hard and learn French, it is perfect. You have free time, but it is not all free time.
do you have any additional advice or comments?
Start early with financial matters if you are in France, like asking for a CAF (grant for housing in France). And remember that French bureaucracy can be difficult.

2018 - 2019

PREPARATION
exchange application process
The exchange application process was not very difficult. If you read the information carefully that is send to you or that you can find on the UU website, you will be fine. I would not worry about it!
counselling & support at Utrecht University
Counselling in Utrecht was quite good, I advise you to go with your question to the international office desk at Janskerkhof 2-3, they have an inloopuur every week, and you can often get a response right away.
academic preparation
I did not do any acedemic preparation.
language preparation
I didn't do any language preparation either. I had obtained my B2 certificat in the 6 th grade of high school, so I already had the required language level. However, I think my French level at the beginning was not really good enough, which made it quite difficult at the start. One the one hand, I think it would have been smart if I did some language preparation beforehand, on the other hand, I think it is difficult to really prepare for following all your courses in french. If you want to do preparation, I would advice you to focus on your listening skills, as this is the most crucial thing to be able to understand your courses. So for example, watch some french series
finances

You can get quite a lot of money from the dutch and french gouvernement. You get erasmusbeurs which is around 180 a month, you can get ov-vergoeding (90 euro's a month) and you can also get CAF from the French gouvernement which is like "huursubsidie" (also 180 euros a month). However, Paris is quite expensive so if you can it is could be nice to save money

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

I will tell you which courses I followed and how I liked them, this might be usefull if you choose to study at panthéon assas and you have to choose subjects.

In the first semeser I chose:

1. droit de l'Union européen with a TD - I am really interested in droit de l'union européen so I really liked this subject. The CM's were a little bit boring sometimes but I really liked the TD's. I thought they were really interesting and they gave a new perspective. For the TD, I had to hand in a dissertation and I had to do a presentation in a group. The teacher was really nice and quite approachable. The exam was a written one
2. Politiques de l'Union européenne - I chose a TD for this subject as well but I ended up dropping the TD because I felt I did not have enough basic knowledge about european law to be able to follow. (it was a master subject). The CM's were interesting but tiring because the professor spoke really fast and it was 3 hours with two 10 minute breaks (like most courses).
3. Droit international Public. I could not receive credits for this subject because of the subject International law in the first year. But, as you have to follow courses for 22.5 ECTS, I thought I'd still choose the subject. The exam is also a written one (and not an oral exam) and what is really nice is that the exam is an open book exam. However, the exam was corrected quite strictly and a lot of people did not pass.
4. Philosopohie du droit - I found this really interesting. the subject was "les aventures du droit subjectif". Sometimes it was difficult to know where the professor was going to with his story, but what was nice was that the professor uploaded a script to his website. So you could just study the script.
5. Vie politique française - this subject had some interesting elements but it required that you knew a lot of details, for example who one the elections and with what percentage of the votes in a certain year. If, like me, you don't know a lot about french politiques, I woud advice you to maybe not choose this subject because it is so in-depth

in the second semester:

1. Philosophie politique II - I think this is really interesting. It's about the concept of "Souveraineté" and the professor talks about philosophers like Plato, Bodin, Hobbes, Locke, Montesquieu, Rousseau (and more). The exam however is an oral exam.
2. Aspects européens es droits fondamentaux - This is OK, it's mostly about the ECHR.
3. Relations Internationales - this subject is really difficult to follow for me, it is interesting though. The professor talks a lot about the news, for example about whats happening in Syria. For the exam you do have to know a lot of things, you are required to know all the countries in the world, all the names of the seas and important rivers and you shoud know important places, in syria for example.
4. Droit de l'union européenne II with a TD. The CM's are interesting, it is mostly about the internal market. However I wouldn't recommend the TD, you have to write either a commentaire d'arrêt or a cas pratique almost every week. The commentaire d'arrêt has to be around 5 to 8 pages and the cas pratique can be even longer sometimes. I also have to mid-term exams.
5. histoire contemporaine politique et sociale - Although I don't think this subject is really about contemporary history (the professor talks about the french revolution and the regime of napoléon), it is quite easy to follow, so I like it.

I would advice you, if you want to do a TD (which is not required and a lot of people choose not to do), to only choose one. Because it can be a lot of work (especially the one I had in the second semester).

academic quality of education activities

They say that Panthéon-Assas is the best for law in France, and I do notice the academic quality is really high. Students also work really hard (harder than the dutch students I think)

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

The counselling in France is a bit different than in Utrecht. Information is not really handed to you, you have to find a lot of things out yourself. This can be a bit difficult sometimes because you can feel a bit lost in the system and sometimes you don't even know what you don't know and therefore you can't really ask questions about it. However, the international office Coordinator at Panthéon-assas, Mme Clergue, does respond to your emails very fast, and if you have a specific question she will provide a clear answer.

transfer of credits

for the first semester, I passed 4 out of the 5 exams so that makes 21 ECTS, but I could not transfer droit international public and for droit de l'union européen 2 points were subtracted, so I transferred 15 ECTS for the first semester. For the second semester I don't know yet. I have not had my exams yet.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

The university doesn't organise a welcome week, in which you do fun activities. You do get one week of courses in which you get introduced to the french law and to the french history. I would go there if I were you because you can meet the other exchange students there, but other than that it is not very useful.

accommodation

I was very lucky with my accommodation. I found a room in the first arrondissement, 50m away from the Seine, and I payed 520 euros and I received CAF which made it 340 per montch. It is always good to start early. I got my room in the beginning of august. If you need tips to find a room you can (IEO:) contact the International Exchange Office and they can give you my e-mail address!

leisure & culture

Really nice, there is always things to do. Museums are free (most of them), you can go to concerts and opéra for not that expensive.

suggestions/tips

CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes I would recommend it! It is a bit different maybe to the typical erasmus experience because you have quite a lot of courses a week and you are required to study, especially if you take TDs. But, you do learn a lot from it, because the courses are interesting and have such a high quality. And, as the courses are in french your french really improves aswell, even though it can be very difficult at the beginning. I think it is (i'm still in paris for a few months) just really nice to live in Paris, because it is just so beautiful and you never have to be bored.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	The exchange application process was very easy, after the UU part there were a couple of forms with questionnaires to fill in online. Finally, you have to send a letter with a photo to the International Office of Assas in order to create your student cart.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	The International Office assisted perfectly during the preparation of the exchange. They responded quickly to all my questions. The information session was structured and enlightening.
academic preparation	I had already finished all my courses of the bachelor of law at Utrecht University, what was a great advantage because my legal level was perfect in order to follow courses from both the bachelor's and master's degrees. I found the courses at master's level much more relatable and similar to the courses at Utrecht University. Especially in the first year of the bachelor, there is much attention for history, philosophy and general legal principals (much more elaborated than at Utrecht University). In France, the exam consists mostly of writing a very structured paper: this skill is not given much attention at during the courses at UU. As a student of French Language and Culture at Utrecht University as well, I highly recommend to follow certain courses of this bachelor's programme (TV1/2/3 (language acquisition), LC1 (French history) and LCU1 (French modern society and economy). These courses are naturally all in French, which will help you to get used to follow courses in French, in order to improve your skills in presenting and academic writing.
language preparation	For studying in French, Utrecht University obligates students to have a B1 level. However, I think a higher level of French is needed in order to follow the courses succesfully. In law, language is very important, so I recommend to have a certain experience in legal or professional French. Most of the exams consist of writing dissertations (a type of paper) which are revised strictly by the professors. The other part of the exams are oral. The university Assas offers language courses at every level for free. As mentioned before, I recommend to follow the courses TV1/2/3 at Utrecht University instead of doing a language course at a private institute.
finances	Paris is a pricy city: especially housing is really expensive. In my experience the food was quite normally priced; not a big difference with the local Dutch supermarkets. However, alcohol and clubbing are much more expensive. Public transport is available for €78 each month. UberPool is a cheap way to share a taxi.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	As a UU law student at Assas, you are obliged to follow law courses: only one course from the Political Science programme is allowed during your exchange. Therefore I was a little bit dissapointed, because I wanted to change my perception and point of view during my exchange. However, Assas offers multiple courses of international or compared law. The programme is demanding, even if you don't follow courses worth of 30 ECTS.
academic quality of education activities	As known, the French educational system is very much different from the Dutch system and has always remained very old-fashioned. A digital platform such as Blackboard is absent, but also the use of PowerPoint and other modern teachings remain highly unused. However, this does certainly not affect the quality of the

courses. The professors are well-known in France and have many interesting things to say. The accent is, contrary to Utrecht University, not on the casuistics but is more of a theoretical nature. This offers an exceptional and interdisciplinary view on law in general.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

The International Office helped the students adequately. Nonetheless, the opening hours of the International Office were minimal, so sometimes it was hard to make an appointment. Every group of countries has a own specific counsellor at the International Office, which was easy because they were more up-to-date with our system in Holland.

transfer of credits

There are two types of courses: with or without seminars. For the courses with seminars, you receive generally 9 ECTS and for the other courses you obtain 4 ECTS. In January (first semester), all the final exams are organized. The final results will be published in March.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

Unfortunately, there wasn't really a welcome and orientation programme (only a sports day during the weekend). We started right away with the French history and legal basics. I really would have liked a welcome programme because there are many international students and I think I would be easier to get to know them sooner thanks to a welcome programme.

accommodation

Housing is pricy in Paris, I stayed in a Chez Nestor (renting organisation in France) apartment which I shared with two other international students. The apartment was fully equipped, the signing of the contract was really easy as well (especially made for international students). It was difficult to find an apartment because most of the apartments are available right away and not in a couple of months in advance. Often you can apply for extra financial aid when you are renting an apartment or a room (the so-called Caf).

leisure & culture

At the university you can sign up for free sport courses or use the fitness (you have to send a medical certificate signed by a MD in advance). Attention: you must be quick, the sport courses are popular. Paris has a grand variety of cultural activities and is one of the most vivid cities in the world, so never boring!

suggestions/tips

You can easily join one of the many weekly events the ESN Paris has to offer in order to meet other international and French students. If you like to meet French students studying at Assas, you can join an association.

CONCLUSIONS

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

If you like to challenge yourself to study law in French, I can absolutely recommend this university. The programme is demanding, and the French is not easy as well (especially in the beginning), but there is plenty of room for fun activities. What I really liked of my exchange is that I learned so much, and now I can easily speak and write French at a C1/C2 level too. I learned a lot about myself as well, since this was my first experience abroad.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

No.

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	
	The exchange application process at the UU was very easy. At the first orientation presentation everything was very well explained. Most of the application happened online which was easy to keep up with.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	
	The UU international office is very helpful but sometimes they don't seem completely up to date.
academic preparation	
	I didn't do any academic preparation
language preparation	
	My french was already at a sufficient level but you really need at least a B2 level to succeed at this university.
finances	
	Paris is a very expensive city so you should save quite a lot of money to cover everything and enjoy Paris to its maximum. I spend around €1500 a month

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	
	When I first arrived I was under the impression that I could also pick from the science politique courses since I got that idea from the IO before my arrival. This is not the case. You pick around 5 courses and 1 of them is allowed to be a 'non-law' course, all your other courses have to be from the law curriculum
academic quality of education activities	
	The academic quality is quite high at this university. The students are very motivated and don't sit back to wait for someone else to give the answer. Everything is in French so to keep up you need to have a good level of french! The french students are usually not difficult about sharing their notes with erasmus students which is very helpful
counselling & support at receiving university abroad	
	The IO in Paris doesn't really actively help you out or check up on you. You kind of need to figure everything out yourself.
transfer of credits	
	I went the first semester so I'll normally get the transfer of credits in march. So still waiting on it

STUDENT LIFE	
welcome & orientation programme	
	There is an introduction week of the international student association I think
accommodation	
	I found my accommodation in the CIUP. I stayed in the Dutch Colleg, I recommend it
leisure & culture	

Paris is a great city to enjoy culture and get the most out of life. A lot of museums a free for students
suggestions/tips
Musée D'orsay, Foundation Louis Vuitton, Atelier des lumières.

CONCLUSIONS
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
Yes, Paris is not that far away but the city is amazing an there is so much to do
do you have any additional advice or comments?
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2017 – 2018

PREPARATION
exchange application process
Just had to apply and had to prove my French B2 level before I left.
counselling & support at Utrecht University
The university helped me during the process with serveral things
academic preparation
Because a B2 level was required for this uni, I had to follow French courses.
language preparation
French
finances
I had to borrow some money from my parents because Paris is an expensive city

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD
study programme (content and organisational issues)
The first day at the uni you'll get a paper with all the courses you can follow. A week later you've to hand this in. During this week you can follow all the courses they offer and make a choice.
academic quality of education activities
The level is quite high and they don't make an exception in exams for exchange students.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
The communciation with the exchange coordinator is very bad. Didn't had the feeling that she really wanted to help me the times I approached her. They expect you to find out everything by yourself and this can be hard. Besides that they for example don't use Blackboard or something like that.For all your informatie you've to approach French students or your coordinator.
transfer of credits

They offer courses with 4 and 9 pt.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

The uni itself didn't organise a thing, but there was another organisation who did. This was a program with other exchange students from other uni's.

accommodation

Super expensive and hard to find something. You should start looking as fast as you can.

leisure & culture

A really nice thing is that most of the museums are for free if you are a French student, so you can enjoy you with this.

suggestions/tips

Make sure your French level is high enough and you find your accommodation as fast as possible.

CONCLUSIONS

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

From one side I do, because the time here offers you a perfect chance to improve your French. From the other side you've to keep in mind that this uni expect a lot from you. This means that you'll have to study way more than you used to do at UU.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

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2016-2017

PREPARATION

exchange application process

The application process is long, kind of complicated, and especially full of deadlines. I had to apply almost a year before the start of the exchange programme. However, the university is clear on which steps you need to take and ready to assist you if you ask for it. Be aware that it is a lot of paperwork (even during and after the exchange)! The most work lies within finding a destination that best suits your interests and that fits your budget. So start early on sorting that out! If you stay in Europe you can apply for an Erasmus grant, but there are also other grants available. The university will elaborate further on that.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

The university is ready at all times to help you when you don't understand something. But in general you are the one that is responsible for completing your application adequately.

academic preparation

I did not need any academic preparation for my courses in Paris, as I was planning on doing only non-mandatory subjects (keuzevakken).

language preparation

Because I was going to study in a foreign language that was not English, I needed to refresh my knowledge of French. I had done French for 6 years in high school and was quite good at it because I also speak Portuguese.

Nevertheless, the university required that I had a solid B1 level of French to be able to go to Paris. So, I did an intensive summer course at Universiteit Leiden for the level B1. Even though I hadn't lost my knowledge of French, it was very good to have revised all the grammar, writing, reading, etc. If you have time, try to take a longer course (several months), which allows you to practice the language even better before your departure. But be aware that for these courses you need to register quite early in advance as well, so don't leave it for the last minute!

finances

As you might know, Paris is an expensive city. Rents are sky-high (compared to what we're used to in the Netherlands), groceries are expensive, let alone going out at night for drinks or clubbing. (However, there are also quite some cheap little spots throughout the city, you just need to find them). So make sure you have sufficient funds to survive those few months. I had the Erasmus grant and on top of that Dutch students receive a remuneration for public transport when they live abroad (Ov-vergoeding), which is nearly 100 euros a month. Apply as soon as possible for this as well, otherwise you might miss out on a part of it (as they don't pay you this money retroactively). Furthermore, I received my normal funds from my parents and I applied for the government's full student loan (bijlenen). Note that I had to receive this full loan for a few extra months to be able to pay for my rent (that I had to fully pay in advance), which was a lot. If you're able to save up some extra money yourself, that is a great advantage that would allow you to do more fun stuff, like city trips.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

Exchange students at Paris 2 are given many options of courses to choose from. Even though at home I was officially only a 3rd year law student, there I was allowed to choose between the courses from year 1 (licence 1) up until year 4 (master 1). All courses are thought in French, nothing is in English. Also keep in mind that the master 1 courses have generally more complicated language and content than the licence courses. You have to put together your timetable by yourself, which is quite complicated and you will probably have to let go of some courses that you initially wanted to do (so you probably will hand in a different learning agreement than before you arrived). The courses given at Paris II all have three hours of Cours Magistral, which is a lecture in a big amphitheatre, where you listen to the teacher and make notes. Please be aware that these lectures are the full content of what you need to study for your exam. You will not have to buy any books, so you will be dependent solely on those notes (but the french kids are generally not difficult with handing out their notes to the international students). Some courses also have (next to this CM) 1,5 hours of seminar, which is called Travaux Dirigées. These are smaller classrooms with around 30 people where you will go deeper into the material of the course and you will have to write essays or case notes. These classes are quite hard when you are not used to the system and their methodology (which they are very strict about). But don't feel intimidated, as you will understand the material a lot better with this TD than without. Some courses have obligatory TD and for other courses you can choose whether you want to do it or not. If you choose to do a course with TD, the course will be worth 9 ECTS, and otherwise if you choose for one with only CM, you will be awarded 4 ECTS. To be able to receive the grant, the university in Utrecht requires you to obtain 22,5 ECTS. Therefore I chose to do 4 courses of 4 ECTS and one of 9 ECTS (two of them were master 1 courses).

Furthermore, the university offers complementary French classes for the internationals so that you can improve your French even better. This gave me 4,5 hours of extra classes a week, but it was very helpful and it is a way of meeting the other international students (you do not earn any studypoints with this!)

academic quality of education activities

Paris 2 is renowned for its faculté de droit. They say it is the best law faculty in France, even better than the Sorbonne (Paris 1). Therefore the courses are of very high quality. They strive to keep their name good and so they can be quite rigorous when grading. I found that my TD teacher was quite harsh on her grades, which gave me a hard time to keep up with the French students that already knew how the work had to be done (the

methodology). The students are very competitive and therefore will seize every opportunity to speak up in class. So the atmosphere at Assas is quite different than what I was used to in Utrecht. But you will learn a lot from it!

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

At Assas I found that my international officer was not really ready to help me during the process of choosing my courses or other things. Everyone had to figure it out by themselves and the only thing you had was a thin booklet with some information. They were not willing to really help you and when they were, it felt as if you were a great burden. This was quite frustrating. But in the end everyone managed well.

transfer of credits

The transfer of credits was not really clear for me on how to do it. I was not able to get my courses acknowledged by the UU before I went, but I started the process only after I came back. I am still in the process of transferring my credits.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

The first week was officially introduction week in which you had an introduction day, where all practical stuff was explained. Then the days after the university offered abroad students and other students courses on the introduction to french law and on the methodology that you need in your courses. It was interesting, but it took a lot of time.

accommodation

This was one big hell to find. For me in the end I had to go with a studio which I had found through Home Away (a sort of an AirBNB). The studio was in the centre of the city, which was a dream come true. However the price was not and the quality neither. Try to arrange this as early as possible!!

leisure & culture

There is a lot to do in Paris. Most museums are for free for EU students and there are frequently new art expositions opening. Also, try going to the theatre (such as the opéra), it is amazing and you can get cheap seats for 12 euros. However, as you will have to put a lot of time into university, you will not be able to go party every weekend for example (also because that is really expensive).

suggestions/tips

CONCLUSIONS

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

I certainly would! Paris is amazing, there is always so much to do and to learn. The students that you will meet are awesome and it will just be an amazing experience. The university is quite rigorous so prepare for that, but also keep in mind that you will come back with an excellent knowledge of French and despite all the bureaucracy, it is really worth it.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Try to have a good knowledge of french before you go, otherwise you will not be able to keep up with the material. Extra courses in French prior to your departure is strongly advised!

2015 – 2016

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	
	<p>The exchange application process was rather simple. After doing my research and choosing this particular university, I wrote a motivational letter explaining my enthusiasm. This went rather smoothly because I was very sure of my choice and really really wanted to study abroad, in France, Paris, that is!</p> <p>Like everyone I was not sure about the selection since I reckoned that Paris would be very popular and since my French was not perfect.</p>
counselling & support at Utrecht University	
	<p>I was very surprised by the counselling/support at the UU, in a good way. The Panthéon-Assas II University only has courses in French and I was worried that it would be a bit of a too large challenge for me. Improving my french was one of the reasons for choosing this university but a huge languagebarrière would be troubling. It could complicate the contact with other students and people in general, the understanding and enjoyment of the courses, the achievement of ECTS, the 'culturegap' and the conditions under which the Erasmus-grant is granted. Fortunately miss Van der Ven was very helpful and understanding, taking time to respond to my mails, arranging a meeting, making suggestions for improving my french and checking upon me once in a while.</p>
academic preparation	
	<p>I already looked at the courses that were to be offered at the university and made a list of the ones that seemed most interesting. However, I did not started preparing the courses beforehand, because that did not seem to be necessary and because the chance was big that my choice of courses would change.</p>
language preparation	
	<p>Language preparation was essential so I started reading books and watching movies in French once I knew I was accepted at Panthéon Assas. Also I participated in French course of the University Utrecht "Taalverwerving Frans 1", this was pretty intense since it had a lot of courses and assignments, which I had to combine with a juridical course and my Bachelor-thesis. In the end I decided to go to all the courses but not to participate in the exams.</p>
finances	
	<p>I have saved money since a long time so I had a little 'extra' to cover the extra charges of living and studying in Paris. In addition I requested the Erasmus-grant, of course. In my opinion it really is necessary to have a little more to spend than usually. The average cost of living in Paris is higher than in the Netherlands, even the supermarkets seem more expensive. Especially going out costs a lot of money, but dining out is relatively cheap. With the Erasmus-grant, the OV-uitkering and some saved money you will be fine. Also, check whether you can request CAF, a subsidy you might receive renting a room/apartment.</p>

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	

The first thing I noticed upon my arrival in Paris was the bureaucracy. It's worse than in the Netherlands! Practically nothing is arranged online so be prepared to print and meet many times. Choosing subjects is easy since you'll have enough time to check some out before definitively choosing the ones you want to do. Do not expect to be contacted or warned about registration formalities and such, you'll have to remember yourself and always take initiative. So as long as you don't forget to arrange everything within the deadlines, there won't be any problem. Emailing the university is possible, but don't expect to receive an answer quickly. I advice you to go by the international office in person, it is faster and more clear that way.

academic quality of education activities

The education activities differ very much from the ones i was used to in the Netherlands. The HC take 3 hours in stead of 2 and there is no powerpoint or educational books to support the subject-matter. It's just one professor talking for three hours, with five minute-breaks every hour. No one asks questions during these classes and everyone literally writes down every single word.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

Terrible. At the UU they are truly committed and interested in you, I felt like they were glad to help and assist. At the Panthéon Assas I felt as if I was just a burden. The international office would practically give me a small instruction book as guide and that was about it. I did not feel welcome or supported at all, they did not seem to care even a little that everything was new to me. Not only were the conversations as short as possible, they responded to my emails very shortly and lately, just to tell me that I should go figure it out myself. At the end of the Erasmus I asked whether they could sign my attendance-certificat and they did not even know what it was... I've spoken to Erasmusstudents of other Paris' universities and they seemed to be supported very well, so it's not just a difference of culture;) So the support and counselling was dissapointing, however, I managed just fine on my own.

transfer of credits

The courses at Panthéon Assas are worth 5 ECTS, which surprises me since these are courses of a half year with HC's of three hours each week. There's also a French language course that I participated to, which contained 6 hours a week and for which I received 0 ECTS; not very motivational.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

You should have no expectation of the university itself as regards to the support towards foreign students. Fortunately there is ESN (just like in Utrecht) which, as a student organisation, organised a week of welcome & orientation activities. I can recommend this to everyone. It might not be organised as well as you might be used to but it remains a great way to meet other foreign students, from Panthéon Assas and from other universities in Paris.

accommodation

Finding accomodation in Paris is difficult. There are a lot of facebookpages and websites offering rooms, studio's and appartments but there are at least as many scammers. In the end, I found a nice studio via a friend of mine who had studied in Paris as well. It was a wonderful studio but expect to pay a lot more for a lot less;)

leisure & culture

Paris is a city for everyone, no one has to be bored for even a second. Culturelovers will be preoccupied during their whole Erasmus times; there is a huge amount of musea, theaters, cinemas, galleries etcetera! There is so much to see and to do, even after half a year I felt like I did not have enough time to truly experience everything. Eventhough Paris can be expensive, there are great ways to spend your free time without going

broke; there are free concerts every night (), many musea are free, opera and ballet is very cheap if you find out how to receive those special tickets, there are a lot of 'rommelmarkten' and so many parcs to have a picknick!

suggestions/tips

Read blogs and books beforehand and talk to strangers!

CONCLUSIONS

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

Absolutely!

First of all I believe that a semester in a foreign country should be obligatory for everyone (except those who don't have the means of course) because it truly is an enrichment of your ... Being placed in a new environment with unknown people, (language,) university, culture, surroundings etc etc really makes you reflect upon your 'normal life' and gives you a chance to redefine yourself.

Second of all, I recommand this destination. I believe Paris is perfect for an Erasmusexchange because it's close enough to receive visitors and to feel quickly at home but far away enough to explore everything by yourself and be astonished by the different culture and people. In my opinion the city has to offer something to everyone, it has every kind of art, entertainment, shops, restaurants, parcs, clubs, neighbourhoud you might think of. Eventhough really integrating into the french society/university is difficult, it's the perfect way to approve your french.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

I advice you to arrange certain administration immediatly such as a French bankaccount and accomodation. It makes your first few days much more relaxing. Also, I would really advice everyone to make us of the wonderful culture in Paris; it's so cheap and well aranged for students; so visit every museum and go to the opera/ballet! Lastly, there are a lot of blogs on life in Paris. I loved reading some and picking restaurants, shops and activities based on those stories; it's a huge city and it would be a shame if you are not aware of all the wonderful possibilities the city has to offer!

PREPARATION

exchange application process

The application proces was quite easy, although I did not get much information from my host university before I got there.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

The International office of Utrecht University was always very helpful when I had questions.

academic preparation

I did not do any specific academic preparation for this exchange.

language preparation

The year before I went on exchange, I followed three language courses from the bachelor French language and culture, to improve my French.

finances

I saved some extra money and my parents gave me some extra to pay my rent in Paris

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD
study programme (content and organisational issues)
Contrary to the Netherlands, in Paris you can choose your subjects until the first day of classes. The amount of subjects at the same time (5 is normal) is quite high and the work load is also very high. Sometimes you can get a bit lost in the French system (especially in the first weeks), because it is hard to determine the content of certain subjects.
academic quality of education activities
The academic quality of the French university is very high. Especially the TD's (comparable to tutorials in small groups) are very demanding: you have to always be prepared when coming to class.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
There was not so much support and international students are treated the same way as French.
transfer of credits
Still in the proces of transferring my credits.

STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme
In the first week there was an introduction week organized for international students, where we had to follow courses on the french law system from 9 til 17. This was very tiring and not very useful because most of the knowledge was not very new or useful for the semester. But it was nice in the sense that all international students could meet each other. Also ESN organized a 'welcome week' for international students.
accommodation
There was no help from the university. I started very early to find an accomodationa and I advise everyone to do so: it is very hard to find an affordable room in Paris. I payed 600 for my room, but you can apply for the CAF (which is a subsidy for students).
leisure & culture
Paris is amazing: there is always something to do (museum's, festivals, bars, parties) and the people are very nice.
suggestions/tips

CONCLUSIONS
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
Yes I would: Paris is an amazing city and you wil definetly make international friends and learn good french. But be aware of the high quality of the University and the amount of time you will actually have to study in order to pass the exams.
do you have any additional advice or comments?
Make sure you speak and write good in French before the start of your semester.

2014 – 2015

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	
	In order to apply for an exchange, you need to make sure to fill in some documents: Study Plan (how your exchange will fit in your programme in Utrecht), Financial Plan (how you will finance your stay), a Letter of Motivation (in the language spoken and used at your receiving university, French if you decide to go to Paris), your Curriculum Vitae, (in French as well) and at last a Language Proficiency Form (which indicates your level of French). This document is required for students who are not native French speakers, which I am. I gathered all the required documents in time and sent them to the International Office. A couple of weeks later, I was admitted by Utrecht! All I needed to do was wait until my application was admitted by 'Assas'. This will most likely be the case, and so I was admitted by Assas soon afterwards.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	
	The International Office has been very helpful to answer all my questions when I attended the so called 'Studiepunt'. However, their opening hours are not very flexible. When I decided to send an e-mail instead, I had to wait for about 1,5 week for a response, if I would receive one at all. I recommend to visit the Studiepunt for direct answers.
academic preparation	
	Besides the courses I followed during my bachelor's programme 'Rechtsgeleerdheid', I have had no academic preparation. I already finished the ECTS requirement to go on exchange, so I've had basic knowledge in public, private and criminal law and the procedural laws. There are no courses French law offered by the University of Utrecht, so there is not much that can be prepared academically.
language preparation	
	In order to follow courses in French at a high standard law faculty, you need to make sure your French is sufficient. Levels in French go from 1, low, through 6, high. B2 is level 4. B2 is required by non-native speakers to apply. Luckily, I've always paid attention in French courses during secondary school, so this was no problem for me in order to apply. I've completed a language test at Babel, a language institution located at the University College in Utrecht. This test costs about 60 euros and consists of an oral test and a writing test, where spelling, grammar, etc will be tested. In case your French is insufficient to B2, you will have to take some French courses to be able to get admitted. This is a strict demand. I think even B2 is quite basic for attending a law faculty since I've experienced some difficulty in the beginning of the courses. On the other hand, the purpose of my exchange was to learn to speak French fluently, and what better way than to learn during studying?
finances	
	Paris is an expensive city. Of course, you decide what you spend, but you need to take into account that for example grocery shopping is 1,5-2 times more expensive than in the Netherlands. To make sure I wouldn't be short on money, I decided to lend some extra money from DUO. I managed very well with this amount.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	
	At Assas, the study-year is divided in 2 semesters. During one semester, you follow courses that will count up to 30 ECTS. The courses are built up in a different way than in Utrecht. At Assas, there are 2 kinds of courses: Cours Magistral or CM (which can be compared to the 'hoorcollege' in Utrecht), where attendance is optional and there is no interaction between student and professor. The professor talks for 3 hours straight, or one day 2 hours and another day in the same week for another hour. And then there are Travaux Dirigés or TD, which can be compared to 'werkgroep', in which you are expected to be well prepared the exercises, read the

jurisprudence and read the literature, which you need to figure out yourself. Your presence and preparation in TD's are always registered. Courses that have TD are always accompanied by CM --> 3hrs CM and 1,5hrs TD. The CM will give you 4 ECTS when you succeed for the exam. The courses you take in TD will give you 9 ECTS when you succeed the exam. Usually, the exchange students have all of their exams orally. This frightened me in the beginning because I've never had an oral exam, but I must say it is a very logical way of examination. During your stay abroad, you will speak French with everyone around you (friends, housemates, teachers, other students, while on the street). Writing happens less during your stay and is considered to be very hard for non-native students, and therefore written exams are discouraged by the 'Action Internationale'/International Office of Assas.

So if you need 30 ECTS during a semester, most students take 2 courses with TD (2x9 ECTS = 18) and 3 courses with CM (3x4=12). 12 + 18 = 30 ECTS. Another possibility is to take more CM and less TD. Unfortunately, you will not be able to attend all your CM because of schedule reasons.

academic quality of education activities

The quality at Assas is very high. Université Panthéon-Assas is THE university for law in France and is very well-known. They are very proud of their university and there are a lot of politicians (and their children) who have finished their studies at Assas. The quality of teaching is high, students are very willing to be the best of their class. They don't seek to complete a course, but rather to get the highest grade possible, preferably higher than their classmates. So the atmosphere under students is way more competitive than in Utrecht, or the Netherlands in general.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

The 'Action Internationale' en specifically my coordinator of Assas was actually quite distant, not very welcoming at all (which is typically French). This seems strange to me since 15% of Assas' students are foreign students!! In general, the teachers and professors were very likely to answer any questions I've had about the specific course and the manner of examination and they were always enthusiastic when telling them you're erasmus.

The student associations as we know them in the Netherlands do not exist in Paris. Most universities have a lot of societies of their own. I can recommend to join a students association. A lot of students have the same problems, so you can exchange notes and ask older students your questions.

transfer of credits

The announcement of grades of the exams you've made at the end of January will happen in the second week of March, 6+ weeks later! The moment of writing this report, my grades are yet to be announced. Once announced, I will receive a Transcript of Records from the receiving university, which I will need to insert the ECTS achieved in Paris at University of Utrecht and to complete the requirements to have right to the Erasmus grant. I guess there is some kind of 'erasmus clemence' which contains that you will be corrected less hard and your grades will be relatively high for your level. Of course, you're not a native, you've only lived in France for a semester and there's another way of studying. To make sure not all foreigners fail their exams, the teachers grade a little more in your favour.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

The introduction week of Assas Started the 22th of September. I decided to go to Paris a little bit sooner to install at my apartment, do extremely touristic things and to get to know my neighbourhood with it's shops, restaurants and grocery stores. The introduction week contained 2 hours of french law history during 5 days, and during 2 of these 5 days, the professor explained how to write certain documents like a dissertation and the commentary on a judgement by the 'Cour de Cassation' (arrestanalyse van de Hoge Raad). I can recommend to attend these methodology lessons! (they take only little of your time and you will be very glad to have attended them later when you need to write something as homework for your TD courses).

After the introduction week, my 5 different courses started: Financial entrepreneurial law, civil contract law, entrepreneurial law, employment law and competition law. 12 weeks of CM, and the TDs start 2 weeks later, so 10 weeks of TD. I've decided to follow the courses that interested me, whether they were bachelor level 3 or master level 1 (a master takes 2 years at Assas). Since I already accomplished 175 ECTS before my exchange in Utrecht, I had the freedom to choose whatever course I wanted because I wouldn't need them in order to finish my bachelor's programme in Utrecht. The courses that I've followed were therefore supplementary for me, which relaxed me.

Furthermore, there is not a single activity organised by the International Office at Assas. Something like the 'UITweek' in Utrecht does not exist at all in Paris. But because there are tons of erasmus parties and societies, you will find your way through the first couple of weeks! There are so many others like you, making friends goes very quickly!

accommodation

When I was permitted to go on exchange by Utrecht as well as Assas, I applied for a room at the CIUP (Cité Internationale Universitaire de Paris). I've met a lot of people the last semester, and only 2 of them were able to live at the campus. The chances you will be allowed at CIUP are extremely small. Instead, look up websites that rent apartments or rooms on the internet or contact 'foyers' (big houses where students live)! I've found my apartment through Home Away, a website that normally offers short stay and holiday rentals, but I guess I was an exception. I've lived 350 metres from 'Centre Assas' (6th district), where I needed to be on a daily basis. Above all, there were 2 different large metro lines just within 50 metres and I've had 'Jardin du Luxembourg' as my backyard. Even though my apartment was only 10m² and on the 6th floor without elevator (no gym class needed this semester...) I was very, very lucky to find such a great location for an acceptable price (650 euros a month). I've had a very good connection with my landlord and he even came by once a month to bring me clean sheets and towels.

If you wish to spend less on rent, you will probably find a location that is about the same size, but outside the 'périphérique', in the suburbs. For me, the ultimate Paris experience was to live right at the centre of Paris. It was only for 4,5 months, so I guess a little bit extra rent was worth it!

leisure & culture

Where to start... There are so many things to do and explore in this great city! I've been in Paris for 4,5 months, and even this was too short to discover all the cool places, restaurants, shops and bars! I've made a list of things I wanted to see that are not in the travel guides and made sure I had seen them all before I started studying for the finals. Another great moment of leisure for me was running. While running, I decided to go left and right whenever it felt good. This way, I've discovered different routes and districts. Also, while running, you suddenly realise you've ended up near the Eiffel Tower or Arc de Triomph. Another great way of leisure for me was renting bikes and cycle my way through the entire city. If I had known that a bike subscription only costs 20 euro's a month, I would have definitely chosen that above a metro subscription (which is also very practical). This Navigo card costs 70 euros a month: unlimited traveling with bus, train, and metro within the 'périphérique' and outside the perif in the weekend (to go to Versailles for example!). When you're staying longer than 6 months in Paris, you can ask for a 'Imagine R' metro card, with which you can travel under the same circumstances as the Navigo, but is only 35 euros a month. Unfortunately, my stay was too short to command this card.

Almost all of the well-known spots in Paris have their own metro station. Very easy accessible, though sometimes there are some wanderers at night.

Assas offers you free sporting facilities. You can choose whatever sport you like, swimming, soccer, tennis, dancing, yoga, zumba, fitness, badminton and more. I can definitely recommend to make use of this free offer, because you will get to know some other students with the same interest!

Besides studying, there are tons of student societies. There are societies for dancing, debating, human rights organisations, blood donation, organising events with other universities, music orchestra, but also societies specially for foreign students. I joined Erasmus Student Network (ESN), which sounds way more english than it really is! With this association, I've been to Brussels, I've participated in a weekend trip to Normandy and Bretagne, I've been to the Catacombes of Paris by night and there are several evenings and parties.

suggestions/tips

- Don't worry if you haven't figured out which courses to take before departure, you will choose them during the introduction week and will probably differ from the courses you've chosen for your Erasmus Learning Agreement.

- For some rooms/apartment, you can demand CAF (caisse d'allocations familiales), which is the same as 'huursubsidie' and run up to 1/3 of your months rent!

- Don't forget your biligual dictionaries, and if you'd like, a lexicon of french law words.

- You can pass the exams without buying 'codes' (wetboeken), even though it is kind of cool to have one of your own. There are plenty of codes available in the university's library.

- I assumed that there were only exams in January, at the end of the semester. However, some teachers like to give an 'interrogation' (only 20 minutes, short questions) or a 'partiel' (3 hour written exam where elaborate knowledge is required). This exam will count for your final note and takes place during the 8th or 9th week of TD, so right before Christmas holidays. This is ONLY when you follow the TD next to the CM!

- Join a student association to make friends quickly.

-ENJOY PARIS!!!

CONCLUSIONS

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

I must certainly do! Even though it takes a little courage to move to another country for a semester and gathering documents is not a great way to pass your time, but it was most definitively one the best choices I've ever made. I speak fluently French now, I've made friends from all over the world (lots of Italians, Columbians, Argentinians and Austrians) and I've enjoyed every single time I walked down the street and passed the Hausmann-style buildings and architecture. Definitively a great destination for your erasmus exchange! However, if you're looking for a semester of partying and drinking (compared to exchanges to Spain or Italy), Paris in general is not the place to be. At Assas they expect you to work a little harder because of the high standard and internal competition, as I explained earlier.

do you have any additional advice or comments?