

faculty/college	Faculty of Science
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Natuur- en sterrekunde (Physics and astrophysics)

destination city & country	Trento, Italy
how did you travel to your destination?	By car
name university abroad	University of Trento
start date	12 / 09 / 2022 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	27 / 02 / 2023 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION
exchange application process
I found the application quite difficult, but I am a very chaotic person. I think for the average person the application is quite smooth and easy. I am just very stressed to do something wrong.
counselling & support at Utrecht University
I got a lot of support and counselling to make sure that the application and so on went fine. I asked sometimes where to find certain documents and if I did not forget something.
academic preparation
I did not do any preparation for my courses before the real courses started.
language preparation
I followed some Italian free courses on the internet to be able to say 'thank you', 'I have a question' and so on. I also talked with Italian people on a language app and I read an Italian book.
finances
I had spared enough money to have no problems during my exchange, so I just used this, the Dutch loan and the grant.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD
study programme (content and organisational issues)
I was very unsatisfied with the planning of the programme. The schedule of the courses was handed to us one week before the real lectures started. Then it turned out that a lot of people had overlap with courses and they needed to change their study plan. I like Utrecht for the planning of the courses much more, where they have these fixed timeslots, which don't overlap. The programme in the sense of content was amazing, and I liked this a lot. I am fascinated by the quality of the content of the courses. I must admit that I followed master courses and I am attending the bachelor, so this could also be an influence.
academic quality of education activities
I think the professors were highly qualified. The way how they teach is extremely good. The exercises and the planning of the course itself was extremely good. The way of examining is also (completely different of my home university where we only have written exams) extremely learnfull, because there are oral exams. You need to prepare in a completely different way and I think this way of testing made me understand the material much better in the end.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad
There was a lot of space and opportunity to ask all the questions about organisational issues and so on. I have nothing more to add, than that I was really satisfied with the quick replies and responses in case of questions.
transfer of credits
I received my transcript of record. I received (while I am a bachelor student) 6 ECTS per master course, which I find a bit unfair, since the level is much higher. But these ECTS are apparently fixed. The number of credits I obtain for a course in Utrecht is much more compared to the work you need to do for a course in Trento. There is a bit of a balance mismatch.

STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme
There was not a physical welcome programme for my study in particular, but there were lots of activities of the ESN community for people to interact and to meet new people.
accommodation
I rented at Dove Vivo and according to Italian prices this is quite expensive. For Dutch standards it was quite normal. The location of Dove Vivo was amazing and I was very satisfied with my room and building in general!
leisure & culture
There is not a lot to do in the sense of activities inside. For nature lovers it is the amazing place to be. There are lots of mountains. The problem is that if you want to take a beautiful hike, you probably need a car. There are not many places where the bus stops in order for you to hike. There are no dancing clubs as far as I know and a lot of shops are closed on Sunday. Also there is a time around the afternoon all the shops are closed. But the Italians make up for that by all the nice 'Aperitivo's' you can go to with friends. = just drinks with some snacks in a bar or café.
suggestions/tips
There are some hidden activities. Befriend yourself with the 'local' people. They know the hidden lakes, or forgotten bars. The places where they have the best pizza (Korallo) and so on. I also made a friend that attended the conservatory and they sometimes have free classical concerts where you can go to. During Christmas there are the famous Christmas markets. Also, Trento is near to Verona. In Verona there is plenty of things you can do! It is a very big and nice city.

CONCLUSIONS
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
For my study (physics), definitely yes. It depends on WHY one wants to go on an exchange. I mainly did the exchange to have more challenge in my study programme, since I was able to follow master courses in my bachelor. The programme is extremely good. I also loved Italy as a country. The culture is completely different than in the Netherlands. I learned a lot from their culture and I love to take that back with me in the Netherlands. An exchange also changed my mind about where to study for my master. I am more willing to study outside of the Netherlands now. I love the way how one can evolve with an exchange (even though it is just for six months). It makes a difference. There are friends you make, which you would have never met otherwise. There are things you learn, which can not be 'taught' by books. For a 'party' experience, I would not recommend this destination. The city is quite 'dead', but for me it had every beauty with the mountains surrounding it. So: YES, if you want to hike a lot, are okay with a more quiet ambiente and love to befriend the locals. And: NO, if you want to party and do a lot of activities (organised by others), so think about certain events. There are some, but not as much in other cities and destinations.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Bring a car if you want to hike a lot or visit spots in the mountain, because the bus is not well connected. Try really to not only hang out with Erasmus people, but find some Italian friends. They are so welcoming and guest-free. It would be a waste to not invest some time in to get to know the 'real' Italian culture and people. I opened my eyes with how welcoming and friendly they are!

faculty/college	Faculty of Science, Department of Information and Computer Sciences
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Informatica

destination city & country	Trento, Italy
how did you travel to your destination?	by car
name university abroad	Università degli Studi di Trento
start date	12 / 09 / 2022 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	01 / 02 / 2023 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION
exchange application process
Already at the beginning I was quite sure I wanted to go to Italy. So I applied to the locations in Italy which appealed to me. I needed to fill in and write some documents and do some other things listed on the uu.nl exchange page.
counselling & support at Utrecht University
Tessa Schutte, the faculty of science international officer, helped me a lot with the whole process and I could ask her all my questions.
academic preparation
The courses at Utrecht prepared me well enough for all courses I took in Italy.
language preparation
My father is Italian, so I already had a decent level of Italian. I took a B1 exam beforehand in case I would need it, which I passed without much difficulty.
finances
I saved quite some money beforehand, used the erasmus grant and got around 100 euros every month from DUO as public transport compensation. Saving quite some money beforehand was quite important because Erasmus+ gave me my grant very late.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD
study programme (content and organisational issues)
Making my study plan was quite a mess. In Trento they do not make the timetables available until very late, so you need to make due with the ones from the previous year, which of course do not match up perfectly. I needed to change quite some things afterwards, but in the end all went well.
academic quality of education activities
My subjects were very interesting. The lecturers of the courses I took in English had a decent level of English. The study load is on average less than in the Netherlands, and the exams are generally easier than those in the Netherlands. Some of my exams were oral instead of written.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad
The counselling was great. All my questions were answered clearly. I also learned that the average Italian, at least where I studied, answers an email insanely fast. One problem however is that Italian IT facilities are often not as clear as Dutch ones.
transfer of credits
I filled in an online check-out form after which the contact person from Trento emailed me my Transcript of Records. Up until this moment, I have not used it to transfer credits.

STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme
The welcome of the university was not that great. There was an online meeting where the exchange coordinator of Trento explained some things.
accommodation
Knowing the Dutch housing situation, I started quite early with looking for a house. The Italian housing situation is far less worse, so I found my house quite fast. I used a service called Spotahome, where I found an apartment from the organisation DoveVivo, which was great. I payed 450 a month, which is even relatively expensive for Italian standards.
leisure & culture
<p>Trento is located in the middle of the Dolomites. wherever you look, you see mountains. You can go on hikes and go climbing, and in the winter you can go skiing and snowboarding.</p> <p>Even tho Trento is close to Austria, it is very much Italian. They speak Italian and I believe they are culturally a lot closer to typical Italy than Austria. However, the more north you go, the more German you hear. In Bolzano they for example speak both fluently.</p> <p>Although Trento is a student city, don't expect to go out a lot. There are definitely some options, but there really aren't many.</p>
suggestions/tips
I highly suggest to explore the beautiful Dolomites. go hiking, go skying, go climbing!

CONCLUSIONS
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
I defininetly would suggest it to every mountain lover.
do you have any additional advice or comments?
The food is amazing