



ERASMUS+ STUDIES UU Report

Every student receiving an Erasmus+ STUDIES grant has to submit a UU report as well. Writing the UU report is one of the university's conditions to receive and keep the grant. Only after submitting this report your Erasmus+ grant will be awarded definitively.

Your report will be made available (anonymously) to UU students preparing an exchange or research period abroad. Not all of them are Dutch-speaking, therefore we prefer to receive reports **written in English**.

Please use Tab to go to the next (text) box.

family name	
first name	
student number	
e-mail address	<i>optional; only if you don't mind students preparing for study abroad contacting you directly</i> @
faculty/college	Geosciences
level	<input type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Urban & Economic Geography

destination city & country	Milan, Italy
name university abroad	Bocconi
start date	28 / 8 / 2017 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	22 / 12 / 2017 (dd/mm/yyyy)

You are requested to write on the following topics. Text boxes will expand automatically while typing!

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	
	The process went smooth and didn't take a lot of time.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	
	Generally good, although there was the odd requirement of attaining at least 22.5 ects in courses to get my grant, while also having to write a 45 ects thesis as a requirement from my own study. For some reason, these 45 ects could not count towards the 22.5 ects grant requirement.
academic preparation	
	I did not have any academic preparation, as I took courses that are not taught in my own Master's.
language preparation	
	As a language preparation, I took a language course in the first two weeks in Milan. This course was organised by the university itself en very good. Also, it wasn't expensive, and I believe that for Bachelor's students, you could even make it count as proper ects on your diploma.
finances	



I had enough money beforehand to guarantee an affordable stay. Be aware that Milan is a very expensive city. A simple room in a flat can be 800 euros a month (I lived in a university dorm on the edge of town, which was already 500 euros per month, but cheap in comparison to where most people lived).

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

I took three courses: Advanced Statistics for Economics and Social Sciences, Industry Analysis, and Fundamentals of innovation. While the latter two were very doable (I would say a lot easier than the average UU Master's course), the statistics course was very hard. That course is part of their Economics and Social Sciences Master's, which is regarded as the hardest and most quantitative Master's at Bocconi. I would pick a course from that Master's programme only if you're in for a proper challenge.

academic quality of education activities

The academic quality of the Italian educational system is miles below the Dutch level (and Bocconi is considered to be the best university in Italy). The difference is not so much in the content, which is comparable to the UU and often more difficult, but rather in the teaching methods and the way of testing knowledge. Teaching wise, only lectures are given, with very little interaction between lecturer and student. There is no such thing as a seminar or work group in which you can actually discuss the content of readings. Therefore, the focus is only on the reproduction of knowledge and only in small part on critical reflection or application of the knowledge. Don't be surprised to find yourselves trying to remember whole chapters from a book or practicing mathematical proofs every day (although I've been told this way of teaching is pretty much a standard in other international business schools as well). Testing wise, it's all about the exams, of which you have two in a semester, which together form your whole grade (although some courses have the odd group work that also counts towards the final grade). In sum, studying is more of a challenge than at the UU, because of lower quality teaching and a focus on memory, rather than knowledge.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

The support at the university was very good. I had some problems with the payment of my room at first (online payment with a debit card doesn't exist in Italy), but that was solved well by the service members.

transfer of credits

At the moment of writing this, I did not yet receive my transcript of records.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

The welcome programme itself was really standard, with only a generic welcome lecture. However, there were a lot of supplemental welcome events that were really nice. I went on a city tour, stadium tour and to musea with other international students, which is a good way to get to know people.

accommodation

The accommodations of the university were downright embarrassing for a university of its reputation. While the lecture halls were fine, the library is the worst I've ever experienced. There is a total lack of study spots in the whole university, and the library was very crowded every day, and above all, never quiet. My apartment wasn't really good by Dutch standards, but more than decent for Milanese standards. I paid 500 euros for a 10 square meter place in a university dorm on the edge of town, around half an hour away from the university. The plus side of this Arcobaleno residence was that it was very clean, and because you can get a student transport card, the trips to the university were not annoying from a financial point of view. On the down side, it did take me at least an hour per day to commute to the university, and the city centre was at least



45 minutes away for a single trip. The internet quality was absolute stone age, making it impossible to for instance Skype with my family and friends.

leisure & culture

There is plenty to do in Milan and its surroundings. The ESN student association organises a lot of activities, such as city trips, but also nights out. While Milan itself isn't the prettiest Italian city, the cultural life is pretty rich, and there are activities for everyone: the opera, concerts, musea, night clubs, football and basketball matches etc. Above all, going to a restaurant offers a lot better value for money compared to the Netherlands. If you want to visit nicer Italian cities, Milan is very conveniently located. Como, Turin, Bergamo and Verona are nice cities close by, and other cities are easy to reach by high-speed train. There are also three airports with low-cost airlines offering a lot of destinations, so it is easy to make city trips during the weekends.

suggestions/tips

When making a budget: food is cheaper in Italy than in the Netherlands, but going out to clubs and buying drinks is at least twice as expensive compared to Utrecht.

CONCLUSIONS

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

I would recommend Milan if you are interested in Italy and still have a lot to discover: it is conveniently located and the university is pretty international, so the culture shock is not too large. I wouldn't recommend it from the academic point of view: the level of teaching is much higher at the UU, and the facilities at Bocconi are just not up to standard.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Save this UU report for your own records and upload the report in your Erasmus+ file/application in Osiris within 30 days after finishing your study abroad period and in ANY case before the final deadline!

See *Erasmus+ Studies timeline and instructions* for more details. Please **upload in Word (.docx)** so we can delete your personal details between processing for grant purposes and publication on the website for future UU exchange students.