



Universidad Autónoma de Madrid

2019 – 2020

PREPARATION
exchange application process
The application process was a little bit of time, but not too hard! Everything is explained clearly and easily to do
counselling & support at Utrecht University
I had a lot of contact with the International Office at the Utrecht University because I had some difficulties with uploading some forms etc. They were really helpful and I want to give a big thank you to Vera Noot!
academic preparation
For the academic preparation I tried to read all the courses and the things to do at UAM (Universidad Autonoma de Madrid) really carefully before I applied for courses
language preparation
I took lessons at the Spanish language school "Spaans leren vamos" with Joan. It was really helpful!
finances
It is not too cheap. I had my apartment 550 euro's a month and for the rest you do a lot of fun things next to studying so I spent around 1000 euro's a months including trips to other cities in Spain etc.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD
study programme (content and organisational issues)
I studied 2 English courses and 2 Spanish courses
academic quality of education activities
The Spanish courses were very hard, because they talk really fast and it was hard to keep up. The English courses were okay. One course "Derecho Comercio Internacional" was of really good quality and i've learned a lot. Unfortunately the other course "Derecho Case Law" was a little bit dissapointing. The teachers quality of teaching and their English was not really good and the course was not what I expected.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
I did not need coueslling or support at UAM, so I do not know
transfer of credits
?

STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme
It was really nice! There were a lot of activities to make new friends at get to know the new university!
accommodation
I lived in a really nice neighborhood "Malasana", I would recommend it to everyone! You can get your accomodation either via 'idealista' or 'helpmadrid', those are websites.
leisure & culture
I love the Spanish culture! The food and the people are really nice and the city is very much alive always.



suggestions/tips
I would suggest to live in either Malasana or Lavapiés, really cool upcoming neighborhoods with a lot of nice people :)

CONCLUSIONS
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
Yes. The UAM is a really nice university.
do you have any additional advice or comments?
No

2018 – 2019

PREPARATION
exchange application process
The exchange application process in the Netherlands was good and was not too difficult. The UU webpage is clear about what to do to complete your application. However, I sent once the wrong form of the learning agreement to my university in Spain, but with help of the International office, it was alright. So the application process in Utrecht was easy but in Spain it was more difficult. They needed all kinds of different forms which I completed completely, but there was always something wrong and I needed to wait for ages to receive an answer from the UAM.
counselling & support at Utrecht University
The support at Utrecht University was good. I did not ask them a lot, but when I asked something, they helped me friendly and quickly. Besides that, I did not need to wait long for receiving their responses. The good thing was that you could just walk by the international office during certain hours of the week to ask them everything what you wanted them to ask. There were also a few meetings in which the people of the international office explained how to complete every step and what the deadlines were for all those steps. This was really useful.
academic preparation
I did not do any academic preparation, because I did not know what the content of my Spanish courses would be. I already had criminal law in the Netherlands, but this is quite different in Spain, so only some of the principles were useful. Besides this, I was not sure about those courses, because everything was quite vague and I needed to do another registration for those courses in Spain.
language preparation
Since 3 out of 4 courses were in Spanish, I already prepared myself for this challenge in the Netherlands. First of all, I had Spanish classes at my high school. Besides that, I completed the first year language courses of the Spanish Bachelor of Utrecht University. This was quite a good preparation for my classes in Spain, however, all of my classmates were Spanish which meant that the teachers talked quite quickly. But do not worry, people will help you and send you their notes.
finances
The most important thing to keep in mind is that it is quite expensive to live 5 months abroad, because there are many organizations that organize some really nice trips that you do not want to miss. Besides that, when renting a place to live, you need to take a look at organizations that do not ask for a certain fee. In my case, this was quite a lot.



STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

I chose to do follow 3 law courses in Spanish and 1 law course in English. In Spain, criminal law is divided in two parts: the general part and the specific/special part. I chose to follow both of them in Spanish, which was truly interesting. In the general part you study the theory of a crime and in the other part, you study a lot of different types of crimes. Besides this, I studied Economic criminal law. At the beginning everything was quite difficult because all of my class mates were Spanish, except me. This meant that the teacher talked quite quickly in Spanish using a different vocabulary than I was used to. The other students were quite nice, so they helped me when necessary. At the beginning it was also very difficult that I did not know the basis of the Spanish criminal law system. Besides that, we did not get a certain book. They just named some books with the right information, so it was not very clear what to study from those books. However, everything worked out fine, since I passed all the courses. In addition, I followed international trade law. I did not really like this subject, but I thought that 4 courses in Spanish was too much and too difficult. However, the Spanish courses were easier to follow than the English one, because the English of the Spanish teachers was not that good. It was very often hard to understand since they did not pronounce the words properly.

academic quality of education activities

In my opinion, the Spanish courses were better than the English one. For the Spanish courses, we had the same teacher during the whole semester. For the English course, this changed every now and then, because every teacher taught a different part of the course. I did not really like this, because we learned from everything a bit and we did not really go into depth. Because of this, I liked the Spanish courses better and I really wanted to improve my Spanish language skills, which I did through the Spanish courses. Besides this, the Spanish courses were way more structured than the English course.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

I did not really like the support at the UAM. I needed to wait quite a long time for a response of the ORI (international office) when I sent an email and if I went to their office, there was often a long line. I have waited once for 1,5 hour to get my registration fixed. However they were nice and got everything fixed, but it took ages.

transfer of credits

I am not sure yet if this is the same, but we will see.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

The welcome meeting of the faculty of law was interesting because they explained how their system worked and they told us about every deadline, for instance for the registration of courses. After the presentation we got a tour through the building which was useful.

The welcome meeting of ESN was more fun. The presentation itself was not really useful for me, but the tour with different kinds of activities was nice to get to know other people. After the tour we ate paella with loads of other students.

accommodation

I used Spotahome to find a room in Madrid. It was really easy to use this webpage, because there is a map and on this map you can see which rooms are available. One thing that I want to mention is that this organization (or HelpMadrid) asks for a fee. This fee is quite high. So you might find and use another webpage on which you do not need to pay the fee.

leisure & culture

I loved studying in Madrid. There are many things that you can do and there are many organizations that



organize some really nice activities/trips (for instance Citylife). You do not need to get bored in Madrid, because there are many museums, parks, nice bars, clubs, etc. Besides this, there are many nice little cities close to Madrid, for instance Salamanca and Toledo. Another thing that I liked a lot is escaping the big city and go for a hike in the mountains. A cultural difference is that the people in Madrid (Spain) eat quite late, but you will get used to it quite quickly.
suggestions/tips
Enjoy your time in Madrid as much as you can and do a lot of activities and trips!

CONCLUSIONS
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
I would recommend the university AND the destination. People think that you do not need to study and that everything is quite easy in Spain, well this was not the case at my university. I learned a lot, but I really needed to study for it. Besides this, Madrid is an amazing destination for your Erasmus. You will meet many international AND Spanish people.
do you have any additional advice or comments?
Ask the students from the receiving university for help, because it is quite difficult to find out everything yourself.

PREPARATION
exchange application process
The exchange process took quite a lot of time and I had underestimated this.
counselling & support at Utrecht University
My contact person was very helpful. If I did not understand something, I contacted her and she was directly there to help at all times.
academic preparation
I did not do this
language preparation
English test needed to be made in advance. For me this was quite easy since
finances
The preparation of costs and expenses had been quite useful for me in advance. However, in the end the costs abroad turned out a bit higher.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD
study programme (content and organisational issues)
The course enrolment procedure in Madrid was a bit of a mess compared to the one in Utrecht. Initially I wanted to take some other courses, but this was not possible anymore at the time of enrolment. In the end I followed innovation, marketing, international business and accounting courses. In my opinion the content was well-organized and linked to current problems which I experienced very pleasant
academic quality of education activities
The quality of the education activities was less than at Utrecht University. The teachers were less prepared than I was used to in Utrecht. Nevertheless, I had to present quite often, which increased my presentation skills. The exams were only multiple choice, which in my opinion does not challenge the students enough.



counselling & support at receiving university abroad
I did not use this that often. However, when I needed something and emailed them, they responded always quickly
transfer of credits
So far I did not receive my transfer of credits yet

STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme
I was not able to attend this programme since I had to finish my thesis in Utrecht
accommodation
The accommodation I had arranged in advance turned out to be perfect. Despite the high rent I had to pay, my room was located well and all the facilities were perfect.
leisure & culture
I made a lot of trips to for example Segovia and Toledo to get to know the culture more. Furthermore, in the weekends I tried to discover new things in Madrid.
suggestions/tips
Do not constantly do the same things, but change your plans

CONCLUSIONS
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
Yes I would sincerely recommend this university and destination. The university is well-organized and Madrid is an incredible city
do you have any additional advice or comments?



2016-2017

preparation
exchange/placement application process
I applied a long time ago to go to Spain. I had already decided to go to Spain because I really liked that country. I didn't care about where I would go. So I signed up for three cities in Spain. The UU wrote me later that I had to go to Madrid. The application procedure was not too much work. It is important to take a good look at the universities, so you know which one you should choose. Not all the information is on the internet. I can recommend to ask for more language information if you are not sure in what language the lessons will be.
counselling/support at home university
The support from my home university was good. They were always willing to help when there was a problem.
academic preparation
I had no academic preparation. I choose subjects which I hadn't had before in my bachelor. So I didn't know what to expect. I knew in Spain the level of the subjects are not the same as in Holland. So there was no need to prepare myself for the subjects.
language preparation
In the beginning I thought I could do all my lessons in English. 2 months before I left I found out this was not the case. So I tried to do a Spanish language course to repeat my Spanish knowledge. But it was too late, because all the courses already started or I could not finish before I left. I had no language preparation. This was very bad. Because in Spain almost everyone speaks Spanish. Sometimes they speak English but some are not willing to. So for the communication it is good to know some basic Spanish, when you get there.
finances
I had some savings where I could get money from while I was in Madrid. I found out that it is not necessary to have extra money. When you get your student financing or lend money from DUO it must be enough to live in Madrid. The accommodation is more expensive than in Utrecht. I start early with searching for a room so I had a cheap (but very small) room. Further, I wanted to do some extra things for fun and they are more expensive.



study/placement abroad period

study programme/work plan (concerning content and organisational issues)

I had a study program before I arrived in Madrid but it turned out this was not good. I had Spanish subjects and these were way to difficult. So I switched. One English course was deleted because there were too less students. At the end of my first month I had 6 ECTS left. I had to find new courses by myself. I went to other faculties and teachers to ask for courses. In the end I found more subjects and changed my old ones. This



process was very stressfull and hard to do, but luckily I made it work out.
academic quality of education/placement activities
The quality of the courses in Spain is not the same as in Holland. You must have in mind that it is less difficult and the teachers are not very strict. I was surprised by the way they give notes, because you can get a high note very easily. You need to know what they want from you and how you have to act in class.
counselling/support at host institution/organisation
The international office in Spain was also very different. Nothing went very easy and quick. When you asked something most of the time they don't know. I think maybe it is also because I always asked in English. And even the people in the international office prefer to speaks Spanish instead of English. One woman was very kind and she helped me a lot with my subjects and things I didn't know. So you need to find the right people, who wants to help you.
transfer of credits
The transfer of credits was very difficult. In the beginning I had not enough information to send the right information to the examencommissie. So it took very long before my courses where accepted. The transcript of records was not well organised by the international office in Madrid. So now one big course is not on my diploma because I had to graduate. And my graduation was before I got the right transcript of records. I didn't need the ECTS for my graduation but the course is not on my list, so I worked for nothing.
student life
welcome/orientation programme
There was a welcome programme. As I said before, this welcome day was also in Spanish. It is a good way to learn but I didn't understand nothing. I think they gave good information, but I'm not sure. I asked other students to help.
accommodation
I had a very good room. I found this room at Help Madrid. This is an organisation with rooms for exchange students. The room was at a good location and it was not too expensive. I lived with 5 other exchange students, so this was very nice. We became good friends. In the house was fully equipped and we had a big living room.
leisure/culture
The culture in Madrid was the best part of my exchange. It's the capital of Spain and that's why this city is so cool. Everyday there is something to do and in every street you can find nice shops and restaurants. I only had Erasmus friends because I had no Spanish people around me. I think Spanish people are not very willing to be friends with Erasmus people. I don't think it was a problem I only had Erasmus friends. Because there were a lot of activities organised by different organisations. These are special for exchange people. This is a good way to meet new people.



suggestions/tips

Go to the activities from Citylife Madrid. Here you can meet new people.

Do the same things as Spanish people. This is the best way to deal with the differences. For example: Spanish people are laid back and nothing goes really quick. So the best way to deal with it, is to be very slow too.

conclusions

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

I would recommend this host university and destination to other people. If someone speaks Spanish, this university is very good. People who don't speak Spanish and you are not willing to put a lot of effort in your subjects and university procedures, can better choose another place to go on Erasmus.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

The advice I would give to the home university is that it maybe would help if there is a language test before departure. So you can select people who can speak a bit Spanish. This will help a lot.

To the people who go to Madrid I would say, that this is the best place and city you can be. Learn some Spanish before and don't worry too much, Spanish people don't worry at all. So follow this way of living.



2016-2017

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	
	The application process for my exchange went very smoothly. We got a lot of information regarding what partner universities we could go to, what documents we had to prepare in advance and how to actually apply.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	
	The support at the University of Utrecht was really good. In person or by e-mail, there was always someone who could give you the information you needed and communication never went slow.
academic preparation	
	I did not really do any academic preparation.
language preparation	
	The language preparation was really hard. I did not really have a good base in Spanish and I was told that it was not possible to take all your courses in English at the University I went to. That is why I started learning Spanish in my free time, however this was very hard. When you learn a language solely off paper, you do not really get a good view on how to use your knowledge in practice.
finances	
	I financed my study abroad by my regular student grant, my Erasmus+ grant and my parents also helped me a lot.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	
	I studied Law abroad, however I took a lot of different courses than I expected. I soon realized that the Spanish courses I chose were way too hard for me. Because you are not in Erasmus classes but just in regular classes with Spanish students, the teachers talk very fast and cannot really take extra time to help you. That is why I had to switch up my study programme and this actually caused a lot of issues. At the law faculty, there were not enough courses in English to match up to my requirement of ECTS, so I had to go to all the other faculties and search for courses that would not overlap with the courses I already had. Furthermore, most of the courses were already full so I had to wait for almost an entire month before I actually knew if I could enroll. That caused me to miss the whole start of the course. Finally, when I thought I figured everything out, I was told that one of my courses would not take place at all, so I could start the whole process over again.
academic quality of education activities	
	The academic quality for some courses were a bit lower than in the Netherlands. For some courses you could choose to do a paper/presentation instead of an actual exam. You do not really have to prepare assignments for the classes either, just readings.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad	
	The support at my receiving university was actually not that good. There were some people who were willing to help you, however everything went really, really slow and I had to figure out a lot of things on my own.
transfer of credits	
	Not sure yet.



STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme
The welcome & orientation programme was good, as it offered you a lot of different activities to get to know other students, the city and the university itself.
accommodation
I got my student room via idealista.com. I just sent a Whatsapp message and could see the room the same day. It was in the city centre and it cost me 450 euros per month.
leisure & culture
Madrid has a lot of great (cultural) activities to offer. Furthermore in summer you can do amazing things in for example all the parks.
suggestions/tips

CONCLUSIONS
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
I would only recommend this university if you speak good Spanish. It is hard to follow courses only in English, and a lot of people are not really willing to help you if you do not speak Spanish. I had a great time, but if my Spanish would have been better I would have had an easier time and a lot more fun.
do you have any additional advice or comments?

