



UU Report form - Erasmus 2023-2024

faculty/college	social and behavioural sciences
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	sociology

destination city & country	Limerick, Ireland
how did you travel to your destination?	By plane
name university abroad	University of Limerick
start date	04 / 09 / 2023 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	22 / 12 / 2023 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

The application process at Utrecht was quite easy and the information available was very clear. I had no trouble finding answers for questions I had online on the Utrecht University website. For Limerick, there were some parts that were a bit more confusing but with the help of the team at Limerick and Utrecht it all worked out.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

I had both in person as well as teams meetings before deciding which universities to put in my top 3 and both were very helpful and helped me a lot with my decision. The pre-departure meeting was also very helpful, especially at the end when you can meet people who are going to the same country/university as you. I was able to meet a couple of other girls and we made a whatsapp groupchat and had contact/helped each other out with all the application forms etc.

academic preparation

Since I study sociology in Utrecht and was selected for the sociology programme abroad as well, I did not need any specific academic preparation.

language preparation

In Ireland everyone speaks English, which is why I did not need to do any language preparation. There was also no requirement to take an English language test for this university.

finances

I made sure to save up over the years because I knew I wanted to go abroad for my studies. I do recommend saving up as much as you can because that way you can make the most out of your time abroad by travelling around the country, joining clubs and societies and going out for food and drinks with friends. Besides saving up, you also receive the erasmus grant which helps out a lot as well and you might be eligible for grants from DUO.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

As previously mentioned I was nominated for the sociology programme. At the University of Limerick most of the courses are 6 ECTS which means you have to take 5 courses to receive the 30 ECTS. The requirement for the Erasmus programme is that you have to take at least 3 courses in the programme you were nominated in, which was sociology for me and the other two courses you could take any academic course that the exam



committee would approve of. I decided to take two psychology courses. There were quite a few courses from which you can pick, sadly not every course is open to internationals but they publish a separate list for internationals. The subjects for sociology were on a variety of subjects and there were some that are not offered at Utrecht which I liked.
academic quality of education activities
The layout of the courses was a bit different than what I was used to. There were no seminars for any of my courses but I know that other courses did have seminars so that is not universal for all courses. Instead of writing academic articles, we mostly wrote essays, which was also new for me. I was used to doing a lot of groupwork in Utrecht but I did not have any groupwork in Limerick, but again other courses did have groupwork just not the ones I took. I would say in general, the material and content was a bit more broad instead of more indepth compared to Utrecht and assessments were a bit easier in my opinion but also different so you would have to get used to it first (essays/online quizzes/written exams).
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
The incoming Erasmus team at University of Limerick is great. They respond quickly to your emails and provide you with a lot of information prior to your arrival. The university also provides multiple counselling services for their students if they need help.
transfer of credits
I have not yet received my transcript of records but the communication on it so far from both universities has been clear so I don't think there will be any problems.

STUDENT LIFE	
welcome & orientation programme	The welcome programme for international students starts a week before the actual lectures start. In this orientation week, the global office had organised different activities and information sessions for each day and provides you with a schedule and sign-up emails for activities prior to your arrival. The week was so full but you can decide where and when you want to go. But especially the first few days for making friends the activities were so helpful and well-organised. Also the information sessions were helpful with setting up your module schedule and other important stuff.
accommodation	This is where I had the most problems. The University of Limerick has a huge beautiful campus and offer on-campus accommodation but they do not have enough rooms for all their students. I believe around April/May you can apply on their on-campus accommodation website for on-campus accommodation which is what I did because ideally you would want to live on campus. About a month later, I was notified that I did not get a spot on-campus which was very stressful. Ireland just like The Netherlands struggles with a housing crisis and especially in cities with a lot students. After searching every possible site for housing and asking everyone around me, I still was not able to find anything. Three weeks before the start of the semester, I was emailed by the on-campus accommodation team, that someone had cancelled their spot and that it was now offered to me as I was still on their waiting list. I ended up living on-campus for the entire semester in Kilmurry Village and it was very good! I had 5 other housemates and we shared the living area, kitchen en 2 bathrooms. For every on-campus village they have a laundrette, study room and other facilities. If you live on-campus you also get free access to campus sport facilities and it was just very convenient to live so close to all the university buildings. I do not know many people that lived off-campus but the ones that did rented bikes and said it was doable. The university does provide help/meetings to students that did not get into on-campus accommodation. I would recommend looking at off-campus accommodation as well as signing up for on-campus accommodation and come up with a back-up plan if you do not get into on-campus because by the time you are notified, nearly everything off-campus will be full.



leisure & culture
<p>During my time in Limerick I made sure to go on a lot of different trips. The university organizes a couple of trips for the first few weekends (usually on either Saturday or Sunday and around 40 euros) which are nice to go on since the public transport in Ireland is not that good. Trips that you can do around Limerick are visiting the Bunratty Castle, Killaloe and within the city of Limerick there are activities every now and then as well. For daytrips in Ireland we went to: Cork, Galway, Killarney (and the National park), Cliffs of Moher, Dublin & Wicklow Mountains, Kilkenny. A visit to both Edinburgh and Belfast are very much worth it as well especially closer to christmas time if you are going in the autumn semester as they have great xmas markets! The pub culture in Ireland is definitely very fun as well and there are plenty of nice pubs in every city that you can have a great time at. The University of Limerick offers lots of different clubs and societies and I would 100% recommend signing up for a couple since there is something for everyone. The clubs that I joined were super fun and it was the best way to meet Irish students and I got to go on some amazing weekend trips with the kayakclub so I would definitely recommend joining that one if you like adventure and meeting the nicest group of people.</p>
suggestions/tips
<p>I would recommend getting a creditcard. You won't need it for buying anything in store (your debitcard will do for that) but for accommodation and online purchases (also for signing up for clubs & societies you will need one) it is practical to have one. Also I would recommend getting a leapcard (you can only get it delivered to an Irish address so just get one when you arrive), which is a public transport card. The global office will mention it during the orientation week but definitely get one as it saves you money. You are going to need some cash, especially euro coins. In buses (for when you don't have your leapcard yet) you need to pay with cash and for some smaller stores or for when you are travelling to smaller villages they might only accept cash. Also for getting to Limerick from Dublin I would recommend booking a bus via citylink and getting off at Castletroy (the hurlers) if you are going to the University (its about a 15 minute walk from the busstop). Some fun pubs in and around Limerick are The Hurlers in Castletroy and The Locke Bar in Limerick city.</p>

CONCLUSIONS
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
<p>Yes, the campus is really nice and green and they offer so many different things (clubs&societies, counselling services, trips and other activities) for students. The courses were fine and not too difficult and if you plan well, you will have lots of time for leisure and fun activities next to your studies. Ireland is great destination with a nice culture, fun people and beautiful nature. The only downside was the accommodation struggle but it is worth trying and if you make sure to look at other accommodation options as well/have a backup plan, it should be fine!</p>
do you have any additional advice or comments?



UU Report form - Erasmus 2023-2024

faculty/college	Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Psychology

destination city & country	Limerick, Ireland
how did you travel to your destination?	Airplane
name university abroad	University of Limerick
start date	04 / 09 / 2023 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	22 / 12 / 2023 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

I decided which country would suit me best. With a preference for English-speaking and not too far from home, and the possibility of an Erasmus+ grant, Ireland was my first choice. I listed my top three Irish universities, taking into account the financial and accommodation situation, where the University of Limerick seemed most suitable. I did some research and wrote my motivations. In the end, I got a place on the Sociology (instead of Psychology) programme at the University of Limerick.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

I attended all the meetings and discussed my options with the International Office. I also got in touch with an old exchange student who had attended the University of Limerick.

academic preparation

There was no particular academic preparation required. I did do some research into the different module options and which ones suited me best.

language preparation

There was also no need for language preparation. For assignments and emails, however, 'DeepL write website' can be very useful.

finances

I made a spreadsheet of my income and expenses to get an overview. And most of my income came from DUO.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

There was a module booklet with a selection of modules that you could take as an international. I had to take five, but you had to write down ten possible modules that you might want to take. When I was at the university there were actually a lot of changes in the modules, which caused some confusion, but they give you about two weeks to follow certain classes and choose which ones you want to take, so in the end it all worked out.

academic quality of education activities

The academic quality was quite good. The lecturers were very knowledgeable and passionate about their subject, but there were some differences between lecturers. There was an emphasis on either essays or a final exam.



counselling & support at receiving university abroad

The counselling and support was good. If you had any questions about anything, you could contact the incoming Erasmus team.

transfer of credits

As a Semester 1 student I will receive my results on the 25th of January. The University of Limerick will also send these results to the International Office at Utrecht University for further registration with the examination board. All results are converted into a Pass/Fail grade.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

The welcome and orientation programme was very extensive. There were a lot of different activities, something for everyone, and it lasted for a week. Then there were a lot of activities throughout the semester.

accommodation

Finding accommodation wasn't as easy as I had hoped. There was a lottery for on-campus accommodation where I ended up on the waiting list. Finding off-campus accommodation was difficult because of the number of students living in Limerick. I contacted almost every available place and was turned down many times. I even visited Limerick in the summer to look for a place, but with no luck. I was finally offered a place on campus at the beginning of August. I would advise you not to get your hopes up for on-campus accommodation, but to at least apply for off-campus accommodation on time to have a back-up.

leisure & culture

Limerick is a great city with nice people and lovely pubs. The university organised a lot of trips outside Limerick, visiting many historical places and beautiful nature. There are also beautiful castles and nice cities to visit in Ireland, such as Cork, Galway and Belfast. So if you are studying here, I highly recommend exploring as much as you can.

suggestions/tips

I have been lucky enough to have a small group of friends that I have bonded with very quickly, so I have never felt lonely. Therefore, my advice would be to go to activities, socialise, find people with the same interests and definitely join a club or society. UL has so many clubs/societies, it is just amazing and a great way to meet Irish people and explore Irish culture. I highly recommend the Kayak Club :)

CONCLUSIONS

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

I highly recommend this university and Ireland! I have had the best time here. The student life is good, lots of opportunities for different people, great library and study atmosphere. There is a lot of support from the incoming Erasmus team. And the campus is beautiful. I was lucky enough to live on campus, which might have made some things easier than living further away, but living in the city also has its charms. No two experiences are the same. Ireland itself is amazing. The people, nature and history are very interesting and highly recommended. Be sure to go to a rugby or hurling match.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Having some friends can make a lot of things easier because you can do things together. So try to socialise a bit every now and then. Almost everyone comes alone and is looking for the same thing, especially at the beginning of the semester.



UU Report form - Erasmus 2023-2024

faculty/college	Social Science
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Psychology

destination city & country	Limerick, Ireland
how did you travel to your destination?	By plane and train
name university abroad	University of Limerick
start date	04 / 09 / 2023 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	23 / 12 / 2023 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

The preparation process is clear. You have more than enough time to do this. It may be a lot of paperwork, but you can always contact the international office for help.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

As I said, the counseling from international office is very good and helpful.

academic preparation

I am a psychology student, and took psychology modules in UL as well. So no further preparation was necessary.

language preparation

No language preparation, just a confirming letter from i.o. that my English language proficiency is sufficient.

finances

Ireland is quite expensive, so luckily I could apply for an Erasmus Grant. It is easy to do so, and i.o. will help getting you through the process. My room cost about €770 a month, which was cheaper than my room in Utrecht. But grocery shopping, having a beer or eating out often turned out to be more expensive than I initially expected

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

Picking psychology modules at UL seemed easy at the beginning. But once we had to pick our modules the second week, it became a bit confusing. For erasmus students, UL initially offers the full booklet of modules so you can see which modules are available. Of course, a minimum of 3 psychology modules is set. Once in UL, we were given a selection of modules that were specifically for Erasmus Students or internationals. This resulted in very few options for me as a psychology student, as I had already taken some of these modules at UU, or they had too much overlap, or were too low a level. In addition, the only module that I was sure would be approved had students excluded or random selected because of the many applications.

Everything worked out in the end, as I was also able to choose two sociology modules.

I also went to UL's person of contact for internationals. She told me that I could always choose another module



that was not indicated in the booklet for internationals, if we applied for it. She said it always works out. The modules I took were 'Developmental Psychopathology (level 3)', 'Applied Psychology (level 2)', 'Psychology of the Personality (level 2)', 'Sociology of Gender and Popular Culture (level 2)' and 'Sociology of Mental Health and Illness (level 2)'
academic quality of education activities
The level of the modules are lower than in the Netherlands. I did not have any exams, so I cannot compare this type of examining, but I have written 2 essays for each module. In my opinion, this was easy to do and did not take me a lot of time. The expectation of your writing style differs a bit from the expectations in the Netherlands, but the planned tutorials will explain what is expected of you.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
The support of the receiving university was very good. They were easy to approach and responded very quickly. Most of the time you had an answer within a day. Also, you could just stop by in the office of UL Global (their office for internationals)
transfer of credits
The grading system in UL is different from the grading system at UU. They work with an A-E scale. You will receive a pass or fail for these modules in UU. I have not received my grades for my last essays yet, but once I do, I can find them on their studentweb.

STUDENT LIFE	
welcome & orientation programme	The first week after you arrive is fully focused on welcoming international students. You have the option to sign up for different kind of activities, like your first grocery shopping at Lidl, a scavenger hunt on campus to get to know the environment, a tour through the different university buildings and sport arena, a trip to the milk market in the city centre, rugby training, movie night in one of the lecture halls, Irish cooking class, etc. You can sign up for these via a link sent to you in the 'count down emails' of UL. With these emails, they try to help you to get you prepared for your arrival. If you're staying on campus, you have to let the reception of your village know when you're arriving. Once you arrive, they help you out with Wi-Fi, the keys and the location of your house. Overall, I couldn't have wished for a warmer welcoming.
accommodation	If I speak for myself, I had no trouble getting a house at all. There is a possibility to live on campus. UL has a couple of villages, varying in price and amount of persons per house and facilities. When applying for UL, you have a chance to 'rate' the villages and fill in your most and least favorable village. Based on random selection, you will be allocated to one of these villages. I was assigned to my first choice, so for me it was settled. But for others it became a problem. If you won't be selected, you will have trouble finding housing in Ireland. Not just internationals, but also the Irish students find themselves in trouble getting a room. I spoke to other international students who were not assigned to a village on campus, and for some of them it took over 2 hours travelling to get to the campus. One other thing about the housing, for me, life on campus made my exchange the time of my life. I met my friends through my roommates and the roommates of my friends became my friends as well. So getting a room on campus would be a recommendation. If you are not selected, make sure you are on the waiting list. Two friends of mine got a room on campus just two weeks before departure. So don't give up hope.
leisure & culture	Don't get me started on the Irish culture. The Irish are the sweetest, most lovely and funniest people I have ever met. Every single Irish person I have met was incredibly helpful and kind. I have to say, for me Irish culture is the pubs. The atmosphere is amazing, and everywhere you go there is a singer with a guitar or a fiddle playing Irish pub music. I am hooked to Guinness, and the Irish accent is just awesome. And the Irish landscape... It is just beautiful. Of course, the Cliffs of Moher are close by and are very impressive, but don't forget the national



parks of Killarney or Connemara. Rent a car and explore the Ring of Kerry, visit Cork, Galway and Dingle. Also, Ireland is about sport. The Munster Rugby team trains at the gym on campus, and they play their games in Thomond Park, about 30 minutes with the taxi from campus. It is worth watching them playing a match! Of course, you can visit castles. One close by is Bunratty Castle. There is a direct bus from campus to Bunratty. Not into a weekend trip? Just go to the pubs in the city centre, you'll have Irish people talking to you in a minute.

suggestions/tips

- Go on the trips provided by UL student life. Every Sunday for the first few weeks they organize trips to the cliffs, to th Aran Islands or to another city
- Download the Free Now Taxi app.
- Get yourself a Leap Card for public transport. You can't use your card in busses. Only cash or a leap card.
- Favorite pubs: by far the Locke Bar. Mother Macs, Flannerys Pub, The Hurlers Pub (just a 10 minute from campus), The Stables (Pub on campus)
- Sign up for a club, sport of society
- When going in the autumn semester; don't miss out on Halloween night and Christmas Day!
- You can easily go on a trip to Belfast, Edinbrough or any other city. It is worth the money!

CONCLUSIONS

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

I had the best time of my life. I would definitely recommend going to Ireland, to any university at all. But looking at the location of UL (near Galway, the west coast, Cork) and all the facilities and kind people on UL, I would recommend the University of Limerick.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Enjoy every bit, it is over in the blink of an eye.



UU Report form - Erasmus 2023-2024

faculty/college	Social Sciences
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Pedagogical Sciences

destination city & country	Limerick, Ireland
how did you travel to your destination?	By plane
name university abroad	University of Limerick
start date	03 / 09 / 2023 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	22 / 12 / 2023 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

At first I looked up to starting the entire application process, because I was overwhelmed by all the information I needed to take in and all the tasks I had to do. But after I sorted everything out, it was quite clear what was expected from me. Both Utrecht University and the University of Limerick provided me with clear instructions on what to do. I received the first email with tasks from the University of Limerick in early may (Semester 1) and received a couple more of these. Do not underestimate how much time you need to complete these tasks and write down the deadlines to make you save yourself some stress.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

The social sciences international office has always been of great help to me, whenever I had a question I would send them an email and they would respond quite quick and with the right information. I also found the events they organized for upcoming international students very helpful and helped me meet other students also going to the University of Limerick.

academic preparation

I went on exchange during the first semester of my third year, so by the time I went on exchange I had the sufficient amount of ECTS needed. Before going to the University of Limerick I had to make a top-10 choice of modules I wanted to take while being there. But the final module registration took place during the introduction week (you can also choose modules outside of this original top-10)

language preparation

I did not have to do a lot of language preparation before heading to Ireland, as they speak English there and all modules are given in English. I did need to hand in a Language Proficiency Statement, which the international office sent to me.

finances

Ireland is a expensive country, comparable to The Netherlands but a bit more expensive I would say. Before going to Ireland I spoke to my parents about how I was going to afford going on exchange. My parents helped me with paying rent, but the cost of living and trips I had to pay for my self. Before going to Ireland I saved up quite a bit of money from my job, applied for the erasmus grant and for OV compensation. I did not receive the 'uitwonende beurs', because I had already studied for more then four years. The university of Limerick sent me a cost of living sheet, so I had a bit of an idea about how much money I was going to have to spend on rent, food, landry, public transportation and the available food options on campus.



STUDY ABROAD PERIOD
study programme (content and organisational issues)
<p>To receive 30 ECTS I had to follow 5 modules, as (almost) all modules are 6 ECTS. I needed to follow a minimal of 3 psychology modules, for the other modules I could also choose from other departments. Before I needed to choose a top-10 during the application process, I received a book of modules. The book of modules contains all modules you are allowed to choose from as an international student. Before deciding which university to go to I checked online which modules the University of Limerick provides, so I was a bit sad that I could not follow all the interesting modules I had seen before. At first I struggled a bit with which modules to choose, because the psychology modules had a bit of overlap with the courses I had already taken in Utrecht (which is not allowed). But after comparing I did find 4 psychology modules I could take and ended up choosing 3 psychology and 2 other sociology modules. In Ireland they work with semesters (2) instead of blocks (4) that we have in Utrecht. This means that for 4 months I took the same modules, that would run for 12 weeks. For one of my modules I needed to hand in a midterm paper and for 2 modules I had online multiple choice tests every 3 weeks. At the end of the semester I needed to hand in 4 essays and for one module I had to make a on-paper test. At the university of Limerick you mostly need to write essays, having on-paper exams are less common.</p>
academic quality of education activities
<p>In my opinion the difficulty of studying in Ireland is lower than in The Netherlands. I only had lectures (hoorcolleges) and no tutorials (werkgroepen), but this differs per module. The quality of education was good and the lectures were interesting.</p>
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
<p>I was not in need of the counselling services at the University in Limerick so I can not explain a lot about that, but I do know that they offer a lot of counselling such as a writing center and a mental help center. The UL Global office was of great help to me, they send us countdown emails for 8 weeks before coming to Ireland with a lot of tips and information, came to us during orientation week, send us e-mails on what tasks were required of us (both before and after arriving at UL) and when I had a question I would email them and get a fairly quick response.</p>
transfer of credits
<p>Ireland has a different grading system than The Netherlands, their grades go from A1 to F, which means fail. Because it is difficult to compare these, all grades received transfer to a pass or fail when they are received in Utrecht. In the beginning of January (after my exchange) I received a form that I needed to fill in from the University of Limerick, so they know to which e-mail address they have to send my list of grades to. I have not yet received my grades, but if I am correct the international office sends the list to the 'examencommissie' and they will make sure that all grades are put in Osiris.</p>

STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme
<p>The University of Limerick Organized quite an extensive orientation week, with events taking place every day during the week. Some events were mandatory, these were all the informative events held by the UL Global Office. For other events I needed to sign in and some of the events were walk ins. The orientation week had so many events, that there really was something for everyone. There was a welcome coffee morning, a trip to the milk market in the city, a trip to a shopping center and the supermarket, a movie night, an event at the pub on campus, a scavenger hunt, and much more. For me, having such a busy week really helped with not feeling homesick, because I simply did not have time to do so and was rarely alone. The university of Limerick has a big campus, but this week helped me a lot with exploring and getting to know the campus.</p>



accommodation
<p>The University of Limerick offers on campus accommodation, which made my exchange a real college experience. There are multiple villages where you can live. Some of these villages have an en-suite bathroom and in some you have to share the bathroom. In the villages you live with 4 to 8 people, this also depends on your village. I lived in Cappavilla village with an en-suite bathroom and 5 housemates. I really liked living here and every day I had a beautiful walk, crossing the river the Shannon on the Living Bridge, while walking to the main campus (about a 10-15 minute walk). When applying for on-campus accommodation I needed to make a preference list with the on-campus accommodations I wanted to live in, I ended up living in my second or third choice. I had to pay a 50 euro fee, which you get back when I get my deposit back. It is also possible that you do not get offered on-campus accommodation and it is very hard for international students to find off-campus accommodation. So I would recommend searching for off-campus accommodation straight away, if you do not get offered a room on campus. But, it is still possible to get offered a room if you at first did not get offered one. Luckily I got offered a room straight away, so I can not give information on the proces of looking for a room off-campus.</p>
leisure & culture
<p>Ireland has a big drinking culture and has a lot of fun pubs to go to. Most pubs are very lively and there will most likely be live music. Limerick also has a lot of nice pubs in the city center and the on-campus pubs, mostly the stables, is nice to go to and hosts a international night for all the international students every Friday. Limerick is close to a lot of big cities such as Cork, Galway, Killarney and Dublin (all about 2-3 hours away with public transport), that are all worth going to. The University of Limerick also organizes a trip every Sunday for the first couple of weeks, these trips go to the cliffs of Moher, the Aran Islands, Cork & Blarney castle and other places. These trips are a good way to explore Ireland without having to figure out the public transport by yourself. Ireland also has a beautiful nature and is perfect for someone who likes to spend a lot of time outdoors (but ofcourse if you do not like this there are other things to do). The University of Limerick has a lot of clubs & societies to join in which you can persue different interests. These clubs arange from sports to drama to crafts, there really is something for everyone. I joined the hockey club, which enabled me to pick up the sport I played when I was younger. I really enjoyed being part of a club, as this also got me into contact with Irish people.</p>
suggestions/tips
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Get a leap card while you are there, this makes it a lot easier and cheaper traveling by bus. You would also need to carry around a lot of cash if you do not get one and some buses do not take cash. *Apply for on campus accommodation, it is the easiest way to get a room and will make it easier for yourself because you do not have to spend time traveling to campus an most international students will live on campus. * Take your time with completing all the tasks and start early, it will take some time completing these tasks and if you have questions there is still time to ask them.

CONCLUSIONS
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
<p>Yes! I would definitely recommend going to the University of Limerick, I had the time of my life while I was there. UL has a very big and green campus and I quickly felt at home there. Because I was able to live on campus, a lot of my friends lived close to me, so I never really felt alone and we met up during the week a lot. University of Limerick offers a lot to make it the best exchange period, such as trips, international night and having clubs & societies. Limerick is close to some great cities and there is so much to explore in the area. There are a lot of international students at the university, which gives you the opportunity to meet people from all over the world.</p>



do you have any additional advice or comments?

Make sure to really use the time you have while in Ireland. Go on a lot of trips, both the ones the university provides and ones you plan your self. Go on trips where you stay the night so you have more time to explore, I went to Belfast, Killarney and made a trip to Edinburgh, Scotland and really enjoyed this. Ireland is a beautiful country and I realized after being there for 4 months I still was not done exploring the country and that there are still places I would like to see one day.



UU Report form - Erasmus 2023-2024

faculty/college	Faculty of Social Sciences
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Psychology

destination city & country	Limerick, Ireland
how did you travel to your destination?	By plane
name university abroad	University of Limerick
start date	3 / 9 / 2023 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	22 / 12 / 2023 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

I would highly recommend taking enough time to familiarize yourself with all the different countries available for the exchange. This way, you can make an informed decision that suits your needs and interests. The application process is well-guided and described in detail on the website of the University of Utrecht, and if you have any questions, the International Office is easily accessible for assistance.

There are a lot of steps in the application process, which might seem overwhelming, but making a list of tasks that need to be done before, during, and after the exchange can help. Supporting documentation, such as a motivation letter and, in some cases, a language proficiency document, are required as part of the application process. You will have to give your top three destination choices, and you'll usually be offered one of them, but if not, you can choose from the remaining options.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

The International Office has been incredibly helpful every time I've had to contact them. They were also quick to respond and very friendly. They even organized a meeting for all of the EU exchange students, which was a great way to meet others who were heading to the same destination. Before and during the exchange, they sent us periodic emails reminding us of important things we needed to take care of before, during, or after our trip. Overall, I was very impressed with their level of support and would highly recommend contacting them if you have any questions about studying abroad.

academic preparation

When I was preparing to go to my exchange destination, I had to choose the modules I wanted to take while I was there. The University of Limerick website had a module booklet with courses for international students, but only a limited number were available. However, I heard that some international students were able to get into courses that weren't listed by contacting their course leader. So if you really want to take a course that's not in the booklet, you might want to try reaching out to the course leader. One thing to keep in mind is that even if you choose certain courses before you arrive, it doesn't mean you'll be able to take them. Sometimes the course doesn't continue the next year or it overlaps with another course in your schedule.

language preparation

I didn't have to take any language course to get better at English, as I had already proven my English skills to be good enough to enter the University of Utrecht. But, since I mostly speak Dutch at home, it was quite hard for me to communicate in English. I had to adjust a lot to the new language. Luckily, there were many exchange students who were in the same boat as me, so we all had enough room for mistakes and learning. However, I



found it quite difficult to understand some of the Irish students, especially those who spoke very quickly with their Irish accent. But, maybe it's just me.
finances
Studying abroad can get quite expensive, although I think my experience might have turned out less expensive than initially thought. Personally, I'd perhaps recommend keeping up with an expense tracker. I didn't do this, but it might be very beneficial, especially if you only have a certain amount of funds to use. Life in Ireland can be quite expensive, comparable to the Netherlands, and the prices for accommodation is very high (I paid around 800/900 every month for my on-campus accommodation). So I'd definitely recommend saving up before going. Also, apply for grants! Most people will probably be eligible for Erasmus Grant, although I'd still recommend looking at their requirements, and sometimes you can even apply for their top-ups which is very nice. There is one for travelling green (e.g. by train) and one for extra financial support, that is similar to the supplementary grant ("aanvullende beurs") in the Netherlands. But besides that, there are more options for grants. The UU has listed them on their website: https://students.uu.nl/en/academics/study-abroad/step-3-arrange-before-departure/funding-grants

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD
study programme (content and organisational issues)
To fulfill the requirement of 30 ECTS per semester, I had to take five modules at the University of Limerick. Three of these had to be from the program with which I attended, which was psychology. I had to make my own timetable, which was quite a puzzle. I'd definitely recommend taking the time for this. Sometimes your first choices might not work out, so it's good to have a back-up. I eventually took the following modules: Psychology and Everyday Life, Psychology of the Personality, Applied Psychology, Irish Folklore & LGBT Rights, Resistance and Redress: Gender, Sexuality and the Law. The level of these modules differed enormously: some of them were first year modules, whereas others were fourth year modules. I do have to admit that I felt there was not a lot to choose from. A lot of the modules offered I had already taken in my years at the UU, leaving me with limited options.
academic quality of education activities
The academic quality is, in my opinion, lower than what I'm used to at the University of Utrecht. It was easier. Out of the five modules, I had an exam only for two at the end of the semester: one being a multiple choice exam and one being an essay-style question exam, which we had gotten the questions for beforehand. You do get a lot more assignments than I was used to, but usually, the required level for assignments was not very high. For instance, for my Irish Folklore class I had to write a blog post every week on the topic of that week, which was usually done within two hours. Also, I had workgroups for two of my classes, but they were not comparable with the ones in the Netherlands. Basically, instead of discussing with students or working on assignments, they were just short lectures. The lectures, however, are quite comparable to the ones in the Netherlands, except that they group size might be a bit smaller.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
A lot of support was offered by the receiving university abroad. Before we arrived, we got countdown emails with a bunch of information, ranging from information about the grant to what to pack for or what to visit in Limerick. In the first week, aka "Orientation Week" during which only the international students were present, we had several information meetings. Some of them were about the university in general, others consisted of information about Erasmus. However, they were all spread out over the week, which made it a bit more manageable instead of getting all of the information at once. They also uploaded all of the information on Brightspace, which is a website comparable to Blackboard, so you could always look back at the information. I also always got the necessary documents quickly back, signatures and all, so that was nice. On top of that, the university advertises their counselling possibilities a lot. I have not had any experience with their counselling, but I've known that some of my roommates used it, and they were quite positive about it.



transfer of credits

At the moment of writing this report, I have not yet received my marks back from the end of semester essays and exams. Therefore, I've not been able to transfer my credits yet. All of the marks from the end of semester tests get publized on the 25th of January, so I'll have to wait until then. I did get all of my courses approved by the Board of Examiners, so if I pass my exams, I should be good.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

The Welcome & Orientation Programme took a whole week, during which only the international students where present on campus. There were a lot of activities to get to know people as well as some information sessions. This was really fun! On top of that, for the first few weeks, the international office organises trips to popular destinations in Ireland. For instance, we went to the Aran Islands and the Cliffs of Moher. I'd definitely recommend joining these, because it's much easier than organising these trips yourself and the pricing is quite reasonable as well.

accommodation

I lived in Thomond Village. This is a quite expensive village (around 900,- each month), but you definitely do get what you pay for. However, I do think that living in one of the other, less expensive villages are fine as well. All of the villages have three or four bikes available, which you can rent for free for a few hours. You can either use these to go grocery shopping or to explore the area. In my apartment, I had a room for myself with an ensuite bathroom. It's very dusty, which is good to know if you have any allergies. It was quite dirty upon my arrival, but after one good clean, it's a really nice apartment. The process of getting an accommodation was quite easy for me. It was based on a random lottery, so I just got lucky. However, if you do not get an accommodation on campus due to the lottery, it can be quite hard to get something elsewhere, so be aware of that.

leisure & culture

Limerick City itself isn't as interesting with regard to culture, in my opinion, but they did organise an "Culture Night" with a parade and things to do around the city, which was quite fun! I'd definitely recommend trying to go around the country to see some more of Ireland's beautiful landscapes. However, it does take quite some time to get to locations, especially if you don't have a car, so be prepared for this. I'd also recommend staying in the big cities for at least a night. Not only so you'll experience the night life and have the possibility to visit the pubs, but also because there's usually a lot to do. Bring your passport as well, perhaps you'll want to go to visit Belfast! One of the places I'd definitely recommend is Killarney National Park, which I absolutely enjoyed.

suggestions/tips

Like I said, it's quite hard to get around Ireland just using the public transport. I'd recommend to hire a car, if possible. This will make it easier to get to places, especially places that might be a bit more remote or are not as well-known (which are usually the most fun places to visit). Another, unrelated, tip is to try to put yourself out there in the first few weeks. Partake in the activities set up by the international office in the first week, join clubs and organizations, etc. The first few weeks, every international person is very open to make new friends, so use this to your advantage!

CONCLUSIONS

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

Absolutely! Living on campus at the University of Limerick was an absolute pleasure, and I'd definitely recommend. Although the city centre of Limerick itself isn't as special, I do think the campus life makes up for that. So if you go, definitely try to acquire an accommodation on campus. On top of that, Ireland is a beautiful country and definitely worth exploring.



do you have any additional advice or comments?

There are some funny cultural/linguistic differences that might be good to be aware of. "Craig" does not refer to the drug, but to the word "fun" - so, "that was great craig last night!" means that you just had a lot of fun and not a lot of cocaine. Additionally, the Irish tend to greet with "How are you?", which they don't always expect an answer to. Also, although the weather can be quite dreadful at times, you won't see Irish people with an umbrella. It might be because the wind is too heavy and umbrellas might break (and they do, I've experienced), but my roommates and I just liked to think that the Irish citizens are just build different.



UU Report form - Erasmus 2022-2023

faculty/college	Faculty of Science
level	<input type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Human Computer Interaction

destination city & country	Limerick, Ireland
how did you travel to your destination?	By plane
name university abroad	University of Limerick
start date	16 / 01 / 2023 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	15 / 05 / 2023 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

I was very late with my application (end of May) and my exchange was fully extracurricular, so my process went a bit differently. It took some emails and meetings to figure out if an exchange was still possible, but all international offices were very helpful. In the end, I used a spot from a different faculty (my program belongs to the Faculty of Science), so this complicated everything a bit further, but I was very happy that FSW's international office allowed for this opportunity!

counselling & support at Utrecht University

The documentation on the website and in the emails was clear. Before my departure I received a useful email with some reminders. I could always ask questions if I had any. Documents were always signed within 3 days.

academic preparation

As part of the application for the University of Limerick (UL), we were asked to select 10 modules (=courses) prior to arrival. In the end, it didn't really matter which courses you selected here, because you can (and probably will) change of them in the first weeks of the semester. The same goes for the courses in the Learning Agreement. Other than that, no academic preparation was required.

language preparation

Since all courses were in English, no language preparation was needed. As part of the application, UL asked for a proof of English proficiency. Don't worry about this, as they accepted a document by the international office that explained that all Dutch high school graduates with level VWO meet this level. As part of the Erasmus+ grant application, I had to take an online language assessment, of which the results were not relevant for the admission.

finances

Applying for the Erasmus+ grant was an important part of the preparation. The prices in Ireland are comparable to Dutch prices, but the rent I paid for on-campus accommodation was very high (€817 per month). Therefore, make sure to save enough money. Also don't forget to apply for public transport compensation, which gave me another €120 per month.

I highly recommend to get a credit card if you don't have one already. I needed one for all online payments (including the rent, which I had to start paying before my arrival).

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD



study programme (content and organisational issues)

UL gave me a lot of freedom to choose the courses I liked. The only requirement was that the majority (3 out of 5) of the modules were in the area of agreement (in my case, Psychology). The other 2 courses could basically be anything. The majority of the courses were open for all international students. Since my exchange was extracurricular and I had no requirements from my program, I had a lot of choice, which was very nice. The first week of the semester was dedicated to introductory lectures, which were helpful for the course selection. I found out that some courses were not run that semester, which was good to know. You could still change your selection up until week 4. It was also possible to do 3,4 or 6 courses, as long as your home university also allowed for this.

In the end, I selected: Psychology - Theory & Method 2, Psychology and Social Issues, The Psychology of Career Success, Broadening: Beginners Japanese, and Writing for New Media. I especially enjoyed The Psychology of Career Success and Beginners Japanese as they had very dedicated teachers.

I was assigned an academic coordinator for Psychology at UL, who I only emailed to ask to sign my Learning Agreement.

academic quality of education activities

The quality of the courses was highly dependent on the teacher. In two of the Psychology courses, it often felt like the teachers assumed that we were not motivated to participate, so lectures and tutorials sometimes felt superficial and cut short. However, the course in Japanese and Career Success were of high quality and made me learn a lot.

I found the level of most courses to be relatively low. We were provided with a lot of guidance for the assignments. All my Psychology exams were open book. Only one of my courses had an exam in the final exam weeks, so I basically finished 3 weeks before the end of the semester.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

The Erasmus office at UL was always very helpful. They posted a lot of announcements and they always responded within one workday to my emails. They hosted information sessions at the start and end of the semester.

transfer of credits

I have not received my credits yet, as UL publishes these a month after the exam weeks. However, I already received most of my grades and from my experience I have the idea that it is quite easy to score high marks (at least for my courses). The UU international office has told me that all grades will be transferred on a Pass/Fail basis.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

The week before the semester started, there was a full orientation program for international students with information sessions, workshops, entertainment, and trips. It was quite exhausting, but also very useful and a lot of fun! I'd recommend to attend everything you can. I met a lot of other internationals and remained friends with some of them throughout the entire semester.

accommodation

I applied for on-campus accommodation, which you will receive information about when you apply for UL. The vast majority of international students lived either on campus or in Troy/Groody, which is also part of Student Life Services (housing organization associated with UL). I'd recommend to apply for on-campus accommodation, as you'll live close to the university buildings, sport facilities, the campus bars, and your international friends. The housing association also organizes multiple activities, such as painting workshops, pub quizzes, and yoga. We were warned beforehand that campus accommodation was not guaranteed, but I didn't meet anyone who didn't get it. I heard it can be difficult to find housing yourself, as there is a shortage of student accommodation in Ireland.



When you apply for accommodation, you can indicate your preferences and I got my first one. I lived in Dromroe Village, which is in my opinion (and that of many others), the best one. It's closest to most university buildings and it's relatively calm and high-quality. My room was not very large but it had its own bathroom. I lived together with 5 other international girls, who became my friends instantly.

There were a couple of disadvantages though, the first one was the price. The rent was extremely high (as for all Student Life Services accommodation), I paid €817 per month. It included the weekly activities, bike rental, and a sport memberships, but it still was a lot. We also had to pay for the laundry room, €3 each time you used the washing machine or the dryer. We were provided with some inventory for the living room and kitchen but we still had to buy some items ourselves. There were pretty strict rules. For instance, we couldn't place any chairs on the balcony and we had to sign in overnight guests. There was an inspection halfway the semester to check if all our rooms and the shared area were clean.

leisure & culture

UL has a wide variety of clubs and societies that are very easy to join, also as an international student. I became a member of Archery and UL Dance. Joining Archery was one of my best decisions. They offer beginners training, where you're guided by a skilled member of the club. There were also a lot of other international members and the Irish members were very open and friendly. It only cost €8 to join.

Every Friday, the Stables Club (the pub on campus) hosted internationals' night, where you could dance outside or have a drink inside. It was pretty fun, a lot of internationals attended.

In the first weeks of the semester, there were bus trips organized every weekend to visit the touristic highlights of Ireland. They were pretty fun, but maybe a bit high-paced and pricey (€37). You can also travel yourself by bus to e.g. Killarney, Cork, Waterford, Galway and Dublin. Some of those travels will take up to 2-3 hours one-way, but I'd say it's worth it. I'd highly recommend applying for the Young Adult/Student Leap Card, as it'll give you a discount of up to 50%, which makes the bus travels relatively cheap. Public transport in Ireland isn't too great though, but once you figure it out it's quite useful.

In general, the Irish are very friendly. I noticed that people are very helpful and tend to go out of their way for you. The Irish pubs are also fun, there are a couple of them that have live Irish music. It seems like the Irish don't take life as seriously as here, they know how to have fun (and drink!). St Patrick's Day was a bit of a disappointment, honestly. I expected a bit more from the parade in Dublin and the nightlife in Limerick.

suggestions/tips

- Apply for on-campus accommodation, specifically Dromroe Village if you are willing to spend this amount.
- Get a Young Adult/Student Leap Card once you arrive (you'll be told about this by the Erasmus team of UL)
- Make sure to have access to a credit card
- Rent a bike to do grocery shopping at Lidl or Aldi (the Spar on campus is pricey and what they offer is very limited)
- Join Clubs and Societies you're interested in
- Attend as many activities in the Orientation week as you can
- Attend all the first-week lectures of the courses you're interested in and then make your final selection of courses.

CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes! Although the rent is high and Irish weather isn't the best, I'd say Ireland is a great country to do your exchange. There are a lot of beautiful places to visit and the people are friendly. I find it a great advantage that everyone speaks English, which allows you participate in every aspect of Ireland's society.

Limerick itself is not a particularly beautiful or interesting city. However, the campus life is very rich. It's very easy to join clubs and societies and there is a large international community.

do you have any additional advice or comments?



UU Report form - Erasmus 2022-2023

faculty/college	social sciences
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Psychology

destination city & country	Limerick, Ireland
how did you travel to your destination?	Plane
name university abroad	University of Limerick
start date	28 / 08 / 2022 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	18 / 12 / 2022 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

I found the exchange application process a bit tough since there is quite a lot to take care of. I also think that the year I was enrolling for my exchange programme was exceptionally busy (with it being the first year after all the covid restrictions). Because of this sometimes certain processes took longer than I think they normally would.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

I think the support at Utrecht University was sufficient. Sometimes I could get my answers and help very quickly, while other times it took a while to find the right person to contact or to get the answers I was asking for. However usually everyone was happy to help.

academic preparation

I went on exchange after having completed all required courses for my bachelors and I had already finished my thesis. Although this means I had to study half a year longer it was definitely worth it. Because I was already done with all the mandatory parts of my study, this allowed me to fully focus on my exchange experience. I did have to ask permission to extend my studies for my exchange, but this was easy to arrange.

language preparation

In Ireland, almost everyone speaks English and all courses are taught in English. Since my English was already pretty good before going on exchange I did not improve my language skills before going.

finances

Ireland is really quite expensive, so it is necessary to look at your finances before you leave. I personally saved up some money and I still had my student loan, together with the Erasmus grant this was enough to pay for my rent and groceries while also having fun with friends and taking some trips. However, I think that some more money would have been nice because staying in hostels or Airbnb is quite expensive in Ireland.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

I study cognitive and neurobiological psychology in Utrecht, and I have a preference for this area within psychology. The courses that were open for me within psychology were mostly not very neurobiological or cognitive and more clinical, social or developmental. However, the courses were still quite nice and it was also interesting to take another look at psychology than I usually would. In the course manual I got beforehand they



also mentioned only a select number of international students allowed per course, however thankfully this proved to be no issue at all. I also took an Irish Folklore course, which was very interesting and really fun.
academic quality of education activities
The quality of the education was fairly good, I personally thought that the content of the courses was a bit easier, however, we did have a lot of (writing) assignments. The lecturers were good and easy to talk to.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
I have not needed a lot of counselling and support during my stay, however, when I did need someone it was very easy to find help. You could just walk over to the UL Global office and ask all your questions. At the start of the semester, they gave a lot of useful information. However, many of the international students (me included) still had a lot of confusion about the course selection, since there was a lot unclear. I would advise you to not stress too much about it, and just ask your questions.
transfer of credits
I have not officially gotten my grades approved so I am not entirely sure how this goes. However, for as far as I know you only need a pass for your courses and the specific grades will not be shown on your diploma.

STUDENT LIFE	
welcome & orientation programme	They had a nice extensive orientation programme, with both fun and educational activities. They give a lot of information in the beginning, but I would not stress about it too much, you will figure it out in the first few weeks. I would also suggest definitely signing up for as many (social) activities as you can in the beginning because it is a great way to find friends.
accommodation	I would definitely suggest taking campus accommodation although it might be really expensive, it is really fun to stay on campus and it is quite hard to find other accommodation (or so I have heard). I think it is a very different experience when staying on campus versus off campus. I really enjoyed having all of my friends so close by, and we often had small parties in people their apartments. Also, most students are staying on campus so it is a lot of fun. However some student villages are more quiet than others, I had a room in Dromroe (it was initially not my first choice) but for me it turned out perfect. Also, as I mentioned, it can be quite tough to find other accomodation. When I was there (2022) there was a housing crisis and a lot of (Irish) students had difficulty finding accomodation. I also met an international student who at first declined a campus accommodation (because it is so expensive), but then ended up sleeping in hotels until he did get another offer for accommodation on campus.
leisure & culture	There is a lot to do culture-wise in Ireland. Firstly drinking is a big part of the culture there and the pubs are a lot of fun to be in. They often have live music and whether you are drinking or not you are up for a good time when you go to an Irish pub. The Irish people are great and really easy to talk to, so even if you would go to a pub alone you would be sure to make friends. Apart from that they have a lot of history and you can find old ruins, castles and forts all throughout the country and the nature is stunning in a lot of places (although not always easy to reach by public transport) and you should definitely go to the cliffs and have a hike. The University also offers bus tours that start at the campus and take you to several places. These are fun and a nice way to see more of the country, however, I personally preferred to go on trips that we would plan ourselves since you were not tied to a schedule as much. But of course, this does take some more planning.
suggestions/tips	Try to do and see as much as you can and maybe try to rent a car and stay the weekend somewhere (we sadly were not able to do this). But without a car, there is still a lot to do. Some of the most fun day trips I had were to Galway, to Doolin and walking to the cliffs of Moher from there, some hiking in the mountains/ hills closer to



Limerick and a few trips to Dublin. I would also suggest taking a few days to go to Belfast and take a tour to the Giant's causeway, or to take a cheap flight to Scotland (don't forget your passport). I would also suggest taking the trip to the Aran Islands if the University offers it, I personally did not but it proved a bit difficult to organize such a trip on our own. Also, you should definitely take a leap card (a public transport discount card) it will save you so much money and make travelling a lot easier.

CONCLUSIONS

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

I would definitely recommend going to UL, I had the absolute best time here. Although Limerick itself may not look like much compared to a lot of the other destinations that are available for your exchange, I did not have any regrets about going here. The university is really pretty big and there are a lot of international students so you will make friends really easily. They have a LOT of extra activities and social student groups that you can join, such as a hiking caving and mountaineering group, surfing, crafts and much more, and they are all really great. However, I barely had time to participate in the clubs I signed up for because I did so much with the friends I made there. The campus is surrounded by a lot of nature and you can take beautiful hikes around the grounds. And it might be nice to mention that the UL international students are some of the happiest in the world (ranking second on international student happiness in the world in 2019) :) So I would say do not hesitate and go to UL!

do you have any additional advice or comments?



UU Report form - Erasmus 2021-2022

faculty/college	Social Sciences
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Psychology

destination city & country	Limerick, Ireland
how did you travel to your destination?	By plane
name university abroad	University of Limerick
start date	30 / 08 / 2021 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	03 / 12 / 2021 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

For me personally, the exchange application process took a lot of time: choosing a destination, making sure that I had all the needed documents, finding an accommodation, et cetera. However, Utrecht University and University of Limerick both provided clear lists with things that I needed to take care of. My advice is to start early and to write down all of the deadlines for the application process and all of the things you need to do. This saved me a lot of stress, at least.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

The counselling and support I received from Utrecht University was excellent. The International Office was always available to answer all of my questions, and they usually responded on the same day or the day after I emailed them. The staff of the International Office was also very patient and genuinely interested in how I was doing. I am very satisfied with the counselling and support I received from Utrecht University.

academic preparation

I needed to choose 5 modules for my exchange to University of Limerick. The University has a clear module booklet with all the modules you can choose from. I had to pick 5 modules for my Learning Agreement, but I ended up changing some of them when I got to Limerick. It was mandatory for me to choose 3 Psychology modules, which I found quite hard because I already followed most of the modules earlier at Utrecht University. However, I did end up finding 3 Psychology modules. You register for your modules when you're already at University of Limerick, you don't have to do this before you go there. I didn't prepare anything before the start of the modules.

language preparation

The main language in Ireland is English. I understand, speak and write English pretty well so I didn't have to spend much time on language preparation. I only took an OLS language assessment before and after my exchange since this was mandatory for receiving an Erasmus grant. Some host universities want you to take a test to prove that you sufficiently master the language, but Utrecht University provided a language proficiency statement saying that I'm on B2 level. For University of Limerick, this was enough proof, so I didn't have to spend money and time on a language test.

finances

I made a budget plan with the amount of money I expected to have during my exchange and all the expected expenses. I saved up money myself and my parents financed a part. I received an Erasmus grant and a public transportation compensation (OV-vergoeding). I also used my student loan (Duo) to finance my exchange. I



eventually spent less money than I expected, which was nice, but I think it's safe to try and save up as much money as you can so you don't have to worry about money too much. And a practical thing to mention is that they often use cash or creditcard in Ireland. I couldn't get a creditcard, so I always made sure I had enough cash on me in case my regular bank card wouldn't get accepted.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

I followed 3 Psychology modules and these modules contained some material I already studied before at Utrecht University. However, I enjoyed that I had a recap of information. I also followed the module LGBT and the Law in Ireland, which I found super interesting. This was a more difficult module for me, because I didn't have a lot of experience with Law modules. Finally, I followed Introduction to Irish Folklore. I really liked this module because it taught me more about Irish culture, the content was interesting and the lecturer was very passionate about the material. The covered content and enthusiasm of the lecturers determined whether I really liked a module or not. Most of my lectures were in person, some were online because of COVID-19. I don't remember experiencing any organisational issues, but making my schedule was a bit of a puzzle. You make your own schedule at University of Limerick, so you have to make sure you don't choose modules that have overlap. You can also pick the tutorial/working group times that suit your timetable, so this was nice.

academic quality of education activities

Overall, I experienced the modules at University of Limerick to be less difficult than the ones at Utrecht University. I followed a Psychology module for fourth-year-students that's offered to second-year-students in Utrecht. I only had one multiple choice question exam, the rest of my deadlines were all papers, essays or other written assignments. Even though I found the modules to be a bit easier, I still spent much time on studying because I got a considerable amount of deadlines to work on. Thus, I didn't get bored at all during my exchange.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

The counselling and support I received at University of Limerick were very good. There was one person responsible for incoming Erasmus students, and she answered all of my questions very fast. She was also very patient so I never felt like a burden. University of Limerick also has a medical centre, I never had to make use of that but it was good to know that there were people there to help me if needed.

transfer of credits

In general, one module gives you 6 ECTS, so you have to follow 5 modules to obtain the 30 ECTS for 1 semester. I don't have all of my results back yet so I have to wait for that before my credits get transferred.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

University of Limerick offered an online global orientation programme during the last week of August. I wasn't able to attend the online sessions that week, so I don't know what those were like. The week after that, there was an online introduction week. This would usually be in person but because of COVID-19, they had to plan that online. I really liked this introduction week. Some meetings were mandatory to attend because they contained important information about the exchange, others weren't. During the sessions, they provided a lot of practical information, for example about registering for modules. Other sessions contained information about the library and the medical centre. There were also more relaxing and fun sessions, where you could do yoga or play bingo. In my opinion, University of Limerick really invested much effort in fun and useful welcome and orientation programmes for international students.

accommodation

University of Limerick has multiple student accomodation villages you can choose from, both on- and off-campus. Student accomodation is not guaranteed, so make sure you are in time for the deadlines if you want



to live in a student village. I chose to live on-campus with 5 roommates in Thomond Village, which was a 10 minute walk to the university buildings. I really liked Thomond Village: I had enough space in my bedroom and I had my own bathroom. I shared the living room and kitchen with my roommates. The living room was spacious, but the kitchen was a bit small: we were able to cook with 2 or 3 persons at a time, but there was not enough room to cook with more people at once. I lived with other international students and we got along very well: we became super close and did a lot of stuff together. Another thing I liked about Thomond Village is that the staff at the reception and the maintenance people were very kind and helpful. When there was a problem, if we didn't have warm water for example, the maintenance guys would come to fix it the same day or the day after. The only less positive thing about Thomond Village is that the rent was really high: I paid 800 euros each month. This also included a membership for the gym on campus. You have cheaper options in other villages, like Plassey Village, where you share a bathroom with your roommates. I don't know how expensive it is to live outside of the student accommodations, so I honestly couldn't tell you if that's cheaper, more expensive or comparable to the rent you pay in the student accommodation villages. I recommend Thomond Village if you are prepared to pay more for your apartment and want to have your own bathroom.

leisure & culture

There's enough to do on campus! You can go to Scholars Club or Stables for coffee, food and drinks from Monday until Friday. On Fridays, it's International Night at Stables: mainly international students attend those nights and there's a DJ. The university and village reception also organized events and activities. You can join clubs and societies as well, I joined the International Society and Dance UL. Nightlife in Limerick city was okay: there are mainly pubs, there aren't many nightclubs. Culture wise, I didn't have a big culture shock, there were just a few things that stood out to me. I was really impressed by how kind and helpful Irish people are. How Irish people dress is also different from how Dutch people dress, so this was funny to see. Finally, nightlife and drinking starts earlier in Ireland than in The Netherlands, so it took me some time to get used to that.

suggestions/tips

Save some money to travel through Ireland if you want to! It's a beautiful country and there are some places you definitely have to see. University of Limerick teamed up with a transportation company and organized trips to popular places in Ireland each Saturday for the first few months. This was a very easy and relatively cheap way to see a lot of stuff. And for public transportation, you can apply for a Student Leap Card, which gives you a student discount for each trip.

CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes, I definitely recommend University of Limerick! I had a very positive experience there, there were lots of other international students, the campus was beautiful, accommodation was good, student life was very fun and Ireland is a beautiful country to go to.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Going on an exchange was the most special experience of my life, I really encourage everyone who's interested to do it. Don't worry about making new friends, you'll easily find them: all international students are looking for new people to hang out with! You'll learn a lot about the world, yourself and others on an exchange, so I really recommend doing it. Even during COVID times, I enjoyed my time abroad.



UU Report form - Erasmus 2021-2022

faculty/college	Faculty of Social Sciences
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Pedagogical Sciences

destination city & country	Limerick, Ireland
how did you travel to your destination?	By plane
name university abroad	University of Limerick
start date	29 / 08 / 2021 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	19 / 12 / 2021 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

I found the application process to be easy. I applied in December 2020 with a motivation letter and a top 3 of study abroad destinations. The University of Limerick in Ireland was my first choice, and halfway through January I found out I was selected there! After that point, I attended the pre-departure meeting offered by the International Office which gave great insights into the steps to make the exchange official. In April I got an email from the University of Limerick to officially apply as an international student. For this, I had to pre-select 10 modules (the name the University uses for their courses) which I would be interested in taking, and I had to submit a couple of documents (language proficiency statement and a transcript of records from Utrecht University, which I received through the International Office). After this, I received official confirmation of enrollment in May 2021, and started to apply for accommodation and the Erasmus grant. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, a lot of things about our exchange were still unsure. Utrecht University decided to set a specific date for each exchange, usually 6-4 weeks before departure, to look at the travel advice. If the advice was green or yellow you could go on exchange, and if it was red or orange you couldn't go. Everyone therefore also made a Plan B, but luckily halfway through July I heard my exchange would be approved!

counselling & support at Utrecht University

The International Office was great throughout the whole process. I had a lot of questions and certain things weren't clear to me, and they would usually respond within a day. A lot of documents had to be signed by both Utrecht and Limerick, which required some back and forth emailing. Both International Offices were quick though, so most were fully signed within a few days to a week. During the summer vacation, I had to get many documents for the Erasmus grant signed, and the International Office was just as quick with responding as usual. Next to this, the pre-departure meeting cleared up a lot of difficulties with applying, and I received a handbook with a lot of information about our exchange which was helpful as well.

academic preparation

I didn't have to do a lot of academic preparation, as module registration took place after arrival (there is a one-week period to try out the modules without any obligations). I only had to pre-select 10 modules before going, which was a bit difficult at first because not a lot of information was available about which ones would be running during the semester.

language preparation

As one of the main languages in Ireland is English, I didn't have to do any language preparation. The only preparation I did was the English test provided by the EU before going and I looked up some Irish slang, which



proved to be useful. Also, don't worry too much about the Irish language. Most people speak English, so the most you will come across it is on signs and buildings (everything is indicated in both English and Irish because Irish is the official language).

finances

I knew that I wanted to study abroad for a long time, so I already had some savings prepared for it. However, as I hoped to do a lot of travelling and other fun things, I took on more shifts at my part-time job during the summer vacation for some extra cash. As well as this, I applied for the Erasmus grant and it got approved. This was a big help in living costs. With all of this plus my savings I was able to cover all my costs. It could be helpful to make a financial plan for yourself so you can see how much money you're going to spend. Do keep in mind that you will probably spend more money in Ireland than you do in the Netherlands, because of travelling costs and other fun expenses such as going to pubs.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

The study programme at the University of Limerick is different from Utrecht University. Everyone takes five modules, each worth 6 ECTS, during the semester. Before going, I had to pre-select 10 modules that I would be interested in taking. Not all information about the modules was known at that point, so when I arrived in Ireland I found that two of my preferred five modules from that list weren't running that semester. However, this was easily fixed because during the first week of the semester you could try out all modules without any restrictions or obligations. I went through the list of modules again and with some recommendations from friends I chose to try out six modules during this first week. Because I could to try them out, I was able to see which modules I enjoyed most, and I think this is a great feature that the University of Limerick offers! The only thing that you do have to watch out for is the timetable. You have to make it yourself, so you have to check if nothing clashes. If a course you are taking has tutorials, you can pick which one suits your schedule best. Because I was going abroad as a psychology student (pedagogical sciences doesn't really exist abroad), I had to select three psychology courses as well. In the end, I chose four modules from the psychology department: Psychology of the Personality, Social Psychology 1, Applied Psychology and Psychology and everyday life, and for my fifth module I chose Introduction to Irish folklore. I ended up enjoying most of my courses. The psychology courses were very interesting, especially Psychology of the Personality and Social Psychology 1 taught me many new things. Introduction to Irish Folklore was amazing, and probably my favourite course out of all of them. The course was interesting, the teacher was very good at telling stories and the assignments were fun to work on. It's also very nice to learn about Irish Folklore while studying in the country itself as you can relate your studies to places you're visiting, so I highly recommend taking this course. I would also take the opportunity to explore different fields if you are interested in them. Because three out of five modules have to be from psychology, you have two other spots to fill in as you would like! In terms of contact hours, I had about 10 hours of lectures and 2 hours of tutorials, and had no lectures on both Tuesday and Friday. This does depend a lot on which courses you take and whether they have tutorials/labs. I was very happy with my schedule as I had a lot of time to work on my weekly assignments and to hang out with my new friends and roommates!

academic quality of education activities

Personally, I thought the academic quality at the University of Limerick was similar to Utrecht University, but I feel there is a difference in how this could be observed. In Utrecht, there are two blocks each semester with two very condensed courses, giving it a very big workload in a short time. In Limerick, there is a half-year long semester, in which you take five courses at the same time. This means that you have more time off throughout the semester, as most of your deadlines will be in December (which is great for your exchange as you have more time to hang out with friends and travel!). I only had a graded quiz every two weeks for one course, a weekly blog for Irish Folklore and two other weekly assignments (one I could actually finish in class). My first big deadline was halfway through November, and my exams and final assignments were all in December. These two weeks in December will be very busy because you are working on five assignments at the same time.



However, it was very doable and most of my assignments were actually nice to work on. For example, I had to write a personality profile for myself using questionnaire data, an essay about fairies in Irish folklore and I had to analyze a movie through social psychology. I also had a lot of good times with my roommates during those two weeks as we were all studying in our living room and chatting in between. So, I feel that Limerick and Utrecht are similar in terms of academic quality, but in Limerick you have more time for your courses and I liked the assignments a bit better as they're more creative.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

The International Office at the University of Limerick was great. They're very easy going and friendly, and respond quickly to all questions. The International Office also sends a lot of general FAQ emails on important topics, such as module registration, certificates that have to be signed, student cards, and more. As well as this, they're very helpful if you need some more personal advice. For example, they organized meetings for people who didn't get on-campus accommodation to advise them with where to go. The International Office was also very informative in the orientation week, as they organized sessions about important topics every single day. I would recommend going to all of these as they discuss module registration, student ID cards, entering the library, online services, et cetera. While the International Office was great, I had some issues with my academic coordinator for the psychology department. She was incredibly slow to answer emails, and when she did she would send me to someone else who in turn would send me back to my academic coordinator. However, halfway through summer another academic coordinator for psychology was added, and he responded to all my emails within a day! He was also great with the module registration process after arrival in Ireland and was very helpful overall. Therefore, I suspect that in coming years this won't be an issue again.

transfer of credits

The process of transferring credits was organized well. I have received my grades from my courses in Ireland, and I have passed all five modules! This means I will receive the full 30 ECTS that I need. The University of Limerick sent my transcript directly to the International Office at UU, and within a few days my grades were added to Osiris.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

The orientation programme was fine. It ran for two weeks in total, the first being the week before leaving for Ireland. The first week had a lot of (online) introductory meetings about campus services and Q&A sessions about enrolment and academic prep. They also organized some mixer sessions, which were fun because you got to know some friendly faces before you even arrived in Ireland. I met one of my closest friends in one of these meetings, and we hung out a lot once we were both in Limerick. The second week was what the university calls 'week zero', the first week of the semester where only international students are on campus as Irish students are due to arrive the week after. The meetings during this week were mostly focused on module registration and getting to know the campus. There was only one mandatory session each day, so you had a lot of free time to explore the campus and get used to how things work in Ireland. Unfortunately, because of COVID, all orientation meetings had to be held online. This was sad, but there was still a lot to do outside my dorm room! Me and my roommates took this time to get to know each other, explore the city and go to the pub on campus to try Guinness. There were also some parties organized by students that week, so it was easy to stay busy! I would recommend attending all mandatory orientation meetings so you don't miss out on any information, but also to make sure to go to as many social events as you can. I met most of my close friends in this first week, because all internationals want to make friends!

accommodation

I stayed in on-campus accommodation, and I would highly recommend you to do the same. The on-campus accommodation is divided into different 'student villages', each offering different types of housing. Do keep in mind that just like Utrecht the accommodation is expensive. If you want your own bathroom or want to live with less people, you have to pay more money for it. However, I would still recommend on-campus



accommodation, as it makes your life abroad a lot easier and fun! People who didn't get on-campus accommodation ended up living in family homes, where you have a room in the house of an Irish family. These houses are often far away from campus, so money you save on rent you'll use for public transportation, and the family house tends to have rules about inviting people over and going out. Other people lived in apartments in the city centre, but these can be about as expensive as on-campus accommodation and are far away from the university, so all things considered: go for on-campus!!!

I was offered a room in Thomond Village, and it was absolutely perfect. I chose to live in a six-bed house, meaning I shared a kitchen and living room with five roommates. All rooms in Thomond Village have their own bathroom. The room itself was very big, had a double bed, a big desk and tons of storage space. The kitchen and living room could easily fit six people and there was a lot of storage space as well. The only issue we had was that the fridge and freezer filled up easily, so at times fitting all our groceries needed some rearranging of our shelves. I also really enjoyed my roommates. We all hit it off immediately and became good friends! We often cooked together, studied in our living room or just had nice chats when seeing each other. I think this really is an advantage of living on campus and being in a house with five roommates, as they are the first people you meet when you arrive and you will see each other every day. Another advantage of living on campus is the village reception. Each village has their own reception where you can go if you have any issues or questions. The people at reception were always happy to help, and any issues I had with my room were resolved within a day. Also, Thomond village offers free bike hire. This is great, because the supermarkets are a bit further away from campus (10 minutes biking to Aldi, 15 to LIDL and SuperValu). Whenever it was time to go grocery shopping, I could just hop on a bike and go! The biking routes are safe and I would recommend biking to Aldi, because it's closer and a lot of the route you are supposed to bike on the right side of the road (opposed to the left which is usual in Ireland). Another added bonus is that Thomond Village is really close to campus. I walked to the main university building and the library in about 10 minutes or so. Also, my friends and I would hang out a lot in the university's courtyard or at Stables (the university's pub), so I never had to worry about travel times or catching the last bus in the evening. The only thing I would say wasn't great about Thomond is that they did some maintenance works unannounced. For example, they came to change our mattresses one day without any advance notice. Almost everyone was home that day as it was the beginning of the semester, but I would have liked to know they were coming. Other than that, everything was perfect. All on campus villages are great, but I would highly recommend Thomond Village, as you have a lot of room for yourself and your housemates, the reception is great, the village itself is really nice and close to campus.

leisure & culture

There is always a lot to do in and around campus. Stables and Scholars, the on campus pubs, are always fun to go to. Stables offers International Night every Friday, as this is the day that many Irish students return home. This night is filled with fun, loud music and dancing, so I would recommend to go there with your friends! There are also a ton of clubs and societies you can join: clubs range from ultimate frisbee to Gaelic football, archery, and surfing, and societies from games to comedy, musical theatre, astronomy, and many more. Clubs and societies are a great way to make friends and explore your interests at the same time, so I would recommend joining a few. I joined the crafts society and the games society, which offered weekly meetings. You can also attend certain events organized by other societies without being a member, such as pub quizzes and music nights. The student union, UL student life, also organizes free events throughout the semester. For example, they've organized multiple markets with gifts for home, entertainers and more. The student union also organized trips around Ireland. I would highly recommend to go on these! They are the cheapest and easiest way to explore Ireland, because the travel is organized for you so you don't have to worry about public transport and travel times. Limerick is a great place to travel from, because it has a central location in Ireland. It doesn't take too long to reach bucket list places such as the Ring of Kerry, Galway, Dingle, Cork, Connemara, and more. Dublin is a bit further away (2.5 hours by bus), and reaching Northern Ireland without a car means you have to travel to Dublin and then change to the train to Belfast. However, both these journeys are very doable if you go on a full weekend trip and not a day trip! Also, going for walks into Ireland's nature is worth it, it's absolutely beautiful. There are a lot of great nature spots, such as the Cliffs of Moher, Connemara, and Giants Causeway. So, main recommendation: travel as much as you can in your spare time! Limerick is not the



prettiest city, though the three bridges walk around King John's castle and the cathedral is very nice. The atmosphere in the city is great, and there are many shops to get gifts, things for your dorm or products from home you're missing. There are also some good pubs and restaurants in the city, but try not to stay out too late. If you miss the final bus home (if you're living on campus or close to it), you have to take the taxi.

Irish culture and Dutch culture are quite similar, so I didn't really experience culture shock. However, there are a few things that are a bit different. For example, Irish people are really kind. They will offer their help to you unannounced if it looks like you need it, e.g. for directions. They are also very social, so you can expect to have long conversations with them (especially in a pub!). Irish drivers will almost always stop in front of zebra crossings if you're near them. The grocery store might not have the things you're used to at home, but they have a lot of great alternatives that I miss now that I'm back in the Netherlands. Also, Irish drinking culture is something to take note of. They usually start quite early compared to the Dutch, you can already see people in the on-campus pub around 2-3pm, and nightlife ends earlier as well (around 12-1am). When you ask for a drink, you will be served a pint. Pints are half a litre, so you're probably fine with ordering just one for a night in a pub. Other than this, there were small differences in terms of shops, academics, leisure, etc., but nothing really caused a culture shock! The atmosphere on campus and in Ireland itself is amazing and very welcoming!

suggestions/tips

- Clubs and societies are a great way to explore your interests and make friends! It's only a few euros to join a club/society, so go for it!
- If you want to hear Irish music and see Irish dancing, go to the Locke bar in the city centre. It's a very popular pub where you can have drinks and listen to great music at the same time. Students at the Irish World Academy on-campus also used to perform Irish dancing and Irish music, but this year it wasn't possible due to COVID.
- Go on the trips provided by the student union, they are the easiest and cheapest way to explore Ireland! Also make sure to plan your own trips if there are any bucket-list items that you have to see before going back. My recommendations: Cliffs of Moher, Aran Islands, Belfast & the Giant's causeway (Northern Ireland, the UK!), Dingle and Dublin. Public transportation in Ireland is not great but you can easily reach the big cities, usually for about 20 euro (return trip). Also try to explore Ireland's nature, it's worth visiting.
- Follow all UL social media channels (the main ones: the university itself, the student union, UL accommodation if you're living on campus). They post often about events/pub quizzes/give aways/other fun things.
- See if you can secure accommodation on campus, it makes your life abroad a lot easier.
- Try to celebrate holidays you usually don't celebrate! Halloween is a traditional Irish holiday, so it's considered a big deal. I also celebrated thanksgiving, which I had never done before. This was a really great and cosy experience with my friends.
- The river Shannon runs through the campus, and there are walking routes around it. These are great to take if you want to go outside to take a break from studying. If you feel like it, you can even walk to the city in about 40 minutes. In the weekends, a lot of Irish families walk along the river route, which is fun to see.

CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes, yes, yes! Choosing to study abroad has been one of the best decisions I have ever made in my life. The University of Limerick is a great choice for your studies abroad. They have an active International Office that's quick to respond to queries, they have good quality education and fun modules, and due to there being one whole semester you have more than enough time outside your studies to explore Ireland, go to pubs and have fun! The on campus accommodation is well-organized and accessible. The university and its student union offer a lot of events so there's always something going on, and there are so many clubs and societies that you will find something that you'll enjoy. Also, you don't have to worry about not being understood and you can blend in easily. The university, Limerick and Ireland itself have a great atmosphere and offer tons of opportunities to enrich your study abroad. I loved my experience so much and had more fun than I could have imagined. So: go for it, you will not regret it!



do you have any additional advice or comments?

- When you arrive abroad, say yes to as many things as you can. Go out to party, go to a pub, meet up with other internationals and Irish students, go to society meetings! Those first couple of weeks are going to be very tiring, but do as many things as you can. Everyone is looking to make friends, so being social during the first weeks can give you many friends for life!
- If there are any pre-departure social meetings the university offers, go to them. I met one of my closest friends in Ireland through one of these meetings, and extra information to ease the things that might be worrying you are always helpful.
- Travel as much as you can! I went on day trips around Ireland pretty much every weekend, and a big 6-day trip at the end of my period abroad to Dublin and Belfast. You want to see as much of the country while you're there, so make sure to do something similar!
- Take a course in Irish folklore, Irish music and dance, Irish history, Irish literature, or something similar. It's truly an amazing experience to learn about Irish culture while you're studying in the country itself! You might even pick up some words or sentences of the Irish language.
- If you want to live on campus (which I would fully recommend), make sure to apply as soon as you hear you've been selected to go to Limerick! The on campus accommodation is very popular, but they always have rooms reserved for international students. However, this is not a guarantee so make sure to apply on time!
- And finally: If you're doubting about studying abroad in Ireland or anywhere else, do it! I worried about many things before going, but my time abroad was absolutely worth it.



UU Report form - Erasmus 2019-2020

faculty/college	Social Sciences
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Psychology

destination city & country	Limerick, Ireland
how did you travel to your destination?	By plane
name university abroad	University of Limerick
start date	01 / 09 / 2019 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	20 / 12 / 2019 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

I applied for my exchange in December '18 by uploading a top 3 with destinations, a motivation letter and a studyplan in Osiris. This required a lot of research about the different universities, because I wanted to make a good choice. In January, I heard that I was not accepted at one of my top 3 universities. There was a list with "leftover destinations" and I could make a new top 3, but I didn't have to write a new motivation letter or studyplan. This list was still quite long, so I was happy with the options. The University of Limerick was my second choice and in February I heard that I got accepted there. In the following months I enrolled online at the university and I went to the pre-departure meeting.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

The presentation about studying abroad in november was very informative and useful to me and there was an opportunity to ask questions. The online information about the whole process was clear, but you have to put some time and effort in looking up and reading all the information. Whenever I had questions, the International Office answered them quickly by email. The pre-departure meeting was also useful and prepared us well for the possible difficult aspects of studying abroad, like culture shock and homesickness. In summer, I had to prepare my learning agreement and I needed some information and signatures for this. The International Office helped me with this and they answered my questions even though it was during the summer vacation.

academic preparation

I decided what modules I was going to take after I arrived at the destination: there was an introduction period in which you could pick the modules. I had made a plan in the learning agreement before, but I changed some of the modules later. My academic preparation consisted of selecting the modules, but I didn't prepare for the content of these modules.

language preparation

The spoken language at the receiving university was English and I felt like my English was already sufficient, so I did not have much language preparation. However, I looked up some Irish words and slang because I wasn't used to the Irish accent. There is a mandatory language test before the exchange and my score was a C1, which made me feel confident enough about my English. It took some time to get used to speaking English, but I didn't experience many difficulties concerning the language.

finances

I didn't save up much money before my exchange, but I received the maximum amount of student loans (DUO) every month so I figured that would be enough. The provisional Erasmus grant that I received in September was



a nice extra amount of money (+- 1000 euro). If you want to stay on campus at the University of Limerick (recommended!) it's important to know that you have to pay all of the rent in advance, this is in July. This is a lot of money at once so it is important that you have this in your savings. The rent of the on-campus accommodations is higher than the average rent in Utrecht: for me it was about 550 euros a month including the facilities on campus. Life in Ireland is about just as expensive as life in the Netherlands if you look at groceries, going out, etc. However, I went on a lot of trips on the weekends so it is important to save some money for extra costs of the bus, hostels, restaurants, etc.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

The system at University of Limerick is different than the one at UU. There's one semester in which you get 30 ECTS, which is the same as two blocks at UU. This semester lasts about 12 weeks and you take 5 modules at once. Each of these count for 6 ECTS. The amount of contact hours was similar, because each module had 1-2 lectures/tutorials a week. For me, attendance wasn't mandatory, but for some other modules it was. The content of the modules was definitely interesting and fun. We had no books, but we had online articles that belonged to the modules. I had to do different kinds of assignments than what I was used to, like writing blogs or designing an infographic. In my opinion, the differences are definitely good for your academic and personal development. My exams had essay questions, so I had to prepare a few topics very well and write an essay about those on the exam. I wasn't used to this kind of system because you only focus on a few topics, like 2 out of 10, instead of studying a whole book.

academic quality of education activities

The education was different, but not that challenging. I still have to get some results back so I am not sure how well I did yet. However, I felt like the assignments were less academic than the ones at UU and it reminded me of a university of applied sciences (HBO). I was happy that the content wasn't very difficult because I had to get used to the system, the country and the language. It wasn't boring because I learned a lot of new skills by doing the assignments there. If you want to get challenged, you can also pick a sixth module so I would not let the academic quality stop you from studying at University of Limerick. However, this is very personal. For me, some of the assignments were harder than what I was used to because I had to be more practical and creative.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

Everybody at the university was really nice, supportive and helpful to the international students and they did so much for us: orientation activities, parties, presentations, counselling services, etc. You should not be scared to ask for help or support because there are a lot of people whose job it is to help you. Before I arrived, I emailed my academic coordinator about my learning agreement and he responded quite slow, but everything worked out fine in the end. In Ireland, everything is a little bit less official and strict. You have to get used to that, but don't worry if there is a problem because they will help you fix it. They also send a lot of emails, like 10 everyday. Some of these are useful. There is a "mental health monday email" every week with some advice on mental health issues like stress, homesickness, etc. Some emails were really irrelevant, about lost items or flashing car lights.

transfer of credits

I still have to get my results back so I don't know my grades yet. I will receive the grades as a A, B, C, etc, and it will be transferred to a pass or fail grade at UU. If I pass everything, I get 30 ECTS. The exact grades don't matter. My transcript of records from the University of Limerick will be sent to me and to the International Office of the UU soon (January 2020).



STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme
I arrived in Ireland on the 1 st of September and the first week was orientation week. There were no classes yet and most of the Irish students weren't there yet, so this week was focused on the international students. There was a program with tours around campus, presentations, parties, trips to the city etc. It was a great way to make friends! I would recommend to be there the whole week and attend as much activities as possible.
accommodation
I stayed on campus at University of Limerick. There are several "villages" on campus where you can live. I picked Plassey Village because this was the cheapest option. I lived with 7 other international student and we shared a living room and kitchen. The location of Plassey Village is really good, it's a ten minute walk to all of the university buildings, the pubs and there is a Spar right next to village. It cost around 550 euros a month and this was a lot. You also get a membership for the gym and pool automatically, though. I feel like the money was worth it because it would have been really difficult to look for off-campus accomodation by myself. But, don't expect too much of Plassey Village. It's alright, but the bedrooms were small and the walls were really thin and the rooms didn't look very nice. We shared one fridge with 8 people which was a challenge. Also, there are no washing machines in any of the houses on campus: you have to go to a laundry room and pay for that. I liked living with 8 people because it was easy to become friends with some of my housemates and we hung out a lot together, which is a positive aspect of living on campus. Another positive aspect is the village reception: they can always help you if something is broken, you lost your key, you have a question, etc. There were some rules on campus and there was security that stopped us from making noise at night etc. This could be annoying, but it wasn't very strict. In conclusion, I do recommend living on campus because it's good for your social life, the location is good and it's easy to get the accomodation. Do this on time! I applied for a room on the first possible day and I got my first choice. The other villages like Kilmurry and Dromroe are a little bit more expensive, but the houses are nicer and there are more options like living with 4 or 6 people, having your own bathroom, etc. If you have the money I would recommend picking another village than Plassey.
leisure & culture
The on-campus life is really fun. The atmosphere is good and the other students and staff are always friendly. They organize a lot of parties. pub quizzes, etc and I recommend going there, especially in the first few weeks. There is a student union called UL Student Life. This is for all students and everybody is welcome. Almost every Irish student and international student is part of this. UL Student Life has clubs and societies with sports, games, hobbies, etc. There's even a "tea appreciation society". The clubs and societies are an easy way to get to know more people, also Irish students. There is also an international society that organizes trips around Ireland on the weekends. I highly recommend going on these trips! The international society organizes an international party in Stables (the pub on campus) every Friday as well. You can also volunteer at a language school where international students teach each other their own languages. You will probably also be busy with settling, studying and traveling, but I had enough time to join 3 societies and go to movie nights, parties, etc. I went on weekend trips around every 2-3 weeks, sometimes with the international society and sometimes with a smaller group of friends or housemates. I'm happy I got to see more of Ireland than just Limerick, because Limerick is not the nicest city (locals called it a shithole, not my words). Traveling is a great way to get to know more of the culture. The cities are nice, but it was also really impressive to go on hikes in nature. About the culture: Irish people are really fun in general. Try going to some traditional pubs with live music and chatting with some of the locals. they were always really nice and interested in internationals. They do drink a lot and they start drinking early! Pubs close around 1am, so the nightlife is earlier, so you have to go out earlier as well. I had to get used to that.
suggestions/tips
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Follow the UL channels on social media, like UL student life and the international society so you don't miss any events.- Don't worry too much about dressing well, Irish students go to lectures in their sports clothes and everything



is really casual, nobody cares.

- It might seem like a short time, but a semester is quite long so make sure you have all the stuff you need and buy it in Ireland if needed. Looking back, I regretted not buying extra pillows and an extra charger. You will have to leave stuff behind when you leave, but you can leave it in your house and it will be donated to the homeless.
- Look up local events, like music festivals. I went to a jazz festival & traditional festival nearby.
- If it's an option, take a course about Ireland like Irish Folklore, Irish Language or Irish Music and Dance. Many internationals do this, and you will learn more about the (very interesting) culture.
- Look up the module book at the UL website, you can probably find the one from last year. You can see the available modules there. For psychology, there were not that many options and some were similar to UU modules so I couldn't take them because the modules have to be approved. Check this on time!

CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes! Ireland is a great country and the culture shock was not that big. I had a really good time in Limerick and I highly recommend the destination because the campus is really big and has good facilities. However, I think any destination is good because you will make good friends and travel and that's always a good experience. So, I recommend going abroad in general but Ireland (and Limerick) was a good choice for me and I was happy I could blend in and speak English.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Don't worry too much about having all the information. It's all a little bit more casual in Ireland and everything will be fine. Focus on making some good friends in the beginning and try to travel as much as possible! If you want to get to know more about the culture, don't be scared to talk to Irish students or locals because they are all very proud and happy to tell you about Ireland.



UU Report form - Erasmus 2018-2019

faculty/college	Behavioral Sciences
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Pedagogical Sciences

destination city & country	Limerick, Ireland
name university abroad	University of Limerick
start date	03 / 09 / 2018 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	21 / 12 / 2018 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

I found the exchange application process to be pretty easy. Once I went to the pre-departure meeting everything became clear for me. I started quite early with the whole process of choosing which university I wanted to go to and if things weren't clear to me I could always email the International Office for advice.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

Like I said in my previous answer the International Office at UU is very supportive and they are always willing to help you where needed. I also found that they replied very fast if I sent them a question by email.

academic preparation

I had to choose five courses at the University of Limerick which I found to be quite hard, because three of those had to be in the Psychology Department. Not all of the modules were available to international students, but in the end I ended up with five modules that I felt happy about

language preparation

.As for language I didn't really do any preparation because I found that my English was at a high enough level to commence my studies in Limerick.

finances

Before I left, I had already made a financial plan. This plan helped me to organise my financial situation in my head. It turned out that I had saved up enough money to cover for my expences, but you definitely have to keep in mind that you are going to spend more money there than in the Netherlands because of trips you are going to make.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

When I started I had selected five modules that I wanted to take during the semester. The first week is an introducton week, which was very helpful to me because to way that the university is organized takes some getting used to. In the second week you get the opportunity to go to lectures of the modules that you are interested in. After this week you have to hand in your final study plan. Some of the modules ended up to be not like I had expected and some were not available after all. This meant that I had to change most of my study plan, but at least I knew that these were modules that I was going to enjoy. I ended up with four modules instead of five and I could also choose two modules from the Psychology department instead of three so they were very flexible. What I found the most difficult was the fact that we had to make our timetable ourselves and make sure there weren't any clashes. It took some time but it wasn't too bad, I just was used to UU making



our schedules for us.
academic quality of education activities
I found the level of education at the University of Limerick to be lower than at UU. For some modules there were no tutorials at all and the lectures weren't mandatory which mean you really had nothing to commit to. The lecturers I had were pretty good over all, but some were definitely worse than I'm used to at UU. The exams were a lot easier than at UU as well.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
The counselling and support at the University of Limerick were really good. This was something that really stood out to me. In the first 7 weeks there is extra support for first years and internationals which I found really comforting. Everything you needed is available on campus, even a doctor or therapist if you need it.
transfer of credits
I have not received my credits yet, so I don't know yet how they will transfer this to UU. The modules are 6 ECTS each so I expect this to be transferred just like that.

STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme
The first week of the semester was orientation week for international students. I found this week to be very helpful because I learnt a lot about the campus and facilities. However, I was very tired after this week because there were so many activities and all the new people I met. I do recommend going to a lot of these activities though, because this is where I met most of my friends for the semester. There was also the opportunity to sign up for clubs and societies. There are a lot of things to choose from but the International Society is something I would recommend to sign up for!
accommodation
I found accommodation on one of the on campus villages. The process of finding a room was quite easy to me. However, you have to apply very soon to make sure you get a place on the list as there are more students than rooms. I lived in Kilmurry Village and I became very good friends with my roommates which was nice.
leisure & culture
The Irish people are really kind and are always willing to help. This was something I had to get used to because this is not always the case in the Netherlands. This was a very positive experience. The Irish students don't really tend to hang out with internationals, but they are very recognisable as they wear sportswear a lot and the guys all have the same haircut. And as expected they are a beer-drinking nation, and they look very confused if you ask for a glass of beer instead of a pint.
suggestions/tips
My main suggestion is to stay on campus during your stay at the University of Limerick. I didn't go into the city centre that often and I didn't need to because everything is available on campus. Another suggestion is to really take your time off to explore the country. Everything is easy accessible by bus or train and you get a student discount. The country is so beautiful and you really don't want to be stuck in one place if you have the chance to travel around the country. Also keep an eye on the Ryanair flights from Dublin as they are extremely cheap. I flew to Portugal for 10 euros for instance and the possibilities are endless!

CONCLUSIONS
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
My conclusion is that I would definitely recommend University of Limerick. Not only is the campus is very nice and organised, the country is truly beautiful and the sights are breathtaking. I would recommend Limerick over Dublin because you get a true Ireland vibe as it is not a big city.



do you have any additional advice or comments?

If you are in doubt right now, I would say: Just do it! I was very nervous before going as well, but this has been the best experience of my life. I have seen so much beautiful places and have made a lot of friends all over the world and I would do it all over again if I could.



UU Report form - Erasmus 2018-2019

faculty/college	Social Sciences
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Psychology
destination city & country	Limerick, Ireland
name university abroad	University of Limerick
start date	03 / 09 / 2018 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	21 / 12 / 2018 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

The application process went rather smoothly. The university of Limerick responded very quickly and was very helpful with any of my questions. I messed up by applying twice, and within a day they had fixed it for me.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

I would suggest that, if you are interested in studying abroad, you go to the information night where students speak about their experiences. The extra information evening before your departure was also very helpful. Make use of the available information!

academic preparation

There is no real need for academic preparation. Have a close look at the courses, know what you want to do, know why you're going. But the level will be lower, the education will be easy if you are used to Dutch standards.

language preparation

Make sure you know how to follow a course in English. Be aware that not only the literature, but also all of the lectures and practicals will be in English. As far as accents go, most of the professors were American. But you could still prepare yourself for the accent a bit (by watching movies) to make sure you can understand people in the grocery store.

finances

Ireland is more expensive than the Netherlands, for sure. Because of the level of education, I was able to travel around quite a lot. Which obviously makes it even more expensive. I was prepared for that due to my savings.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

I loved their course selection. There were some courses we do not have at UU. So take the opportunity to learn about different fields. For example, I followed organizational psychology, social psychology, economic psychology, sport psychology and sociology all in the same semester.

academic quality of education activities

If you want to be challenged academically, then I suggest you look into Trinity college or another country. Limerick is not hard or challenging in that way.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad



I really enjoyed the contact with the Univeristy of Limerick. Very easy going, very helpful. The Irish are honestly way too nice, so if you have a question: don't be afraid to let them know.

transfer of credits

You follow 5 courses of 6 ECTS, instead of 4 courses of 7,5 ECTS. But one semester, is 30 ECTS.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

Very nice! There is a great week set up for you with all of the other EU internationals. It's a shame that you are seperated from the Irish and non-EU, but it gives you the oppportunity to become more of a unity with other internationals, which will help you throughout your stay.

accommodation

Overpriced. But, Ireland is expensive and the campus accomodation is very easily accesible with their online application system. I paid 2700 for four months, which is crazy. But even people I spoke to who lived off-campus paid around 2500. Prepare yourself for these costs.

leisure & culture

Culture shock? Not really. You can prepare yourself for fattier food, less options in the grocery store, pints (568 mL) instead of 250-300 mL glasses while going out and awfully nice people!

suggestions/tips

Travel! Ireland is wonderful. Limerick is located on the west coast which is gorgeous. But the DublinCoach gets you in Dublin for 20 euros (return) in 2,5 hours (single). We even went to London for only 50 return. Also, get yourself a creditcard. You will need for all of your payments online (think booking bus and train tickets to reserving your cinema tickets).

CONCLUSIONS

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

It totally depends on your personal challenges/goals. I was able to improve my writing in English, but because I hang out with mostly other internationals, I don't feel like my ENGLISH itself improved that much. The education is nto that challenging, but I did become more independent when it comes to travelling. I recommend the Erasmus experience for sure, but know what you want to achieve that semester and then search for the best fitting location.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Just do it.