



UU Study Abroad Report Form

Contact info at the IO.

faculty/college	Faculty of Humanities
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	English Language and Culture

destination city & country	Coimbra, Portugal
how did you travel to your destination?	Car
name university abroad	Universidade de Coimbra
start date	01 / 09 / 2022 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	01 / 07 / 2023 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

I have to say that the preparation process for an Erasmus exchange is quite convoluted. It was not the best experience. There are a lot of documents to read and fill in, of which a good number of them have deadlines. This was not the problem per se, but rather the fact that, for me at least, a big part of the process was unclear. I had a lot of questions initially that could have been answered in preparing documents, and whenever I asked a question to either the sending or the receiving university, answers were often a bit vague (if my questions were answered at all). With the deadline factor this made things quite stressful. There is a lot to be done in a short amount of time, and even though there are introduction meetings where the Erasmus Office explains many aspects of the process, there are other aspects that aren't even mentioned at all. So my advice is to stay on top of things always, so as not to lose oversight. However, in the end I did manage to do everything on time and correctly (at least up until now) with the help of a few International Office workers.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

Whenever I had any questions they were usually answered well, although it would often take a while to get a reply or to get to the point of the question. I understand that the people that work at the International Office have very busy schedules, but sometimes it did feel like they wouldn't answer my questions (that to me seemed simple), but rather redirected me to a website that I had already been to before and where I hadn't found my answer. But as I said, this happened sometimes, usually contact was all right.

academic preparation

In my case I don't feel like academic preparation was really needed, except for the usual preparation for a course like any other. Some of the differences between the sending and receiving institutions did strike me, but nothing drastic, mainly regarding administration and examination.

language preparation

Language preparation wasn't necessary in my case, as I spoke Portuguese fluently before applying to a Portuguese university.

finances

For me financial costs were a bit higher, because I travelled to Portugal by car and used it there as well (which I have to say was worth it, because you're able to see a lot of the country that you wouldn't otherwise by public transport). However, other costs, especially when it comes to preparation aren't that high. In my experience it was almost exactly as I had expected it to be.



STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

The study programme is quite different. You have semestrial courses that have a relatively low work load, so to get to your 30 ECTS per semester you need five courses. You'll do them all at the same time, but honestly it doesn't feel like too much. At the end of the semester there is about a month of exam period, and this can be a bit tricky, because you'll have five exams you need to study for and possibly some projects to finish as well. Other than this the only thing that seemed a bit strange in my eyes is that all the classes are lectures. You have two two-hour lectures for every course every week, and of course you have the possibility to ask questions, but there are no seminars. This means that you take notes during class, do the reading at home (which is not always available online, and in such cases also very limitedly available in the library), then study this literature for your exam. This is, of course, regarding the courses I took, at the FLUC (faculty of humanities), and as I've heard from friends of mine that attended other faculties, their experiences are different - sometimes better, sometimes worse.

The content of the courses is not drastically different, but what I have noticed is that it seems a bit more superficial than what I am used to from Utrecht University. This might also be due to the lack of seminars, where you would usually find in-depth discussions. However it's nice to see the different takes on education different univeristies have.

academic quality of education activities

The quality of education is all right. It is noticeable that in the Netherlands there is a more academic approach, while in Portugal it's almost a more academically inclined extention of secondary school. Not bad, but as I mentioned before, it could go a bit more in-depth, rather that just discussing the predetermined literature.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

This was exactly what I expected from Portugal, given my experience with other Portuguese institutions (non-academic). They will help you, but administration is just a bit messy and it takes them a long time to reply or take care of the issues at hand.

transfer of credits

I have to say I don't really understand how the transfer of credits works, but it seems fine.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

It was a bit unclear initially where we should be and at what time on what day, but as long as you ask someone, you will get clarity. The welcoming session wasn't anything special, but they did explain a few things nicely before the start of the semester.

accommodation

As you would expect in any country in these times, housing is difficult to come by. Not impossible, but make sure to put some work in, to get something you are comfortable in. What really made a difference for me is that I could stay with friends in Lisbon while looking for accommodation in Coimbra, so that I was close enough to come visit whenever I needed to (and it was free, as opposed to getting a hostel for a week or more until you find something permanent).

Coimbra is quite cheap, especially if you have a shared house. Mentionable, however, is the fact that there are almost no houses with built in heating. So you will probably have to buy one for yourself to stay warm (as well as to keep your house from being inexplicably humid).

leisure & culture



There are a lot of cafes and bars and restaurants in Coimbra, as is normal for Portugal in general, but because Coimbra is such a student city, you'll get to meet a lot of amazing people. Erasmus is also quite big in Coimbra, so there are a lot of different cultures merging and learning from each other.

Going out can be very cheap, especially in places where you might get an ESN discount.

suggestions/tips

1. If you like to live in party houses, go for one of the many Repúblicas. They are super cheap and organise lots of parties that so many students attend. If you would rather not live there and just go to the parties, make sure to know what house you're ending up in.
2. What really helped enhance my experience on Erasmus is having a fixed group of friends. You should always be open to meeting new people, because you'll have so much fun and learn new things from them, but having a friend group that you will come to love over the course of your stay will make the experience really special.
3. When looking for accommodation: look at as many sites as possible (Facebook, Idealista, OLX, etc.), and call as many numbers as you can. Whenever you are rejected or aren't a fit for the room, always ask if the landlords know other places you could apply to, this is what saved me and got me an amazing one-person studio.
4. If you can keep it up, go out as much as you can, but also go to your classes - and just sleep inbetween. You will get the best of both worlds.
5. Go see places and learn about them in Coimbra but also outside as much as possible. Portugal has so many beautiful places and such amazing delicacies to offer.

CONCLUSIONS

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

I would definitely recommend this destination. Mainly because of two things: its location and the fact that it's just a different university setting than you're used to. I enjoyed my classes, because most of my teachers were good and passionate about their fields. I've heard of some people that didn't enjoy theirs quite as much, because of a lack of quality, but even then I think it can be really good to experience that, because you'll get to learn about the academic culture in a foreign country and maybe even come to appreciate education in your own country.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

The application and completion processes of the Erasmus exchange can be tiring and frustrating, but after your semester/year abroad you will find that it was all worth it.



UU Study Abroad Report Form

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

destination city & country	Coimbra, Portugal
name university abroad	UC (Universidade de Coimbra)
start date	01 / 09 / 2021 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	01 / 02 / 2022 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	Applying for an Erasmus at the UU is quite simple. It takes some time, but the internationals office clearly let you know when you have to finish what. Because of Covid, there were some extra measures I had to take, but I don't think this will be a problem anymore in the future.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	The internationals office at the UU is very helpful. If you have questions, they always provide you a clear and quick answer.
academic preparation	No academic preparation is needed. At the beginning of your time in Coimbra, you have to let them know which courses you want to follow. You can then follow them and still change courses up until 6 weeks after arrival. This means that if you notice that a course is too difficult, you have enough time to still change to another course.
language preparation	Most courses are taught in Portuguese, except for those at the Economics faculty, or master related courses. They offer a 3 weeks language course before the actual classes start, which I really recommend taking. I only chose Economics courses, so I did not really need the language course, but I really liked it, since it also helps you with already getting to know some new people, and starting to understand some Portuguese.
finances	Coimbra is quite a lot cheaper than Utrecht with normal expenses. Most rooms are around 200 euros. Also, restaurants are cheaper. They have a lot of cantinas, which are mostly meant for students. Here they offer lunch and dinner for a very cheap price. The only thing that is more similar to Dutch expenses, are the prices of the supermarkets.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	I studied at the economics faculty, since this is the only faculty that mostly offers English courses. I choose some courses that sounded interesting, but changed almost all of them during the first weeks of my time there. This was a nice opportunity they offer, but it also gave me some extra stress, since they always took a long time to respond and the deadline of having a final learning agreement was arriving.
academic quality of education activities	



At the University of Utrecht, I study Information Sciences, which has no similarities to Economics. Some of the courses I followed in Coimbra were 3rd year courses, but not very difficult. This kind of shows that the academic quality is quite a lot lower than in the Netherlands.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

The support receiving in Coimbra was a bit more chaotic than in the Netherlands. It always took quite some time before the internationals office answered on emails and they were always pointing me towards others with problems. This was sometimes a bit difficult, but at the end you will always work it out.

transfer of credits

Not done yet

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

Just as in Utrecht, Coimbra has an internationals association called ESN, which organizes a lot of fun activities, especially in the welcoming months (September and February). I joined a lot of these activities, which made it very easy to get to know the city and make new friends.

accommodation

Coimbra is a city with a lot of students and student residences. There are probably more rooms than students wanting a room, so it is quite easy to find one. I would recommend not searching for one online beforehand, since there are some posts that are fake. I booked an Airbnb for the first days and asked people around if they knew of places that were available. Because of this, I had the opportunity to first look at the room before actually deciding to take it. (try searching around Praça da República)

leisure & culture

Portuguese people are very relaxed. Everyone is always late and a lot of things are not that well organized. At the beginning, I had to get used to this a bit, but after a while I kind of liked the environment.

suggestions/tips

Join as many ESN activities as you can/want. This way you will make a lot of new friends. Also, enjoy the beautiful places Portugal has to offer. It is very cheap to rent a car to drive through the country.

CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes. Coimbra is one of the cities with the most students living close to each other. Almost all the nightlife happens around one square (Praça da República). Because of this, it is super easy to make new friends and have a great time. The weather is good and Portugal is a beautiful country, with a lot to offer.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

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ERASMUS+ STUDIES - UU Report

faculty/college	Humanities
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Kunstmatige Intelligentie

destination city & country	Coimbra, Portugal
how did you travel to your destination?	Airplane
name university abroad	Universidade de Coimbra
start date	30 / 08 / 2021 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	28 / 01 / 2022 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	It went pretty easy. I followed all the steps given by the universities and everything else went by itself.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	When some things were not clear to me, I sent emails. Usually I got answers fast, so that was convenient
academic preparation	I did not do a lot of academic preparation, but it was also not needed.
language preparation	I tried to follow some Portuguese podcasts and do an intensive course.
finances	I started saving 1 year before going so I did not have any problems with money.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	Economics
academic quality of education activities	The quality of education in Coimbra was lower than in Utrecht, but I expected this. It also gave the opportunity to do other stuff such as exploring during the semester.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad	The counselling & support weren't that good. Often I had to send a lot of emails to get an answer.
transfer of credits	I got my transcript of records but I didn't transfer the credits yet.



STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme
The welcome & orientation programme of Coimbra was really good. They have a lot of international students so they put a lot of effort and time to welcome them all.
accommodation
Since I saved a lot of money before going, I could permit to have a nice apartment where I lived by myself. I was a lot of time not home, but it was nice to know that I always had a place for myself where I could go.
leisure & culture
In my opinion the Portuguese culture is really nice. This was also one of the reasons I chose for Portugal. The people are very welcoming and open.
suggestions/tips
I would definitely recommend everyone to travel through the country when you have the time. Portugal is a beautiful country with a lot to find out. I also recommend to go to the ESN events, here you will meet a lot of people who are also exchange students and willing to meet.

CONCLUSIONS
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
I would highly recommend this destination. To me it was the best time of my life. It's an amazing experience and as Coimbra is such an international student city, I think it's one of the best places to do an exchange. It's also not too big so you'll know the people and the city good and it won't take too long.
do you have any additional advice or comments?
In Coimbra there is party everyday and everywhere, which is tempting and fun, but take a break once in while.



ERASMUS+ STUDIES - UU Report

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

destination city & country	Coimbra, Portugal
how did you travel to your destination?	Plane
name university abroad	Universidade de Coimbra
start date	01 / 09 / 2021 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	01 / 02 / 2022 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	
	The application process went rather smoothly. Everything in Portugal is going in a slower phase so please don't be hasty, but eventually everything will be signed, you just need to be patient.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	
	I experienced the support of UU as very helpful. The staff is very understandable and try to help you if you're stuck with anything. They also know that in Portugal everything is just a bit slower and they really take that into account, also with certain deadlines for the erasmus grant.
academic preparation	
	I don't think you need any academic preparation. Until the minute I left it was very uncertain if I would be able to go so I didn't dive into any preparation to be honest.
language preparation	
	It is advised to have a little knowledge of portuguese if you are studying in Coimbra outside the faculty of Economics. This faculty is the only one with a few courses that are being taught in English. I didn't want to do Economics courses because I don't think its interesting. So I chose for Psychology subjects. These were all taught in Portuguese. So then its good to have some basic knowledge, however the professors are all very helpful and willing to give you an option to do the examination in English.
finances	
	I financed my stay abroad with Erasmus money, my savings and a little support from home. Generally speaking, Portugal is a very affordable country. Coimbra in particular, as a student city, is much cheaper than Lisbon by comparison. For my accommodation, for example, I payed 240€ a month. Compared to other flats, my rent is in the middle range. If you're up for it, you can easily find a flat for around €200. The most expensive flats are just under 400€. These are modern one-room flats with their own bathroom and kitchen. In coimbra you don't really need money for transportation as almost everything is at walkable distance. Moreover, food and drinks are really cheap. You can find an espresso at almost every corner for 70 cents. About the food: Portugal is a meat country. However, there is always a vegetarian dish in the canteen. All dishes in the canteen cost 2.40 (soup, main course, dessert). It is open for lunch and dinner. If you prefer something fancier, you can eat very well for 10-15€ per person. Beer, coffee and wine are very cheap. The cheapest beer in town costs €1.70 for 0.5l. And a whole bottle of wine for 2.50. I recommend everyone to travel as much as possible in Portugal. Because of Coimbra's central location, you can get to the north and south quickly. A train ticket to Lisbon or



Porto always costs 15€ (as long as you are not older than 25) and does not change its price even if you book an hour before departure. Flixbus can be way cheaper if you book it in advance. Rental cars are also very cheap. Example: small car for 24h without insurance and excluding petrol - 10€. I highly recommend Guerin to rent your car all over Portugal. The staff is very nice and really don't want you to get in trouble with them over damage and they have really nice cars.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

As I told you I chose some psychology courses which are taught in Portuguese. The courses were quite interesting although it takes some time to figure out what is actually expected from you. Don't hesitate to ask fellow Portuguese students and the professor, they are all willing to help. In the beginning it can be a bit of a hassle to get your learning agreement in order and signed because at the university it is normal to change courses in the first two weeks of the semester. Also here, just be patient it will all turn out fine eventually.

academic quality of education activities

The academic quality of Utrecht University lies a bit higher than the University of Coimbra. The difficulties are more focused around the (sometimes) lack of proficiency in English with professors and students, which causes a decrease in academic quality.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

The international office of my faculty is consistent of one lady. She is very willing to help but very busy. So as everything in Portugal you have to have patience to get things signed etc.

transfer of credits

Haven't done this yet.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

There is not really a welcome or orientation programme at the UC apart from a formal lecture about UC and health services. Nevertheless, ESN is very active in Coimbra as it is one of the biggest student cities in Portugal. They arrange a welcoming month with a lot of activities for you to meet other students. One thing that I can really recommend is the Portuguese A1 intensive course. It starts before the semester and through this I met most of the friends I hung out with during the semester. It also gives you a chance to be in Coimbra before most other students which makes finding a room really easy.

accommodation

Basically, finding a flat turned out to be very easy. Fortunately, the housing market here is the other way round. This means that landlords try to fill their houses rather than students having to fight for a few rooms. So in the end, I was rather spoiled for choice as to which flat to choose. When you walk around Coimbra you will see a lot of signs for rooms to rent. There are several Facebook groups through which you can find a room and eventually I found my room via the ESN WhatsApp group. I lived near to Praca (the street where you can go out) and the university in a house with 9 other Erasmus students.

leisure & culture

As said earlier Coimbra has an outstanding Erasmus Social Network (ESN). Events of all kinds are organised every week. From excursions to beer pong tournaments and other parties. Especially in the first two weeks after my arrival, events took place almost every day, which made it possible to get to know most of the Erasmus students. During the week I was mostly in Coimbra to follow my courses and almost every weekend a fun trip was organised to explore Portugal. The Universidade de Coimbra is the second oldest university in Europe (1290). Everything in the city revolves around the university. Almost half of the inhabitants are students. Most



of the university buildings are very old and sometimes you feel like you're in Harry Potter, not only because many students walk through the university in their traditional black cloaks. I was lucky to study at the faculty of psychology which is considered by most students as the prettiest faculty.

suggestions/tips

Do as many trips as you can in the weekends. Coimbra is a student city which means it is quite dead during the weekend. It is fairly cheap to travel and there are so many beautiful spots to visit. My recommendations: Lisbon, Porto, Algarve, Nazare (best in winter when the waves are at their highest), Peniche (Cabo da roça), Tomar (castle), Serra de estralle (especially with sunset), national park penida gerês, figuera da foz (For surfing) Aveiro is also worth a day trip. Madeira is also highly recommended. You can also go on breathtaking hikes there. It should be said, however, that both islands are not really suitable for the classic beach holiday. Hikes and nature itself are definitely in the foreground here. Lastly, Madrid is also only a nightbus away and a really beautiful city to visit for the weekend.

CONCLUSIONS

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

I highly recommend Coimbra! I am very happy that I ended up in Coimbra, even though it was not a city I had in mind. The student life is outstanding. The weather is always good. Everything is cheap compared to the Netherlands. The country is great for travelling. Coimbra is very different from Lisbon. Lisbon is a really big city where you have to take the metro to get around. In Coimbra, everything is within walking distance and you have a lot of contact with other students.

Basically, I would say that Coimbra is perfect for students who want to study at a very traditional, old university, who want to get the most out of relatively little money and who also see themselves having a beer or two in the evening.

The semester abroad felt like living in a bubble without responsibilities, but with a lot of life. For me, the time here was the perfect end to my student life. I will definitely miss the time here, as it seemed far removed from any reality.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Just go on an Erasmus already!



UU Study Abroad Report Form

faculty/college	Geowetenschappen
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's
name study programme	Human Geography

destination city & country	Coimbra, Portugal
name university abroad	Universidade de Coimbra
start date	14 / 02 / 2022 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	14 / 07 / 2022 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

In the beginning it was definitely difficult to figure out what was needed to apply and how everything should be done. However the university of Coimbra was very nice and answered all the questions I had.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

The University in Utrecht definitely can help a lot. Just email them and don't wait until the last moment with emailing, because it can take some time before they answer.

academic preparation

My courses were not the same as in my bachelor programme, but I did not need any preparation so I did not do any preparation.

language preparation

Before departure I did not know any Portuguese. I did some Duolingo to already learn some words, but this was very basic. There was also the possibility to do the intensive language course from the university, but this started earlier than the semester and I could not make it to go to Coimbra earlier. However the people that did it were positive about the course and they said it was nice to already meet some exchange students before the semester started. Also during the semester there was the option to do a language course for 6 credits. This course was also quite hard, but it was very nice to learn the basic and to get around in Portugal in general.

finances

Portugal is very cheap in comparison with the Netherlands. Accommodations are around 200 euros a month, 500ml beer is 1.60 euros and you can eat in the canteen for 2.45 euros. From Erasmus you get about 300 euros a months plus about 100 euros as compensation for not using your OV. However you can make your exchange as expensive as you wish. Traveling definitely costed me a lot of money, but also gave me back many memories.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

In the beginning I had definitely some stress about getting into English courses. I was afraid that there would be only Portuguese courses since the website of the UU mentioned that the English courses were limited. After a long search I found the English courses on the internet and I was very content with my study programme. However after arrival only half of my courses were given in that specific semester. Almost everybody had to change their study programme, but this is not a problem at all. You get almost a whole month to do this. You could even go to classes and decide if you want to take them or not. And in the end there were enough English



classes available and I was happy with my selection of courses. I took in total 5 classes:

- China and international Society in Asia
- Interpretivist International relations
- Mobilities and global migration
- Europe in the world
- Portugese Language I (Erasmus)

The classes already ended in the end of May. After that I had some exams and I was done around the end of June/beginning of July.

academic quality of education activities

The quality of the courses was variable, but they were all doable. In most of the English courses the majority were Erasmus students and the professors were always very nice. The academic quality was definitely lower than in Utrecht. Some tests had the same questions as the example test that was give during the classes and some test only consisted multiple choice questions. The papers were a bit more work, but this also varied a lot. For one class I had to write a paper of 4 pages with 5 people and in another class I had to write a paper of 15 pages on my one. But in general it was easy to pass all the classes.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

The university in Coimbra is always there to help. You can schedule appointments with them or you can email them. However it can take a few days before you get your answer.

transfer of credits

My credits were automatically send to me after I informed the university about my date of departure.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

The welcome & orientation programme is really important. The information itself is not really new if you did some research, but the welcome programme is needed to be officially signed into the university of Coimbra. Later there was also a welcome programme for my faculty and they also kind of gave the same information. The most import welcome is from ESN. This is the international student organization that organizes a lot of trips and activities. Through this organisation you can meet a lot of new people.

accommodation

It is really easy to find a good accommodation for a good price in Coimbra, because there is a lot available. There is even more supply than demand. My accommodation was 200 euros without gas/water and electricity. It was called the Rainbow House and I found it through some Facebook groups. However be careful because I got warned that there were also some scammers in some Facebook groups. If you have a little bit more budget and if you are studying at the faculty of economics, I would definitely recommend the Yellow House. This house is also near the faculty of Economics and from what I saw it looked like a really nice place to stay.

Keep in mind that the University is divided in different faculties which are located in different parts of the cities. The faculty of economics is located a bit more outside of the city so I would definitely advise to not find accommodation near the river in that case. In general it is nice to find an accommodation that is close to Praca da Republica, because that is the place were all the students go in the evening.

leisure & culture

The university of Coimbra is the oldest student city in Portugal and even one of the oldest in Europe. This is definitely noticeable by the many traditions that they have. Many Portuguese students still wear uniforms that look like Harry Potter outfits. Besides that they have many more traditions and rules. One of the biggest is



Quiema das Fitas. This is one week in may to celebrate the end of the academic year. In this week there is everyday a party in the evening with music and in the beginning there is a big parade.

The courses at the university are in general not that hard so I had a lot of free time and luckily there is a lot to do in Coimbra. The big party nights were on Tuesday and Thursday, but especially in the beginning there was everyday something to do in the evening. In the weekend it is really nice to make some trips. There is the possibility to chill in the park by the river, to go surfing in Figueira da Foz or to make a trip to some other close cities like Aveiro.

suggestions/tips

Definitely become a member of the ESN network. The organization is really active and organizes many activities. They organize weekend trips to cities, parties and social activities. I got to know a lot of my friends through the activities of ESN. Even if you do not like to party this organization is very helpful, because you can get a lot of discounts. The organization gives you discounts for of surfing lessons and even on flights with Ryanair. Also definitely save up more money than you ever think you are going to need. The traveling definitely costs a lot of money, but it gives you so many nice memories and it is so easy to travel in Portugal. There are many Flixbuses that can take you anywhere. Also definitely try to visit Madeira or the Azoren if you have the time. It's beautiful!

CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes I would definitely recommend this destination. Coimbra is a really vibrant city and is never boring. There are many exchange students and everybody is very open. It is not all hard to come into contact with other people. The city itself is very walkable and small so you will meet familiar people everywhere. Furthermore, there are always many parties going on in the evening and the location of Coimbra is great. It is really easy to reach other Portuguese cities in the North and the South.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Definitely go! I doubted a long time, but I absolutely loved it! It was very easy to meet people and I made many friends. Do not forget to travel, because Portugal is absolutely beautiful!

There were some occasion where a credit card would be nice to have (to rent a car, to book some activities or to order food online). I did not have one and I used Revolut, but in general it would be way easier to have one.



ERASMUS+ STUDIES - UU Report

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

destination city & country	Coimbra, Portugal
name university abroad	Universidade de Coimbra
start date	28 / 08 / 2018 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	30 / 01 / 2019 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

The application was quite straightforward but also a bit stressfull as I decided last-minute where I wanted to go. Coimbra was my first choice, so I was happy to hear that I got in. The application in Portugal was just a formality I think.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

Utrecht University organises a pre-departure meeting per region for students already selected by the UU, which was very useful. I would advise everyone to attend it.

academic preparation

I had already met the criteria for graduating my bachelor, so all ECTS obtained in Portugal would be just a bonus. Therefore, I did not need to make any academic preparations. Moreover, I highly doubt if it is necessary to take any preparations even if one needs to obtain all credits in Portugal as the courses I did were easy to pass. I did courses at the Faculdade de Economia, mostly on International relations, which I hardly knew anything about, but still I never felt any need for academic preparation.

language preparation

I started a course on Portuguese level 2 at the Babel institute in Utrecht in February. I liked it, so I also did the level 3 course which ended somewhere in June. With the certificate of the level 3 course I got into an intensive language course offered at the Faculdade de Letras at Universidade de Coimbra (starts end of August, costs around 300 euros) at level B1. The first week of this three week course prior to the semester was a bit hard to



follow, but in the end it was easy to pass. If you want to follow this course, it is necessary to pre-enrol somewhere before the end of July. I did not do this and it took quite some effort to get in anyway.

finances

Living is half as expensive in Portugal as in the Netherlands, but as you're on an exchange you will probably live 10 times more than you did in the Netherlands, so do not be surprised if you spent 5 times more than you did back home. This is worth it though because you will feel like a god.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

I studied at the Faculdade de Economia, a faculty that receives a lot of exchange students. Their international office is semi-well organised. It is of no use to go there in the early weeks of september to arrange things because they will not be ready yet. Do not stress if you want to make changes to your Learning Agreement because the deadline is somewhere half October.

academic quality of education activities

I did not find the courses I took very difficult. Mine were filled with Erasmus students and on average Dutch students are used to a much higher workload than students from other (European) countries. As a result, most of the semester you will not be busy. I feel like the workload was minimal until the start of November and I finished on the 18th of December.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

There is an obligatory medical insurance of 20 euros for all UC students. I did not use it, but I guess that especially medical coverage is comforting to have while abroad. The people at the International Office usually know how to help with any administrative issues.

transfer of credits

I have not received my transcript of records yet (13-02).

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

There is a welcome session by UC, which is mostly general info. There is also a welcome dinner by European Students Network (ESN), to which I did not go. I did join the ESN but did not participate in any of their activities because any payment for activities was to be done at their office, which is only open from 17u-20u on weekdays and often insanely crowded. However, I do not regret joining them as it includes also a 15% discount with Ryanair + 20kg of free luggage, making my flights to the Açores and back home ridiculously cheap.

accommodation

It is not hard to find accomodation without arranging anything before your arrival in Portugal. I found my room within half an hour using a tip from another exchange student that had arrived earlier. Often there are signs on windows with a telephone number of people that rent out rooms. My landlady was Dona Rosa and every local in Coimbra I spoke knew her somehow. She owns the RS bar next to Sé Velha and always sits on the seat immedeately left to the entrance. One of her houses is 20 metres away from that bar, also with a view on Sé Velha and the price is around 200 euros/month. This is the average price for rooms in Coimbra. Considering location, I would advise the old city (the area between Polo I of the UC and the Mondego river) and the area around Praça da República.

leisure & culture



I had a lot of spare time, which allowed me to explore Portugal. I rented a lot of cars with friends as my experience is that Portugal is best discovered on the road. I recommend for example the Peneda-Gêres park in the North and the Serra de Mamede in the east. In Coimbra a lot of musea are free for UC students.

suggestions/tips

Rent a car and go anywhere, for example to Serra da Estrela. If you travel by train book in advance as it is cheaper. If you travel to Porto/Lisbon the bus is also an option. Visit the Açores because it is beautiful.

CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes, the weather is lovely, the University is beautiful, the studyload is low and the Portuguese people are very warm.

do you have any additional advice or comments?



ERASMUS+ STUDIES - UU Report

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

destination city & country	Coimbra, Portugal
name university abroad	Universidade de Coimbra
start date	29 / 08 / 2018 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	19 / 01 / 2019 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	The exchange application process will take some time but if you carefully follow the guidelines that your university hands you, this probably won't bring any problems. My tip for is to start in time with arranging everything because getting signatures from the different universities will take some time.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	
academic preparation	I didn't do any academic preparation.
language preparation	I didn't do any real language preparation. I only did some Duolingo to learn the very basics of the Portuguese language.
finances	Portugal is not that expensive. The average for renting rooms is between 250 and 300 euro's. However, if you want to go on (road)trips and see a lot of the country (I definitely recommend this!) than you should make sure that you save enough money beforehand.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	For Erasmus students (who do not speak Portuguese) there is not a very broad spectrum of possibilities. Make sure that you check this beforehand. However, for me it was enough. I took a Portuguese course, two economic courses and two English courses. I really liked this because it something completely different from my own academic discipline. I really feel like I extended my general knowlegde.
academic quality of education activities	The quality of education activities is not that high. Therefore it won't be that hard to get good grades.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad	



I feel like my receiving university supported me really well. They informed us with everything we needed and they responded to my email very fast.

transfer of credits

I earned 30 ECTS during my exchange.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

Based on what I had read about Portugal from other student experiences I expected Portugal to be very un-organised. However, my experiences about the welcome and orientation programme were actually quite positive. We received all the information needed and were told a lot about Coimbra and the university life.

accommodation

In Coimbra you do not have to arrange a accommodation before you arrive. Since there are a lot of apartments and houses for rent, you can easily manage this when you have arrived. The positive side about finding a room after you arrived, is that you can check the room before you decide to move in. I decided to go to Coimbra two weeks in advance. Firstly, because I wanted to do the Portuguese Intensive Course (I definitely recommend this as well, very nice opportunity to make friends and learn the language). Secondly, because this gave me the opportunity to check the available houses before all the other students arrived.

leisure & culture

Coimbra is a very old and cultural city. Also, I have enjoyed the Portuguese culture very much.

suggestions/tips

CONCLUSIONS

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

I would recommend this university/destination abroad to others. If you are looking for a beautiful, old and historical city with lots of students, this might be the destination for you. I really enjoyed studying at one of the oldest universities in the world.

do you have any additional advice or comments?



ERASMUS+ STUDIES - UU Report

faculty/college	Faculty of Geosciences
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Human Geography and Spatial Planning

destination city & country	Coimbra, Portugal
name university abroad	University of Coimbra
start date	01 / 09 / 2018 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	31 / 01 / 2019 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

The exchange application takes quite a while, but this is the same for every destination. It is just an inconvenience for a short while, but definitely worth it.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

The international office at my faculty of Geosciences was very helpful in helping me to prepare the right documents. I also emailed them a few times from Coimbra, and they always replied quickly.

academic preparation

I did not do any preparations for the courses I was going to take.

language preparation

I participated in the A1 intensive language course prior to the start of the semester. I do recommend doing this. It taught me the basics of the portuguese language (which is handy since there are quite a few people that do not speak english) and I actually met a group of people in my class with whom I stayed in contact during the whole semester. Apart from that, I followed the Erasmus semester course of the portuguese language A2 for which you can receive 6 EC.

finances

Almost everything in Portugal is cheaper than the Netherlands regarding living costs. Still, you need to take into consideration that there will be more trips, nights outs and dinners compared to your life at home probably and that will also cost money.



STUDY ABROAD PERIOD
study programme (content and organisational issues)
I took courses at international relations, within the faculty of economics. The courses were mainly followed by Erasmus students and I noticed that the academic 'level' was lower than my own courses at the UU. The assessment for the courses were mostly group presentations and papers you had to write. It was almost impossible to fail. It really differed per course in how well the lecturers were prepared. Some were really ill-organized, others were more strict. Generally, they were more relaxed and chaotic than the teachers at the UU.
academic quality of education activities
There were no education linked activities in which I participated outside the courses.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
It was sometimes vague about what was really expected, but talking among international students helped to clear up some things. The person at my international office at the faculty spoke english well and was very friendly.
transfer of credits
I have just received my transfer of credits. This was within the deadline and it seems that everything has been transferred correctly. If there is a problem, the international relations office of Economics in Coimbra replies fast so this will probably not be a problem.

STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme
The university organises one seminar to explain all the administrative things regarding living and studying in Coimbra. My faculty of Economics also organised a day to explain more course specific administration details. The real programme to get to know other international students is taken care of by ESN Coimbra. They organise a welcoming month the first month of the semester with lots of activities to get to know other people.
accommodation
Housing in Coimbra is really cheap. Also, there is a lot available, so you can be critical in your choice. The nightlife was mostly around Praça da Republica, so if you are interested in that I highly recommend to look for housing close to that place.
leisure & culture
There are two organisations for international students, ESN Coimbra and Erasmusland, that organise lots of activities during the week and trips during the weekend to get to know Portugal better. These events can be seen on Facebook.
suggestions/tips

CONCLUSIONS
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
I would recommend this destination as I had a great time in Coimbra. I made a lot of new friends and enjoyed experiencing the Portuguese culture, which is way more relaxed than the Dutch way of life. However, education-wise it was not that interesting or a real asset to my knowledge, so if that is what you are looking for Coimbra might not be the best destination to go to.



do you have any additional advice or comments?

Keep in mind that most housing facilities do not contain a heating system. Therefore, take warm clothes with you or prepare to buy your own heater to stay warm during the winter. It can get quite cold inside the house during winter.