

Erasmus Experience Report

NOVA School of Law, Lissabon

Preparations

As a student of the Hanse Law School's Comparative and European Law bachelor's degree, a two-semester stay abroad at a law faculty is mandatory and an integral part of the curriculum. Because of my studies, I was able to fall back on partner universities, both the University of Oldenburg and the University of Bremen. Before the start of the semester abroad, I had to upload a letter of motivation, transcript of records, grant agreement and language certificates as well as an application form to Mobility Online. After the nomination and confirmation of a place at the university, two e-mails arrived some time later. On the one hand, this immediately provided the link to the website where you had to register as an incoming student. Here you then had to re-enter the Learning Agreement and when you then sent the specified LA, a confirmation of registration was uploaded some time later, on which the courses were listed and which also contained your assigned matriculation number. With your matriculation number you can then register in the student area of the faculty, netpa and moodle. The host university had previously sent me emails with information such as the university's website, where you can select courses and a list of everything you should submit and by which deadlines. I looked at the courses on offer with a focus on English-language courses. Many courses were offered in English. My contact person from the International Office was always helpful when it came to questions or documents. I booked the plane ticket in advance because it was cheaper (Easyjet/ TAP Airline). Arriving at the airport, the metro "Aeroporto" takes you everywhere or Uber/Taxi/Bolt is available.

Formalities in the host country

Since Portugal, as a member of the EU, does not require a visa upon entry, this was easy. Other documents such as a driver's license, ID card or health insurance card also work without any problems. I didn't apply for a bank account and since the new EU regulations no longer require additional roaming fees, I kept my German SIM card and managed everything with my German bank account via online banking. I did not take out any additional foreign health insurance for my stay, as you are also insured in other European countries through your statutory health insurance. Luckily I didn't have to go to the hospital or to the doctor, but I can't report whether additional private insurance is necessary.

General information on the partner university and course selection

The Faculdade de Direito of the Universidade Nova de Lisboa is located on the Universitário de Campolide campus and is about a 10-minute walk from the São Sebastião

station. However, I always ran when the weather was good. I was able to choose courses from all academic years and degree programs, so that I could also take master's courses. Unfortunately, there were not many courses that matched the modules at the University of Bremen and since I am almost at the end of my bachelor's degree, there were hardly any courses that I could take from the bachelor's degree. Most of the courses I have taken are not recognized at the University of Bremen. However, everyone should take advantage of the offer and attend as many courses as possible in the first two weeks in order to then make the best possible course choice. The courses could be changed within the first week and these changes were then also made in the Learning Agreement. Some courses that I had initially mentioned on my learning agreement were ultimately not offered or were partly held in Portuguese, but other courses were included in the program. The Erasmus students were allowed to take both bachelor's and master's courses. Most of the time I attended master's courses and I took all the modules in English. Most of the courses, which are held in English, are attended by the Erasmus participants and only a few Portuguese. I found this a pity, because you hardly get to know fellow Portuguese students, but you quickly make friends with people from all over the world. At the university there is a large study room that has a nice view of Lisbon and is even open 24 hours a day. Unfortunately, the opening hours of the library are rather poor. For example, it is not accessible at all on weekends and public holidays, and only between 9 a.m. and 7 p.m. on weekdays. There was also a small cafeteria on campus that offered various snacks, and there was also a canteen. The semester was structured in such a way that you had to show oral grades, a midterms grade (presentation or exam) and a final exam for each module. This was incredibly helpful for motivation, since you were busy with the subject matter for the whole semester. During my time at the Nova, there were many events and lectures that the students were able to attend. I have often used this opportunity, but most of the lectures are in Portuguese.

Accommodation

I found my accommodation through Idealista. It was in a great location near the Marques de Pombal and the apartment had all the essentials. My room cost 350 Euro per month. The WG had a total of 5 rooms, 2 bathrooms, 1 balcony and a kitchen. Before that I joined some Erasmus and placement groups and looked at various rooms. There are some websites like EasyCuarto, Erasmus Organizations, WG-gesucht, Ondacity, Uniplaces or idealista where you can find a shared room. If you don't like being surrounded by constant noise levels, you shouldn't necessarily move to the Bairro Alto and also avoid the Alfama, since in the Bairro Alto one of the daily celebrations on the streets takes place in particular. In addition, areas such as Bairro, Baixa-Chiado and Cais are very touristy and noisy and the windows in many apartments are poorly isolated or not at all. I can definitely recommend the area around the Maues de Pombal, Alameda and Intendente metro stations.

After returning

After the exam phase is over, you will receive the Transcript of Records after about a month, in which the passed and failed subjects are listed. Furthermore, a language test and participation in an EU survey, which is carried out by the European Commission, are continued. My academic achievements from Lisbon still have to be submitted for recognition.

Other general information

Since I arrived in Lisbon two weeks before classes started, I was able to use the time to meet people, deal with the bureaucracy and use public transport to go to the most beautiful beaches. In the first few days I used the simple tickets that you get from the machines for the metro, bus, tram and ferry. However, it is worth buying a monthly pass for 40 Euro, which allows you unlimited travel. All students up to the age of 23 can have a form for the SUB23 card issued by the university. This card can be topped up at any metro station and for around 20 Euro a month you can use all public transport in and around Lisbon. The map also allows you to go to the Sintra region where you can flip through the national park and palaces. This ticket must then always be topped up on the 1st of the month. To get this ticket, you need to go to one of the customer centers that are located at almost every subway station. The fee is 7 Euro or 12 Euro. For 12 Euro you get your pass immediately, for 7 Euro you have to wait about 6-7 days.

Conclusion

Overall, I really enjoyed my semester abroad and I can definitely recommend Lisbon as an Erasmus destination. Lisbon is simply an incredibly diverse, young, warm-hearted and lively city. The people are open and friendly, which is why you make friends and make friends very quickly. The city itself is not too big, so you can quickly get an overview. Due to the many hills in the city, you are never more than a 20-minute walk from the nearest vantage point. The city also has a wide range of cultural activities.

You can also get to the beaches of Caparica, Cascais and Carcavelos where you can usually take surfing lessons for 20-30 Euro. Anyone who likes sun, sea, swimming and surfing will find the right place in Lisbon.