THE ELSA ERASMUS GUIDE

Thinking about going on Erasmus?

We at ELSA Malta present to you the ELSA Malta Erasmus Guide to help you make the most of your experience abroad! From practical tips on accommodation, to insights on academics, culture, and student life, this guide is your go-to companion for an unforgettable exchange experience. Whether you're preparing to leave or just curious about what's out there, ELSA Malta has got you covered!

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How to Apply.

The Application process is very smooth, students will receive an email indicating when the applications are open. Usually, they are open from 1st December to 31st January. It is a fairly easy process, you just fill in your name and surname, ID card... well you know the drill.

The most important part is the University Selection. Part of the application will be the 5 Universities you would like to apply to, ranking them in from highest preference (number 1) to least preferred (number 5). You are not forced to apply to all 5, but obviously the more you apply for, the higher the chances are that you go where you want. The application would look like something like this.

1. University of Groningen
2. University of Salzburg
3. Universita Roma Tre
4. Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Budapest
5. University of Perugia

Something to note is that the placements are given based on the average of the student. The student's average will be considered until 2nd year. So, even though you apply as 3rd years your marks achieved in 3rd year have no effect on your average relating to Erasmus.

Receiving the endorsement.

After applications close, the university will gather all applications and rank them and start issuing them to the universities on offer. They would come back to the university with an endorsement. The endorsement is another word for acceptance.

The time will come when the Erasmus office here at the University of Malta will send out emails to all Erasmus applicants whether they got endorsed by the universities they applied to go to Erasmus or not.

What Happens next?

Very simple, the applicants who receive the endorsement will have to accept it within a week or two. This would mean that that applicant will secure their spot at that university. Even though a student applies for 5 universities, a student will only be able to be accepted from 1 of those 5 that they applied to. There will not be a situation where students get accepted into multiple universities and would have to decide which one to go to. Thus, students get endorsed for only 1 of the 5 universities they applied to go to for Erasmus.

It is possible to reject, students are not forced to go to that university. There may be situations where students decide that that university would not be the best fit, so they

reject the endorsement, but if you are rejecting your endorsement, an email must be sent to the Erasmus office, but you must make it clear that you are still interested or not in going on Erasmus.

It is worth noting that those who do get the endorsement and reject it will be put at the bottom of the waitlist.

If you did not get the endorsement, this is not the end of the world, what would happen is that you would have to go through the process again as explained above, but with a slight change.

You will not be asked to apply again immediately, you will wait a few weeks until that happens again. This time there would be the waitlist which will list all those who did not get an endorsement and will be ranked according to their average. The application process would be also different due to the fact that many places will be filled up, so the Erasmus office will send out another email listing which Universities are still on offer and for how many students. So, for example if the University of Florence had 2 spaces and both were filled you can no longer apply to go on Erasmus there, but if the University of Salzburg had originally 2 spaces offered and only 1 is left, then that place is still up for grabs. Once again, you will have to list your preferences from 1-5 and wait for the endorsement.

There is saying that everyone goes on Erasmus, the process that was described above will continue until all applicants interested in the Erasmus programme are endorsed or until all foreign university placements are assigned and there are no more placements offered.

Final steps.

All Erasmus applicants that got endorsed and subsequently accepted the endorsement will start filling out forms which are mandatory to go on Erasmus. These are;

Prior to Departure

1. **Acceptance Letter** (host institution, with exact dates, letterhead, signed, stamped)
2. **Financial Identification Form** (typed, bank account in participant's name)
3. **Programme of Studies (PoS)** (full UM programme + Table A/B, signed by student & UM authorities)
4. **Online Learning Agreement (OLA)** (completed online, fully signed copy in PDF)
5. **Resit Clearance Form** (verified and signed by faculty officer)

6. **Copy of Travel Insurance** (covering medical, repatriation, liability, accident if relevant)
7. **Copy of Flight Ticket** (for review only)
8. **Beneficiary Grant Agreement** (initialled and signed by student, countersigned by UM International Office)
9. **European Health Insurance Card (EHIC)** (valid for whole mobility period)
10. **Accommodation & Flight Arrangements** (proof of bookings, after approval of acceptance letter/PoS/OLA)

During Erasmus (most are optional, only if changes need to be made)

1. **Programme of Studies – During Mobility Section** (for changes to courses/ECTS, signed approvals required)
2. **Online Learning Agreement – During Mobility Section** (matching PoS changes, signed and updated within 5 weeks)
3. **Addendum to Beneficiary Grant Agreement** (**ONLY** if mobility dates are extended/changed, with supporting docs)
    - Updated acceptance letter
    - Updated Programme of Studies (signed)
    - Updated Learning Agreement (signed)
4. **Mobility Extension Request Documents** (**ONLY** if extending from 1 semester to full year, approvals + updates)
5. **Grading Accreditation Conversion Sheets** (for grade recognition)
6. **Online Linguistic Support (OLS) assessment/courses** (optional but encouraged)
7. **Set of Procedures** (if clashes with UM exams, or failing a unit abroad)

After Mobility (to be submitted within 30 days of return)

1. **Certificate of Attendance** (host institution, confirming actual start/end dates, signed & stamped)
2. **Participant EU Online Survey** (automatically emailed, completed online)

3. **Transcript of Results** (official, either sent directly to UM or forwarded by student to UM).

ENJOY and GOOD LUCK!!



BRUSSELS ERASMUS ULB- Maria Montebello

Accommodation:

I found my accommodation through Facebook groups and an app called Cohabs, which is great if you're looking for shared housing in good areas. Van Orley international student housing is also ideal for students going on Erasmus as you will be living with other Erasmus students from different countries all over. The most popular neighborhoods among students are Ixelles, Etterbeek, and Saint-Gilles. Ixelles is closest to ULB and has a vibrant student atmosphere, while Saint-Gilles is a bit more artsy and laid-back. I'd recommend starting your search early as good spots go fast.

Things to do:

Brussels is really international and there's always something happening. Areas like Flagey, Place du Luxembourg, and Saint-Géry are hotspots for bars, cafes, and weekend markets. Joining the Erasmus Student Network (ESN) is a great way to meet people since they organise tons of events, parties, and trips. The city's location is perfect for weekend travel to places like Amsterdam, Paris, Bruges, and more. Also, try the waffles, fries, and of course, Belgian beer they live up to the hype.

University:

ULB can be quite challenging, especially since most of the available courses are at postgraduate level. Exams are usually three hours long, and the structure is quite different from what we're used to. While there are a few study units with assignments, the majority are either full exams or lectures in French. It's really important to double-check the language and format of each course when choosing, as courses in English are limited and scattered. You have to look carefully to find what suits you, especially as an Erasmus student.

General Comment:

Brussels is an awesome choice if you want to experience a truly international environment with a strong mix of cultures. The lifestyle is relatively relaxed, and the city is well-connected for travel around Europe. The university experience is more demanding than expected, but it pushes you academically and gives you a different perspective on studying abroad. I'd recommend it if you're up for a bit of a challenge and want a city that's not overly touristy but still full of life.

Vrije Universiteit Brussels- Hayley Chircop

Accommodation:

The best areas to live in Brussels are Ixelles and Etterbeek, which are close to both VUB and ULB and have a lively student atmosphere, or the City Centre, where you'll be near the stunning Grand Place, countless bars, clubs, restaurants, and the main shopping

streets. Brussels' efficient network of trams, buses, and metro lines make it super easy to get around and as a student, you can travel with a MOBIB card, which costs just €17 per year and gives you unlimited access to STIB/MIVB metro, trams, and buses.

Things to do:

Brussels is full of historic landmarks, including the Grand Place, Manneken Pis, Atomium, Palais de Justice, and the Royal Palace of Brussels, as well as museums like the Royal Museum of Fine Arts. The nightlife is lively, with loads of bars and clubs in the city centre, such as the iconic Delirium Bar, known for its huge selection of beers, and clubs like Milano and Fuse. Brussels is perfect for food lovers, with plenty of international cuisines alongside Belgian classics. A top spot is Drug Opera, famous for its traditional Flemish stew and waffles. The city is also home to key European institutions, including the European Parliament and European Commission, which are worth a visit.

University:

VUB's campus is beautiful, with its main buildings surrounded by greenery. Classes are mostly lecture-based, with optional discussions, and assessments can include written or oral exams, assignments, presentations, or a combination, depending on the lecturer. Although both VUB and ULB only offer the masters course in English, the teaching style is similar to Malta. Assignments are generally straightforward, and exams vary by lecturer; in my experience, the exam consisted of five short-answer questions and one essay, which was very manageable.

General comments:

Brussels is an amazing city for an Erasmus experience. I would recommend staying in a student house or a shared house, as it's a great way to meet people from all over the world and make new friends and really enrich your experience. One of the biggest advantages of living in Brussels is its central location where you're just a train ride (or bus) away from major European cities including Paris, Amsterdam, London, Cologne and Luxembourg, as well as charming little towns like Lille, Ghent, Bruges and Antwerp. Brussels is beautiful during Christmas, with festive decorations and markets that give the city a whole new atmosphere. Overall, I'd suggest Brussels if you're looking for a mix of experiences, relaxed evenings, bar hopping, clubbing, and weekend trips.

University of Salzburg- Elisa Debono

Accommodation:

The cheapest and best option is definitely the student dorms around Salzburg. They're not only affordable, but also the easiest way to meet new people and make friends straight away. If you can, go for a dorm in central Salzburg rather than Salzburg Süd – buses from the south stop early and the walk back is way too long. Central dorms are only a short walk from uni and the nightlife, so you're always close to the action.

Things to do:

There's loads to do in Salzburg and around it. ESN organizes trips like ski weekends, hiking days, and parties that are always a lot of fun. Ski resorts are just 45 minutes away by car, so if you love winter sports it's super easy to go. You've also got hikes up the mountains, pubs, and a surprisingly lively nightlife scene in the city. Between the nature and the nightlife, you won't run out of things to do.

University:

For law students, the classes are very interactive compared to Malta. You'll do group projects, presentations, and oral exams, which really push you to improve your public speaking and teamwork skills. It's very different from the theory-heavy lectures we're used to back home, but honestly it makes studying a lot more engaging.

General Comment:

Salzburg's location in central Europe makes it really easy to travel around. Germany, Prague, Italy, Hungary... all just a train or Flixbus away. I spent four months there and it honestly turned out to be one of the best experiences of my life. I thought I'd get homesick or struggle with the cold, but I loved it so much I even tried (unsuccessfully) to extend my stay. The Erasmus community is super welcoming — I made more than 50 friends from all over the world. If you're considering Salzburg, I'd 100% recommend it.

Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Budapest - Caitlin Turner

Accommodation:

The best place to find accommodation is around District 7. It's only about a 13-minute walk to the university, so it's super convenient. Plus, this area is known for its vibrant atmosphere, with loads of cafeterias, bars, and restaurants around. You'll be close to the famous ruin bars, and there's always something happening. It's central, well-connected by public transport (trams, buses, and the metro), and safe, making it ideal for students.

Things to do:

Budapest is packed with things to do from relaxing in the thermal baths like Szechenyi or Gellert, to exploring castles, parks, and museums. Definitely join Erasmus groups and WhatsApp chats — they organise weekly events, day trips, parties, and language exchanges. For nightlife, Instant-Fogas is a must-visit (massive ruin bar/club combo), and Doboz and Morrison's 2 are also great.

University:

The university experience in Budapest is quite different from what we're used to. Most modules are assignment-based rather than exam-focused, and classes are usually in small groups with other Erasmus students, which makes it easy to get to know people. Some subjects do have exams, but they tend to be at an easier level than what we're used to, so overall it's very manageable. The teaching style is more relaxed and interactive, and most professors are understanding and helpful when it comes to Erasmus students.

General Comment:

Budapest is a fantastic Erasmus destination. It's full of culture and history, and there's always something going on. The public transport is reliable and cheap, and it's easy to travel to nearby cities or even other countries on weekends via train or Flixbus. The city is student-friendly, beautiful, and the nightlife is some of the best in Europe. I found the experience of living and studying here really rewarding, and I'd definitely recommend it to anyone considering it.

Maynooth University, Ireland- Rachel Lowell

Accommodation:

Accommodation is relatively easy to find in student households in Maynooth and the surrounding areas. However, I chose to stay in Dublin, which is about 30 to 40 minutes away from the university via the national bus line which is very efficient (and you also benefit from student rates). Staying in the city centre definitely offers more opportunities to go out, explore, and experience Irish city life.

Things to Do:

There are plenty of things to do in Dublin and in other counties such as Galway, Cork, Clare, and Glendalough. You can also join university student groups that organise day and weekend trips to Ireland's most famous attractions. Travelling to nearby countries is also easy, with Dublin Airport located approximately 25 minutes from the city centre.

University:

Maynooth University is a beautiful and welcoming institution. Lectures are well-structured and typically last one hour. They are interactive, and the lecturers are cooperative, approachable, and encouraging. Exams vary depending on the study-unit, some are oral, others written, and some involve presentations. I'd recommend choosing the units that genuinely interest you, as they'll be easier and more enjoyable to study.

General Comment:

Ireland is an amazing place for an Erasmus experience. There's so much to do, the people are incredibly friendly, and there are no language barriers. Travelling is easy, and the overall vibe is relaxed and welcoming. Maynooth University has a stunning campus and offers a supportive academic environment. I would highly recommend it.

LUMSA (Libera Universita Maria SS. Assunta- Ella Vella Cardona & Rachel Grixti

Accommodation:

Finding a place to stay in Rome can be quite difficult, so it's important to start looking early. Always be aware of scams, make sure to request a video call before committing and, if possible, visit in person. Universities also suggest reliable websites for student rentals, which are worth checking. I stayed in Via Flaminia - close to Piazza del Popolo, which was very central, safe, and convenient for getting around.

University:

The lecturers are approachable, friendly, and always willing to help, making it easy to get support when needed. Classes are kept small and are mostly made up of Erasmus students, which makes it easier to connect with others in the same situation. The university area is lively, surrounded by restaurants, bars, and shops, and also has a cafeteria on campus which is very convenient.

We also highly suggest joining ERA or ESN, two Erasmus student associations that organize events, trips, and social activities. By creating a membership card through Instagram or their websites, you are added to WhatsApp groups where you can keep updated on events and meet other Erasmus students. This makes settling in much easier.

Lectures were evenly spread out during the week, with most of them scheduled in the evenings. We followed units in Competition Law, Immigration Law, International Law, and Negotiation. Attendance is usually compulsory, but the class sizes and interactive approach make it manageable. Coursework was due in November and was very straightforward, consisting of multiple choice or short questions. Exams were oral and took place between late December and January. These were short, relaxed, and far less

daunting than they seem. In some cases, lecturers also allow written exams in November or December, which are even easier and allow you to finish earlier

Things to do:

Rome has a lively nightlife, with Trastevere being the best area for bars and authentic restaurants, while Sanctuary is a popular spot for nights out. For transport, a bus card is the most convenient and covers both buses and metro, though you should always keep it valid to avoid fines. The university is well connected by nearby bus stops and a metro station. For groceries, Lidl is cheaper though a bit further out, while Todis is great for everyday shopping. Rome is also the perfect base for travelling—bigger cities like Florence and Milan are easy to reach by train, and smaller towns such as Orvieto, Tivoli, and Siena are ideal for weekend trips.

General Comment:

Erasmus in Rome was an unforgettable experience. Between the supportive university environment, the lively city life, and the chance to travel across Italy, it offered the perfect balance of study, culture, and adventure.

University di Roma Tre- Martina Naudi, Felicity Cachia & Ana Micallef

Accommodation:

Best places to find accommodation is either around the River area because there is a bus which goes directly to Ostiense which is where Roma Tre is located or in Ostiense itself however it is not very nice and there isn't much to do as it is 20mins out of the center. Rome, and Italy in general don't really have student housing which is something to keep in mind!

Things to do:

Rome has a lot of tourist attractions, best thing to do is to join Erasmus Group Chats and become members of their respective organisations. They have a lot of parties and get togethers which you might find interesting. If you are a foodie, it's the place to be. Parties go to Sanctuary. Trastevere is great for bars and grabbing a drink.

University:

Exams are quite basic, not like Malta at all; they are around 1 hour and either consist of orals, very short essay questions or multiple choice. Some classes do include presentations which are very relaxed and informal. Some lecturers are fussy about attendance.

General Comment:

Rome is a great place for Erasmus. It's easily accessible with quick direct flights from Malta. Its also very central which makes it easy to get on a train/bus and travel to different cities in Italy (Milan, Florence etc). The lifestyle is great (shopping, food, aperittivo), the people are all so friendly. Its the place the be.

University of Modena & Reggio Emilia- Laura Strickland

Accommodation:

For cheaper options shared accommodation is obviously better as prices in Modena are more expensive in the north, however, make sure you are in contact with a reliable agency because Italians like to scam you (go see the place in person as I had to change mine as soon as I got there). It's a very safe place to live in and felt at home.

Things to do:

I genuinely thought there wouldn't be much to do here because it's a small town, but it's in the best location because I was close to all the best places (Dolomites, Como, Milan, Bologna and even Switzerland) all just a max of 2hrs by train. Besides the location, Modena itself actually is the liveliest place in Italy I've been to, there are bars everywhere, one club which is amazing, parks and the best food in all of Italy. The people are so friendly and everyone knows each other, basically like Malta lol. Everything is walking distance and even the train station is a max 15 min walk from the centre.

University:

The university is right in the centre also walking distance from everywhere. Exams were very fair and teachers are super relaxed with everything.

General Comment:

It was unexpectedly the best place to be because it felt like home and since it was small you get to know everyone easily and I made friends the second I got to the university. There's also an Erasmus group (ESN) that you should join because you'll find friends immediately and they organize loads of trips and events (go on the Dolomites trip). It was amazing and I recommend Modena to everyone.

University of Perugia- Thomas Sciberras Herrera

Accommodation:

When I think of Perugia I think of affordability, not least when it comes to accommodation. In total we were a group of 6 Maltese, living in pairs wherein rent per flat was not more than 800 euro, hence 400 per person. I strongly suggest renting a flat in the Centro Storico; if you do so, no frequented place will be too far to go on foot.

Things to do:

Perugia is a quiet city but within it thrives a strong foreign student ecosystem. The Erasmus Student Network organises cool events almost every single day including outings on the weekends. For those who like going to the gym, there is a retro gym called Olympic Perugia—it's very affordable and you'll be using it a lot. Don't go for the more modern ones as they're not walkable, and you'd need to catch the mini metro to get there. In Perugia there are also many fantastic restaurants and bars, you will always find what to do. If you have family coming to visit make sure to go to the Baci factory—after all, Perugia is the capital of chocolate. There are also many festivals which occur in the main piazza area, such as the wine festival, chocolate festival, Christmas market and so on. Making friends in Perugia is the easiest thing. You become part of a community and part of also 100 WhatsApp chats!

University:

The University of Perugia is a bastion of legal scholarship, wherein the law is taught in a very engaging manner. I highly commend the lecturers we had, particularly those of International Public Law and Law and Religion, who both have excellent English and who are very well versed in the subject. The exam method is oral exams, however some lecturers also give the option to give a class presentation. My advice? MAKE SURE TO GIVE the presentation, as if you don't it'll reflect in your final mark. I strongly suggest picking International Public Law, Law and Religion and European Private Law, all of which are very useful and more than that interesting. I suggest taking the extra Italian classes as besides strengthening your Italian you get to go on more exclusive outings with private tutors.

General Comment:

Perugia was my first choice, I had done a lot of research prior to applying to Erasmus. From Perugia you can travel all of Italy as there is a great network of FlixBuses and trains. My friends and I would continuously spend a weekend in Rome then Perugia, alternating per week. Prior to going I recommend watching the Amanda Knox documentary on Netflix, to have a cool spook prior to going and making it your mission to see the "crime

scene" upon arriving. My friends and I would refer to the bar closest to it, which is located near Università per Stranieri, as Knox Bar. I miss Perugia and long to return!

University of Bologna- Jeremy Abela

Accommodation:

Central Bologna offers a good selection of apartments, but if you're looking for something more modern and student-friendly, check out the Bolognina area and its surroundings. There are several studying dorm complexes that are comfortable, well-equipped, and located right next to Bologna Centrale station — perfect for weekend trips and exploring other parts of Italy or to connect with other students spending their Erasmus in Italy.

Things to do:

Joining Erasmus group chats particularly those run by ESN is highly recommended to stay informed about events and social opportunities. Bologna offers a wealth of cultural experiences, from its remarkable architecture and historical landmarks to its diverse shopping options throughout the city. Not only is Bologna the capital of Emilia-Romagna, it is also widely regarded as the culinary capital of Italy, renowned for its exceptional regional cuisine, desserts, and wines making it an ideal destination for those with a passion for food and culture.

University:

Established in 1088, the University of Bologna holds the distinction of being the oldest university in the world. Rather than a single campus, it spans an entire district known as the University District, where historic buildings and magnificent halls reflect its academic legacy. Lecture sizes vary depending on the course, and assessments typically consist of written assignments or oral examinations the latter of which are generally more manageable and highly recommended. The exam schedule is notably flexible, allowing students to select from a range of dates between December and February, which is ideal for balancing academic and travel plans. The university merch, especially the school hoodies are also worth going for.

General Comment:

Bologna offers an outstanding Erasmus experience, blending academic excellence with a lively and welcoming student atmosphere. The university hosts a large number of Erasmus students each year, creating a vibrant international community and making it easy to build connections and friendships. Its central location in Italy is ideal for travel, with Bologna Centrale station providing quick access to other cities, such as Verona,

Venezia, Milan and Firenze, perfect for visiting friends or exploring Italy. The city itself is relaxed yet culturally rich, and the flexibility of the academic calendar allows students to balance their studies with travel and social life. Studying at the world's oldest university adds a unique sense of history and prestige, making Bologna a truly rewarding destination for Erasmus.

Universita di Firenze- Emma DeGabriele

Accommodation:

The University is about a 7-minute tram ride out of the centre of the city so for those looking to stay in the City Centre close to the Duomo it is very manageable place to stay, although likely a bit harder to find good accommodation. Alternatively, if you look in advance, there is also student accommodation about mid-way between Centre and the University which is also on the tram line. I had stayed here and found it very convenient. From Evergreen the student accommodation, both the centre and the University were very reasonable walks and it was packed with supermarkets and mini-markets, small restaurants and daily amenities. It also had laundry in the building and once a week, the apartment would be cleaned and the sheets changed which is convenient.

Things to Do:

Florence is full of amazing ways to spend your days with the city being one of the most historical and interesting I've ever been to. Some of my personal favourite activities include the Uffizi Museum, Palazzo Vecchio, Palazzo Pitti and the Villa Bardini Gardens. Be aware that for most of the museums, EU citizens under 25 years old are eligible for discounts! You also can't miss grabbing take-away pizzas and enjoying them at the top of Piazzale Michelangelo towards the end of summer to see the sunset over the city - that was a personal highlight for me - and the Santa Croce Christmas Market. The student life is also extremely enjoyable with the three Erasmus organisations, including ESN, being very active. Almost every weekend they planned day trips to visit other cities which is an excellent way to make friends and they also organised parties, and other activities such as Wine and Spritz nights, karaoke, beer pong and cultural dinners.

University:

I thoroughly enjoyed my experience at University in Florence. I found most of the lecturers very engaging and insightful, approaching very varied topics with new perspectives and methodologies. While the idea of having many different components making up my final grade was quite daunting at first, it was actually quite a relaxed approach compared to 100% exams like in Malta, as it meant never having to do too much at one go but doing little bits and pieces as you went along. However, something to keep in mind is that most

of the exams were orals, so if that's something that intimidates you it's good to keep it in mind - at the same time, they're nothing to be scared of since all the lecturers were very kind and genuinely wanted you to succeed.

General Comment:

I would always recommend Florence to anyone looking to experience Erasmus abroad. It is an incredibly exciting city that is welcoming and will never bore you. The size of the city is also extremely manageable so you feel as though you can get to know the place intimately, but at the same time it's also very well-connected in terms of the train service, allowing you to visit and explore other Italian cities very easily. The food scene is also phenomenal with some of my personal favourites including: **Gelato**: Badiani and Sbrina **Pizza**: Giotto's and Pizzagnolo **Pasta**: Trattoria Zaza **Bistecca**: Trattoria dall'Oste Other favourites: Mercato Centrale; Melaluca; Wild Buns. I would also say that Florence is a relatively affordable city also so you can make the most out of your time there and take in what the city has to offer.

University of Ferrara- Giulia Cutajar

Accommodation:

I would highly recommend finding student accommodation rather than an apartment when in Ferrara. It's a student city so luckily there are a lot of options for student accommodation, with most of them being in the centre.

Things to do:

Even though Ferrara is a relatively small city it's student friendly and thus is always busy with activities. It's important to join the ESN group chat in order to know what activities they are organising. The nightlife is amazing as there are plenty of bars that students can go to (best one being Strabar). Ferrara's location also allows students to travel and visit other cities easily.

University:

The Italian learning system is completely different to ours, in fact this was probably the biggest culture shock I had on Erasmus. Our lectures were held in small groups that consisted of other Erasmus students. Participation during lectures is key and depending on your elective can be included in your final grade. The majority of my exams were written exams however one elective did include an oral exam.

General Comment:

Ferrara is a great option if you want to enjoy the full erasmus experience to the max. It was an amazing 6 months that I would do again in a heartbeat and therefore would recommend it to others.

Universita degli Studi Roma Tor Vergata- Liam Borg

Accommodation:

Speaking from previous experience, it is ideal that, when choosing where to live, to stay closer to the city rather than the University. This is because given that Tor Vergata is far from the centre, staying close to it will cause you to have quite some travel when you decide to go out and venture into the city centre with friends. I had stayed in the area near the Manzoni metro stop (close to San Giovanni), where the distance to the university was only 30 minutes by underground and 10-15 by bus. Lectures at the University started at around 9, so it would be ideal that you would leave your home at around 7:00-7:30, to make sure you arrive in time, and settle for the lectures. Moreover, I would suggest staying closer to the centre as it is more of a nicer area in comparison with the area close to the University, especially at nighttime.

Things to do:

Rome is full of interesting activities and place to go around whilst on your Erasmus. There are numerous restaurants whereby you can go and dine at. Obviously try local dishes as you would not be disappointed, wherever you go in Rome. Moreover, there are a various number of attractions, such as the Colosseum and the Vittorio Emanuele monument, minutes from each other. There are also plenty of shops to go around, especially near Pjazza di Spagna. Cooking classes and wine tasting are very much recommended whilst in Rome. Also, you can just get a train from Termini and travel to another part of Italy, such as going to Perugia, where you can explore and experience a different part of Italy, alone or with your friends. Although the clubbing scene in Rome is not as close to what Malta has to offer, Sanctuay Eco Retreat, around a 20-minute walk from Manzoni metro stop, is a lively and nice spot to go with friends, especially Sunday evening, where upon entrance you can enter for free if you are an Erasmus student. For this, I would suggest joining local WhatsApp groups, to see what is going on not just during the weekends, but also the weekdays, in between lectures and University. Trastevere is also a local hot spot for nightlife, offering countless bars and restaurants, a 40-minute walk or a 25-minute taxi from Pjazza di Spagna. On the note of taxi's, they can be quite tricky at times to find, especially at night, so be prepared to walk if taxis are hard to come by.

University:

Contrary to Malta's system, Tor Vergata hosts its lectures in a group containing a small number of students, making it easier to interact and participate in lectures. Moreover, I would suggest getting the contact information of every lecturer you have lectures with, and sending emails well in advance of any particular deadlines, as they can take days to respond. Exams in Tor Vergata differ between Oral examinations and written. The former takes place in a classroom with other students whereby one by one you are called to appear before an examiner, where he or she asks you to broadly explain what you know about the subject. It would be suggested that you only stop speaking when the examiner tells you, which would indicate a good sign in marking. The latter is also a bit different to Malta's system, as in the majority of cases, you are allowed to take certain materials with you into classroom during your exam. Materials would include necessary legislation and articles, which are mentioned in the lectures and are suggested by the lecturer himself/herself. It would be beneficial if the legislation was to be highlighted where necessary for the purposes of time efficiency during the exam.

General Comment:

Obviously, it is going to feel like a holiday the first week or two, but it is important that you budget and learn how to do basic house chores, so that you settle in. Learn how to plan meals, find a local gym (as speaking from previous experience it is a necessity whilst in Rome) or go on walks around the city if a gym is too hard to find, make friends in the neighbourhood with the locals. Above all else, just enjoy your Erasmus experience, and try to make the most out of it. It will be an experience you will not forget.

Riga Graduate School of Law- Matthea Wadge

Accommodation:

Best places to find accommodation is around the Riga city centre. Everywhere is pretty walkable by foot. When looking for accommodation best to look at the ones the school recommends. I would avoid Duck Republic as it is very far and cause the buses are not frequent/stop at around midnight. Supermarkets: Rimi and Maxima are the biggest. You can do discount cards. Note that at the shop they will ask you for a Latvian number to do the discount cards however the app doesn't require it. The Rimi discount count card could also be used at the pharmacies. Moop is an italian store that you may want to visit to feel a little at home. Home shops: Pepco is super good, was a weekly do and super affordable.

Things to do:

There are a lot of clubs in the old town and bars. Note that after 10 pm they stop serving alcoholic bottled drinks but the clubs and bars will have drinks on tap. Ala Pagrabs is a must visit especially on a Wednesday, folklore dancing. Labiestis is a little beer district also worth visiting. Also make sure to go to a bar hopping event of ESN Riga to discover the bars in the centre.

University:

Most subjects have a lot of course work however the lecturers give good marks especially if you participate in the lectures as the classes are small (30 students).

General Comment:

Riga is super beautiful you can go everywhere within the city centre by walk and the buses are very efficient if you want to discover other cities in Latvia. (You must go to Mezaparks, jurmala, sigulda, cesis, ogre and kemeri park) Highly recommend that you keep over €1000 aside to go to Lapland. You can travel to neighbouring countries by bus and they are only approximately 3/4 hours away. On the whole its an unforgettable experience primarily cause youre constantly assessed but with lesser material and you get to live in snow for the last few months of your stay.

Maastrict University- Laia Mangion

Accommodation:

Finding accommodation in the Netherlands can be both difficult and expensive. It is advisable to start searching several months in advance in order to secure a place. My friend and I ended up staying in a nearby town called Heerlen, which is just 15 minutes away from Maastricht by train and significantly more affordable than any options we found in Maastricht.

University:

Maastricht University differs significantly from our own, placing a strong emphasis on Problem-Based Learning (PBL) and small tutorial groups for every study unit. While the lecture schedule is relatively light, tutorials are held weekly and require extensive preparation in order to participate, as class participation is mandatory. The academic year is structured in eight-week blocks rather than traditional semesters. Each block consists of seven weeks of lectures and tutorials, followed by an exam week. Exams are held at the MECC and are completed on laptops provided by the university. Some exams are open book, while others are not, depending on the study unit chosen. It is a very academically demanding university with a substantial workload. However, with effective

time management, it is still possible to enjoy your Erasmus experience alongside your studies.

Things to do:

Maastricht is a stunning city, rich in history and culture, with excellent shopping opportunities. It is ideally located near the borders of Belgium and Germany where just a 15-minute train ride takes you to Aachen in Germany or Liège in Belgium. Public transport in the Netherlands is highly efficient, allowing you to explore many different cities with ease. Group tickets are available, which reduce travel costs based on the number of people in your group. Student organisations also host numerous events and parties, offering a perfect break from academic life.

General Comment:

I highly recommend studying in Maastricht if you are looking to enhance your academic experience and develop strong analytical and problem-solving skills through PBL. The lecturers are dedicated, supportive, and truly encourage you to reach your full potential. The Dutch people are incredibly welcoming and friendly, making it easy to feel at home.

University of Utrecht- Luca Formosa

Accommodation:

Accommodation is one of the biggest challenges in Utrecht. Unfortunately the city is packed and it is incredibly difficult to find suitable accommodation, even nearby. It is recommended to start searching for accommodation as early as possible if you would like to go down traditional routes of finding accommodation (through an agent, getting into a lease contract, bookings.com). Otherwise the Netherlands Student Housing Scheme named SSH offers around 300 places to students per year but students need to be quick to apply through the Housing Scheme as these are quickly taken up by students within the first few days the student housing page is open. The SSH Student Housing Options are all excellent however and very close to University, note however that these types of accommodations are student ones and are often shared with other students, and you may also need to get your own appliances and furniture. Another option is looking for a roommate or getting a sub-lease through some websites but this may be risky and also still difficult to achieve in practice. My best recommendation is to actually find accommodation in a city outside Utrecht which should be significantly cheaper (an example is Rotterdam) and commute to Utrecht by train however this may also be unsuitable. All in all it is recommended to start looking for accommodation as early as possible.

Things to Do:

In terms of student activities at Utrecht University you are spoiled for choice as student organizations are incredibly active and are constantly hosting events throughout the city. I recommend getting to know the student organizations during Welcome Week and following their pages. ESN are also brilliant in Utrecht and host an event or two every week and it's a great place to meet other international students. If you get the ESN membership a lot of other events happening throughout the year will also be shared to you from their group chats, it's a great way to know about things taking place in the city. I also highly recommend you attend the Welcome Week as this is a great way to meet new people. For parties and clubbing, there are quite a few good clubs such as Poema and Ekko and many student parties are organized in Phythagoraslaan (one of the accommodations) every year. In terms of tourism there are quite a few landmarks to visit in the city but I highly recommend taking a few day trips to Amsterdam (it is only 30mins away by train) or any other location in the Netherlands at the Utrecht Central Station is located at the center of the county and is a great place from which to visit other towns.

University:

The upsides are: much fewer lectures, more dynamic and engaging lectures, great lecturers and overall very interesting study units. The downsides are an increased amount of homework, readings and challenging assignments to make up for the reduced amount of class hours. The University also highly encourages multi-disciplinarily in every unit so be prepared to be outside your comfort zone as it is highly unlikely you will not be doing law in a vacuum but mostly in combination with disciplines like criminology and international relations.

General Comment:

The University experience in Utrecht is incredible and rewarding, but may feel a bit challenging especially in contrast to Maltese University. Overall Utrecht is a super worthwhile place to visit and live in regardless of the challenges you may face to get there.

Erasmus Guide: Groningen-Luke Bonnici

Accommodation:

Finding a place to live should be your top priority the moment you're accepted to study in Groningen. The Netherlands is notorious for being one of the most challenging countries in Europe when it comes to student housing. Every year, students miss out on their Erasmus exchange or even have to defer their master's programs simply because they didn't secure accommodation in time.

From personal experience, the most straightforward and reliable option in Groningen is **SSH Student Housing**, a trusted provider with student residences across the

Netherlands. (link here). Our Erasmus group (2022) stayed at the Kornus residence on Kornoeljestraat, and we can honestly say it played a big part in making our experience unforgettable. Each of us had a private ensuite room (bedroom and bathroom) and shared a kitchen with others on our floor. Most of our closest friends were fellow residents, and the location was amazing - just a 12-minute bike ride to the university, city centre, gym, and all the popular bars, clubs, and restaurants.

For groceries, both **Lidl** and **Albert Heijn** (think the Dutch version of Eurospin) were just a 2-minute bike ride away.

You can find more detailed information on student housing in Groningen here.

Things To Do:

Groningen has a student population representing roughly 25% of the city's total population. This high concentration of students makes Groningen known as a vibrant student city in the Netherlands, with the highest student population density in the country. This leads to the city boasting a number of places and activities which matches its international student culture, from restaurants such as Block and Barrel, Mr. Mofongo and Magoya, to numerous bars (especially if you're a beer lover) such as De Drie Gezusters, Groote Griet, and O'Malley's.

The clubbing/ party scene is also really good in Groningen especially during the Erasmus period. Personal Favourites:

- PALACE Groningen (One of the largest clubs in Groningen)
- Ocean 41
- The End Karaoke
- Copas (Latino Music – severely underrated)
- Sunny Beach (really good for pre-drinks – recommend the shots)
- Groningen Silent Disco (you have to try it at least once)

I also highly recommend the opening week hosted by the Groningen Erasmus Student Network and their parties. Very good to build connections and to get introduced to the best party places there (I especially recommend their opening pub crawl).

You will definitely need to a bike in Groningen. I recommend Swapfiets but you can also purchase one off Facebook marketplace for quite a cheap price. you

From gym/ sports I definitely recommend ACLO – which is the student sports organisation in Groningen hosted specifically for RUG and Hanze students (the 2 universities in Groningen). The gym provided by ACLO is great and very cheap, but if you want a better gym you might want to try the Push and Pull Lifting Club (more expensive

than ACLO but still cheaper than most Malta prices. Honestly ACLO will do for most gym goers).

Other places of interest:

- Pathe Cinema
- Forum Groningen

University:

The University of Groningen (RUG), like most Dutch universities, divides the semester into two blocks. Exams typically take place at the end of October and again in mid-to-late January. The academic system is heavily focused on research and tutorials, and lecturers expect students to come prepared, having completed the assigned readings and tutorial exercises. These tutorials are particularly valuable, often offering key insights into exam content.

Compared to Malta, the exams are more challenging but also more objective. With consistent preparation throughout the block and by keeping up with readings, you can perform very well. The lecture schedule is relatively light, allowing ample time to balance academic work with a social life. You can easily go out two to three times a week while staying on top of your studies.

Resit opportunities are available, and exam reviews are conducted in open sessions where examiners walk students through the paper, clarifying expectations and how marks were awarded.

The university itself has a charming, almost Harry Potter-like atmosphere. The library is well-equipped and a popular study spot, along with the Forum, which many students also use as an alternative workspace.

General Comment:

Groningen is one of the best places to have your Erasmus experience – offering one of the longest Erasmus periods and serving as a hub for a lot of international students. Apart from the university being ranked at 147 globally, the social life there is unparalleled, and I can guarantee that you will have an amazing experience there and make a lot of lifelong friends, especially if you live in a student accommodation. Try not to let your academics slip, as it is a bit more of a challenging university, but this will definitely not come at the cost of your social life there.

Key Tip: Make time to explore not just the Netherlands but also neighbouring countries. The Dutch rail network and Flixbus offer convenient and affordable access to cities like Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and Giethoorn (often called the "Venice of the Netherlands" – highly recommended), as well as destinations in Belgium and Germany.

University of Maribor- Justyne Falzon

Accommodation:

The University of Maribor will provide a list of centrally located dormitories. These typically include shared kitchens, bathrooms, and common areas. While you can opt for private accommodation, be cautious as scams do occur. It is advisable to find a place either near the city centre or close to a bus stop, since public transport is very efficient.
If you are interested in a private two-bedroom apartment, I highly recommend contacting Dario via WhatsApp at +386 40 198 487. His apartment is fully furnished, located in a very nice and safe area, and the landlord's family is incredibly supportive and kind. A nearby bus stop offers direct access to the city centre within 15 minutes, with buses running every 15–20 minutes.

Things to Do:

Maribor is surrounded by mountains, and during winter, it transforms into a ski village, especially as Pohorje Mountain becomes covered in snow. In the warmer months, you can hike, bike, or take a cable car up the mountain, with various hotels and apartments available for weekend stays. In the colder months, there is an ice rink where many students spend their Friday nights. Slovenia shares borders with several countries, making weekend travel convenient. FlixBus offers affordable overnight trips to nearby cities. The local nightlife is not to be missed, with clubs like Štuk and Trust hosting regular weekend parties. The University of Maribor also offers student meal coupons, allowing you to enjoy full meals at selected restaurants for just €3–€5. Additionally, ESN Maribor organises many social events and trips, which are great opportunities to meet new people and make friends.

University:

Lectures take place at the Faculty of Law. Study units are usually taught one at a time—meaning you will finish one before starting another. Classes are held about twice a week for 2 to 4 hours, giving you plenty of free time to explore. Renting a car is an easy way to travel around Slovenia. Compared to Malta, exams are more relaxed. Attendance often contributes to your final grade, and many subjects include presentations, making classes more engaging. Some courses even offer 24-hour take-home exams.

General Comment:

I can't recommend Maribor enough. If you're a wine lover, you're in for a treat—wine is often cheaper than water! Slovenia is one of Europe's hidden gems. Maribor has countless wineries worth visiting, such as Fontana Vin, which also features a zip line. Maribor is known for the Drava River, perfect for scenic walks, as well as numerous beautiful hiking trails. University life here is more relaxed, giving you time to enjoy the experience, explore the country, and even begin work on your thesis. The educational style is different from Malta's, offering a refreshing perspective on how law can be taught.

Erasmus Guide – Lisbon (ULisboa Faculty of Law) – Beppe Micallef Moreno

Accommodation:

I booked my flat through Houze and would recommend starting your search as soon as applications open. Lisbon has many student-friendly neighbourhoods: Arroios is vibrant; Alfama is quiet and historic; Bairro Alto is famous for nightlife; and Chiado blends shopping with culture. Saldanha or nearby São Sebastião work well if you want to be near university campuses.

During my stay, rent was roughly €500 per month, which is higher than basic room prices but reasonable for a comfortable place. I lived in Campolide—a more residential district slightly removed from the bustling centre but still well-connected by metro and bus. It's full of great local restaurants, cafeterias, supermarkets, shopping centres and gym facilities. Most students share flats or rent rooms, and the best options go quickly, so be diligent. There's a metro stop right outside the law faculty, and public transport (metro, buses and ferries) is free for under-23s once you obtain a NIF (Portuguese tax number) and apply for the travel card. Having the travel card makes it incredibly easy to explore the city and beyond.

Things to Do:

There's never a dull moment in Lisbon. For nightlife, head to Bairro Alto or Pink Street: bars and clubs there offer cheap drinks and host legendary Erasmus parties. If you prefer house or techno music to reggaeton, check out Lux, my favourite club on the riverside.

By day, explore Lisbon's heritage, Terreiro do Paço, the Belém Tower and the Jerónimos Monastery, or ride the iconic Tram 28 through picturesque hills. Surfing is a highlight: Carcavelos and Costa da Caparica offer great waves just a short train or bus ride away, and Nazaré's giant waves make for a memorable day trip.

Lisbon's Erasmus community is vibrant thanks to ESN Lisbon and Erasmus Life Lisboa, which organise weekly events, pub crawls, beach trips and cultural tours. Joining these

groups is the best way to meet people and discover places beyond Lisbon. Their weekend excursions often include must-see destinations like Porto, the Algarve coastline and Braga.

Weekend escapes are easy on your own, too: hop on the train to Cascais for beaches and seafood, or take a cheap trip to Sintra's fairy-tale palaces. For sports fans, Lisbon is home to Sporting and Benfica. Tickets are affordable if you buy early, and membership schemes give you access to European matches. Pick a side, these rivals share the city, but supporting one adds to the fun (I cheered for Sporting, the underdogs despite recent domestic success).

For food, my best advice is to eat where the locals eat, small taverns may look less fancy but serve fantastic, affordable meals. My personal favourite is Valenciana in Campolide; don't leave Lisbon without trying pastéis de nata and a proper Portuguese seafood stew!

University & Exams:

I studied at Universidade de Lisboa's Faculty of Law, where classes are small, interactive and attended by a mix of Portuguese and international students. All of my courses were taught in English and tended to be assignment-based, with a mix of individual projects and group work. Classes are around two hours long and meet twice a week, allowing plenty of time for discussion. There's a week-long "grace period" at the start of term where you can sit in on any lectures and decide which subjects suit you best, so long as you register quickly afterwards, because popular (and easier) courses fill up fast.

Assessment usually combines assignments with final exams. Even in subjects with exams, the format is often essay-based: you're given a few questions and asked to write several pages in a couple of hours. Attendance and participation count toward your grade, so being engaged in class really matters. The university runs one exam session in December with the possibility of retakes in January. The Erasmus office at ULisboa is incredibly helpful and made paperwork and course changes smooth. On campus, you'll find affordable cafeterias (meals cost €2–€3) and plenty of open spaces for studying or relaxing between classes.

General Comment:

Erasmus in Lisbon is one of the most sought-after experiences in Europe, and for good reason. The city mixes sun, beaches, history, nightlife and affordable living in a way that few capitals do. Flights are relatively cheap, so friends and family can easily visit for a weekend. If you're feeling adventurous, take a week to explore the Azores or Madeira, rent a car and uncover some of Europe's most beautiful islands. Alternatively, do a road trip around Portugal and even cross into Spain.

My six months in Lisbon were some of the best of my life. Surfing, weekend trips with ESN and Erasmus Life Lisboa, and local eateries made every week an adventure. I made

friends from all over the world and fell in love with Portuguese food and culture. If you're considering an Erasmus at Ulisboa, or anywhere in Lisbon, go for it! Be proactive with housing and course choices, embrace the local way of life, and you'll come away with unforgettable memories and a broader worldview.

ISEP- Jake Navarro

For law students eager to broaden their academic and cultural horizons, ISEP offers an incredible opportunity to study outside of Europe. Similar in concept to Erasmus, ISEP allows you to spend a semester abroad studying law-related subjects at a partner institution.

It's important to note, however, that ISEP follows a different timeline from Erasmus. The first step is to apply through the University of Malta's internal process. All students will be notified via email when applications open. You must first be selected by the University of Malta in order to proceed with the official ISEP application.

Once selected, you'll gain access to the ISEP website and be given an account. The website is a user-friendly platform that guides you through the process and showcases the wide range of participating universities around the world. It is highly recommended that you liaise regularly with both the Faculty of Laws and the International Office. The Faculty can confirm which overseas law units are eligible for credit, while the Exchange Office offers valuable advice on which universities that best match a fourth-year law student, based on past experiences.

ISEP places students at institutions based on a range of criteria, including competitiveness and academic fit. You'll be asked to select around ten universities or colleges in your application. Before making your selections, take the time to review each institution's prospectus. Look out for factors such as:

- The availability of law-related courses at the appropriate level
- The semester dates (which vary by country and state)
- Housing arrangements
- Food plans or meal vouchers (for example, many U.S. colleges include these, but offerings vary)

Once placed, you'll begin corresponding directly with your host institution. From there, you'll receive guidance on the necessary visas, documentation, and payment procedures specific to your host country or state.

ISEP is a rewarding and transformative experience, offering not just academic enrichment but also personal growth through cultural immersion. I cannot but recommend.

