

## Exchange to Santiago, Chile



*The view out of "my" apartment at Diagonal Paraguay, the hill on the left is San Cristobal.*

### *General information*

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University: Erasmus University Rotterdam - Erasmus School of Economics  
Host university: Universidad de Chile - Facultad de Economía y Negocios  
Period: 23 July - 18 November

### *Preparation*

Before leaving on exchange you have a short to-do-list to prepare yourself for the experience.

Visa: I advise you to have a tourist visa for which Dutch students do not have to do prepare anything. I personally had a student visa which took time and a lot of money. However, in the end, I thought it had not been necessary at all. Check on the website (English version) of the university if this is still applicable.

Accommodation: There is no need to prepare for accommodation during your exchange. In Santiago there are many people subletting a room in their house or renting out apartments for students. I advise to meet in the hostel where almost all incoming students will be before the start of the semester, make some friends and find a place to live while you are there. I arrived one day before the start of the semester and I could still find an apartment in five days. It would make it even easier if you arrive a bit before that.

Insurance: For the application process at the Universidad de Chile, it is necessary to obtain a statement of your insurance that one is covered in Chile. This is available after a call to your insurance and I received the statement in five days. Personally, I took an extra travel insurance, however this was completely voluntarily and is advised however not required.

All other things necessary will be communicated by the incoming exchange coordinator of the host university. Do not hesitate to send her any emails (in English), she is nice and will be glad to help you.

Arrival: There is not much to do when you arrive. I advise to get a BIP-card for the metro system. You just go to e.g. Universidad de Católica- metro station and ask for a bip-card. You only have to check in, no need to check out. (no need to get the one for students) The metro-system in Santiago is profound and especially if you manage to find housing in either the city centre, Providencia or Bellavista your only ways of transportation in Santiago will be walking or metro. To go to other cities in Chile I advise to take the bus, it is cheap, safe, clean, comfortable and easy. Additionally, it is practical to get a mobile sim card of Chile with your own Chilean number. You are able to buy them in multiple locations, e.g. the Costanera Mall or the financial centre north of metro station Universidad de Chile. I had Movistar, I would advise you to get Claro, they had less problems. You can get Chilean pesos at the ATM's. There is no need to go all the way to the financial centre to go to the ATM, just stop in a supermarket Santa Isabel or LIDER and you will find one. (*don't forget to put your debit card on world-wide and I also personally advise to get a credit card before you go to Chile*)

I advise to bring a winter coat and more warm clothes than one expects to need.. In the winter period around July and August it is cold in Santiago. Central heating is scarce and isolation is uncommon.

### Host university

Universidad de Chile - Facultad de Economía y Negocios is a public university in the city centre of Santiago. The tuition fees for Chilean students, however, are (almost) at the level of private universities. The university is modern and rich of facilities. The classes are with a maximum of around sixty students per bachelor course and even smaller for postgraduate courses. Personally, I liked the university and its campus in the city centre. The library is designed in a more practical way and the systems for renting study or project rooms are more profound than in my university in Rotterdam. There are many sports activities and associations at the faculty. In addition, many opportunities are available for students to actively contribute to the society or the university. On the downside, there are many bureaucratic rules, which in my opinion lowers the creativity and freedom of the students. The attendance requirements for everything causes a lack of intrinsic motivation and responsibility for the students. As a result, I have noticed that when students had the opportunity to not come to a class they would take it, because the reason for most students to be in class was the requirement which has crowded out the intrinsic motivation. The university provided help and guidelines for finding accommodation, however this had to be done by the international students after arrival Santiago, preferably in the week before the semester starts. Many websites and special pages on Facebook are available for this purpose. The first time I received information from the partner university was at the 26th of May. Exchange students had access to the same facilities as the Chilean students. Computer rooms were always available and the capacity was high. A gym open to all students on certain hours was also present on campus. Next to that, the exchange coordinator as well as a specially assigned Chilean student were always available for any question, doubt or matter. There were weekly activities such as Let's Chat, which was an opportunity for incoming exchange students to talk English to Chilean students, who wish to ameliorate their speech. Moreover, the prom of the semester was also available for exchange students which had a pleasant atmosphere. Finally there was an orientation day, a welcoming event with a cultural aspect of every nationality bringing a typical lunch and a farewell party.

### Courses

Months before the start of the semester, it was possible to look for the courses of the semester in question. It was not completely certain if all those courses would be taught, however it gave an idea what would be offered at the university during my semester. The exchange coordinator provides the

incoming students with the information how to enrol for courses. This was an easy and online procedure, which had to be done in a particular period. At first, I (like every other student) thought that it was first come, first serve based, however this was not the case. Moreover, after two or three weeks of classes there is a possibility to switch classes and I would recommend all future incoming students to check out multiple classes in the first period.

*Course specifics ( all are incorporated in my bachelor)*

Negocios I: 6 new credits/10 UD equivalent to 6 ECTS

4,5 hours per week and three or four hours of self study

The fundamental goal of this course is to provide an analytical framework to be applied on a cross-country basis for doing business globally. This means that essential concepts and tools for the analysis of cultural, competitive, social, and political environments, and the creation and management of international business strategies, based on the objectives, opportunities and restrictions of the firm will be discussed.

This course aims to contribute to the development of student's capacities in the following aspects:

- To identify opportunities for internationalizing a company
- To find appropriate ways to run or manage an international firm on a regional or a global scale
- To evaluate foreign market entry alternatives to different environment profiles.
- To increase their sensibility to the influence of cultural factors when engaging in international business.

I advise future students to not choose this course. Many assignments and rules, however little reward in knowledge or insight. The course outline seems promising, however the reality is disappointing.

Intercultural Business Challenges in Latin America: 6 new credits/ 10 UD eq. to 6 ECTS

3 hours per week and one or two hours of self study

The fundamental goal of this course is to provide an intellectual and experiential forum that examines cultural and intercultural of the Chilean and Latin American business sector and marketplace.

To gain an understanding of the business environment in Latin America and its place in a broader global context.

To identify cultural issues affecting stakeholders doing business in the region.

To make the student sensitive and understanding of customs necessary to be successful future business manager in Latin America.

This course has been very easy and provided no challenges. However, it provided insight in the economic history of Latin America and included an experience of participating in a debate with the proper use of an upper and lower house.

Strategic Alliances, Mergers and Acquisitions: 6 new credits/ 10 UD eq. to 6 ECTS

3 hours per week and two or three hours of self study

To provide a, based on the experience, understanding about investments in Latin America, as well as identifying collateral risks. At the end of this course, the students will be able of identifying and recognize the following global aspects,

- A. Different kind of business and main characteristics
- B. Most common ways to access to these markets
- C. Key variables to realize before deciding a FDI
- D. Risks derived from investing in our countries

Based upon a team working, students will develop integration capabilities, critical judgement, enhancing their global vision.

This course provided the application which in my opinion is essential for economic students coming from the insight of a real (however humble and charismatic) businessman. I highly recommend any student going to the Facultad de Economía y Negocios to take this course and to choose to actively participate. It is easy to pass this course, however you, as a student, are in full control of how much you actually learn. The level of knowledge obtained is highly tied to the hours spend on reading the literature and participating in the discussions in class.

Economic Growth and Development: A policy approach: 6 new credits/ 10 UD eq. to ECTS  
4,5 hours per week and at least 6 hours per week of self study.

Course objectives: We will study the main dilemmas and trade-offs confronting developing countries in the realm of policies to speed up growth and achieve economic development. We will emphasize the application and adaptation of economic theory to the specific realities of Latin American countries. Topics to be discussed: growth and human development; growth theory and empirical evidence; the role of institutions; macroeconomic policies and institutions; saving, investment, and capital market development; financial openness and foreign direct investment; information and coordination externalities; and human capital accumulation. We will make heavy use of growth diagnostics, a methodology developed by Hausmann, Rodrik, and Velasco (2005). Students will choose a specific country and will follow it as we go along in the study of the various issues of the course. Students will hand in four homework assignments (indicated below) on their chosen country, with data, appropriate bibliography and qualitative information on the country. These four assignments will carry a weight of 40% of the final grade. A final essay, also indicated at the end of the program, will also carry a weight of 40%. Students will also make class presentations during the time devoted to the TAs. These presentations, led by the TAs, will have a weight of 20% in the final grade. Class discussion will be important in the final grade.

This course was my favourite course due to the content and the professor. This professor is highly intelligent and socially apt in sharing his knowledge and insights to his students. For Chilean students this is the final course of their master in economics. This course provides the opportunity to apply every economic theory, model, statistical technique or research method to your assignment.

#### Costs

The average costs per month for my period abroad without my (return) flight tickets Amsterdam - Santiago was €900-€1000.

Rent:	€240	
Costs of living:	€200	( by going to the market you can save a lot)
Sports facilities:	€25	(local swimming pool subscription, the gym at FEN is free)
Social life	€400	( restaurants, weekend trips, parties)
Transport	€40	( metro, taxis, buses to other destinations dependent on where you live)
Mobile phone costs	€12	( you'll get a local provider sim only and this will be +/- monthly costs)
Laundry costs	€35	

### Daily Life

The hours you need for studying when you are abroad are significantly less compared when you are in Rotterdam at the ESE. So every day you can make a stroll, go do sports (join a sports team) or hang out with friends. Some friends of mine even did an internship or some sort of volunteer project. Especially in the beginning, when it is cold, Santiago can feel grey, big, overwhelming and contaminated with smog. However, get an apartment with a view and Santiago will feel as home before you know it. Next to that, I strongly advise to save some money in advance to make some trips during or after your semester to visit the incredible unique places in South America.

Feel free to contact me on Facebook for any questions you may have.



**Torres del Paine trekking Patagonia, in the South of Chile.**