

Surf, Sun, Friends and some... Studying!

General Information

Studying at NOVA university in Lisbon, Portugal, has been one of the most amazing experiences I have had throughout my life. Definitely worth it! I did my exchange program at NOVA University in the fall semester of 2016/2017, from September 2016 to January 2017.

Preparation

Preparing for your exchange to Lisbon might seem harder than it actually is. These are the most important things to arrange before you go.

- **Courses:** Make sure to enroll in your courses through Netpa¹, while all information about courses will be posted on Moodle².
- **Visa:** If you do not have a European passport, make sure to apply for a Visa. While European passports usually do not need a Visa (make sure to check the list since there are exceptions³).
- **Accommodation:** Searching through the internet (i.e. Uniplaces⁴) before arriving in Lisbon. Or booking a room in the “Residencia Alfredo de Sousa” in the University Campus⁵.
- **Erasmus+ Grant:** If you apply, make sure to apply for the Erasmus+ Grant, information is provided by the Erasmus University.

Arrival

- **Accommodation:** If you have not yet arranged a room, it is possible to arrange room/apartment visits while staying at a hostel. Facebook housing pages are useful too.
- **Metro Card:** You can travel around Lisbon with metro/bus/elevators for 35 euros a month. For this, you have to arrange a personal VIVA VIAGEM metro card. For organizational purposes, Lisbon only makes a certain amount of cards per day. They start with the first half in the morning around 9am and the second half in the afternoon around 2pm. No meeting required. It is only possible to arrange this in Marquez de Pombal metro station, do not forget a pass photo!
- **Phone:** Go to the Erasmus Life Lisbon (ELL) office in Bairro Alto to get a phone plan (good prices!). Furthermore, they will give you a SIM-card. For only 10 euros a month you receive 1000MB, 1000

¹ <https://netpa.fe.unl.pt/netpa/page?stage=browservalidator&acknowledge=true&language=en>

² <https://moodle.novasbe.pt/>

³ <http://www.schengenvisa.info.com/who-needs-schengen-visa/>

⁴ <https://www.uniplaces.com/accommodation/lisbon?open-registration=yes>

⁵ <http://sas.unl.pt/alojamento/ras/residencia-alfredo-de-sousa>

minutes and unlimited texting. Social media (WhatsApp, Facebook, messenger, facetime, snapchat) are not part of the 1000MB and you can use these services unlimitedly.

- **Bank account:** Most European banks should have no problem with money withdraw at ATM machines. Some places in Lisbon only accept Portuguese bank cards. Though, in my case I did not open a bank account, and made sure to have cash in case I could not pay with my debit card.
- **ELL and ESN:** Arrange your Erasmus life Lisbon (ELL) and Erasmus student network (ESN) cards at their offices to get discounts for extracurricular activities.
- **Erasmus Corner:** Go to Erasmus corner in Bairro Alto, a place with many bars, to have a beer with internationals.

Courses

Portuguese Language (&culture) Course (4 ECTS):

Learn Portuguese, it is fun! This course is offered by the School of Humanities of the Universidade Nova de Lisboa (Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas), a short walk from the Nova SBE campus. The course also organizes trips around Lisbon for you to get a deeper knowledge of the Portuguese culture. The final grade consists of a written and oral exam (in pairs).

Entrepreneurship (7.5 ECTS):

This is definitely the most fun and dynamic course I took. The objective of the course was to create your own startup (new company) using the Business Model Canvas (9 step plan). Groups were formed at the beginning and it is compulsory to present every second week to show the progress of your startup. Final exam counts for 40%, the rest 60% is for the final presentation, other presentations and class work.

Economic History (7.5 ECTS):

This course is very insightful into the history of economics and how our economic ideas have developed throughout past centuries. It covers the exploration era, the industrial revolution, the economics of world wars and the new globalization era.

Introduction to Law for Business and Economics (4 ECTS):

If you do not know nothing about Law, like I did, this is the perfect course to start to have a general idea about Law. With a special focus on economics, it also covers topics like morality or the branches of the law. Besides, the lecturer (Leonor Rossi) is very good and brings interesting examples of law cases for you to understand the course. One midterm (30%) and one final exam (70%).

Contemporary and Modern History (4 ECTS):

Finally, this is an elective course which focuses on the historical aspects, rather than the economic aspects of the other History course I took. We wrote two essays in a group of 4 people (30% of the grade) and the final exam counted for 70%.

Finances

Rent	290
Mobile phone	10
Public transport card	35
Portuguese language course (50 euro total)	10
Tuition fee (Erasmus University)	160
Food (cooking/eating out/mix)	210/500/300
Social life	180
Trips around Portugal	120
Total per month	1015

Return flight ticket from Schiphol: 150

I received 210 Euro per month from the Erasmus+ Grant. Also, Dutch students receive 89 euro extra for transportation costs from DUO (remember to apply through DUO and to cancel your student transportation card here in Holland).

Daily Life

The Daily life in Lisbon is very relaxed and warm. Obviously because of the weather, plus Portuguese people are very friendly. I would recommend surf sessions in Carcavelos (by train from Cais de Sodre) or Costa da Caparica (by bus from Praca de Espanha), to learn how to surf. These are 45 minutes from Lisbon. Of course, for more advanced surfers, Ericeira, Peniche and Cascais are some of the good beaches. For more surfing information contact: The Nova Surf Club.

Also, Bairro Alto is a very nice place to have a drink with friends, especially Erasmus students who are looking for a nice atmosphere with cheap prices. Half a liter beer for 1 euro or half a liter Caipirinha for 5 euros is not a bad deal!

Since Lisbon is a city build on hills its terraces and so-called "miradouros" are the best this city has to offer. Some of the highlights are: Park Bar, Miradouro Santa Catarina, Miradouro do Castelo Sao Jorge and Cristo Rei.

Last but not least, going to Nazare beach to watch XXL waves, skydiving in Evora, eating Pasteis de Nata (at the Mantegaria) or just looking at the sunset from Praca do Comercio are some of the many things you can do in and around Lisbon.