

Have the time of your life in Lisbon!

General information

From september 2016 to january 2017 I have studied at Nova School of Business and Economics located in Lisbon, Portugal. Contrary to most other partner universities, the fall semester at Nova takes 5 months and final exams are in january. If you have to take any resits, these will take place in the last week of january and the first week of february. This is something to keep in mind when choosing this destination, as it might lead you to miss the first few classes from the third block of ESE.

Preparation

When you prepare your exchange, the most important thing to keep in mind is all the forms you have to fill in and get signed by both Erasmus University and Nova. In may you will receive an email from Nova with a lot of information about the enrollment process. If you have any questions, they will answer them quickly by email. They also provide you with the opportunity to sign up for the buddy-program. I would really recommend doing this, as it's always nice to have a local student that can answer all of your questions about the univeristy as well as the city. My buddy was very friendly and helped me out a couple of times.

In June you have to complete forms of the Learning Agreement and the Grant Agreement. Also, if you are a Dutch student you can get compensation for your transportation card. You just have to fill in some forms and stop your subscription before you leave.

I would advise to arrange an accommodation in advance. More and more exchange students are coming to Lisbon and even though eventually everyone will find a nice place to stay, it can be rather stressfull to start your exchange without a fixed accomodation. I started looking in July, but it's even better to start in May or June. Uniplaces is a relatively safe website with a lot of houses, and also Nova will send some advertisements attached to their email. I lived in the area Baixa-Chiado, which was really nice because it was in the centre of the city and I could easily walk to the area where all the students go out at night (Bairro Alto). To go to university I took the blue metro line to São Sebastião, which took me about 20 minutes.

Arrival

When you arrive, you can take a taxi from the airport to your accomodation. Depending on where you live, this should not cost you more than €20-€25, and taking an Uber is even cheaper. Next you should visit the two biggest student organisations in Lisbon, which are ESN and ELL and are located in Bairro Alto. They can help you with a Portuguese simcard and with filling in the form to get a metro pass. With the form and your passport, you can obtain the metro card at Marquês de Pombal. It can be very crowded, especially in the beginning of the semester, so it's best to go there early in the morning. Also, ESN and ELL organise a lot of welcome activities, where you can meet a lot of new people.

Also, if you want to do a Portuguese Language Course you should sign up in the beginning of september at the office which is at the Social Science Faculty of Nova. The fee is €50 and you also have to buy a book that is around €20.

Courses

Nova offers courses of 7,5 ECTS or 4 ECTS. I took three courses at Nova SBE and a Portuguese language course at Nova FCSH. I incorporated all courses into my elective space. One important note is that a lot of courses at Nova have individual and group assignments. This took a lot of time for me in November, but led me to spend less time studying for the finals in January.

Organizational Behavior – 7,5 ECTS

Organizational Behavior studies human behavior inside companies. It's a mix between management and psychology with topics such as emotions, stress, teamwork, leadership and supervision. Because everyone will face human interaction in their future career, I think this course is useful for every student. The course consists of an individual assignment, a group assignment and a final exam. This means it will take you some time, but it's not too difficult and rather interesting!

Strategy – 7,5 ECTS

Strategy is a mix between the courses micro-economics and strategy and organization at ESE. There is a new teacher for this course, who changed from a quite mathematical course to a more conceptual and theoretical focus. The most interesting part is the group project, in which you will write a case-report and present it. The midterm and final exam are not too difficult.

Industrial Organization – 7,5 ECTS

This course studies the structure of oligopoly markets and its players. It also applies some game theory and is quite mathematical. It partly covers similar topics as strategy, but is more abstract. If you are interested in micro-economics I would definitely recommend this course. The teacher explains the theory in an interactive and interesting way. However, he does not use powerpoint slides so it is advisable to attend most classes. The course consists of a midterm and a final exam, which are doable if you keep up with the classes.

Portuguese Language Course – 4 ECTS

The language course offers different levels, but I recommend just doing the beginners level (A1). This course teaches you the basics of the Portuguese language, which can be useful in every day life. If you have some knowledge about French or Spanish, it shouldn't be too difficult. The course takes place for two hours two times a week, and there is a 80% attendance. There is a lot of practising in-class and there are oral and written examinations. They also organise trips to different locations in Portugal.

Finances

I managed to pay my monthly costs with the income of subrenting my room in Rotterdam, OV-vergoeding, the Erasmus Grant and some money I lended at DUO. For trips and other one-time expenditures, I used the money that I had on my savings account.

Rent	340
Health Insurance	25
Metro card	37
Simcard Portugal	8
Simcard The Netherlands	23
Groceries	160
Nightlife/social life	250
Total costs per month:	<hr/> 843
Trips	800
Flight tickets NL-PT & PT-NL	300
Unforeseen expenses	200
Total "fixed" costs:	<hr/> 1300

Daily life

I enjoyed every moment of my exchange in Lisbon and five months flew by! The city is very upcoming, amongst tourists as well as exchange students. This creates a cool vibe, with a lot of young people and new concept stores or restaurants popping up everywhere. The city is not too big and feels very safe. Portuguese people are calm, friendly and speak english well.

The weather is great, until the end of October it's very warm and sunny and you can go to the beach which is only 20 minutes by train. From november temperatures will drop to 15 degrees and it can be more rainy and cloudy. Especially at night it can be a little cold, as most houses do not have a central heating system.

Everyday life in portugal is quite cheap compared to The Netherlands. You can go out for dinner for €10-€15 and cocktails and other drinks are also very cheap.

Portugal has a lot more to offer than only Lisbon, so I recommend attending trips from ESN/ELL or organizing your own (road)trip. Some places that are definitely worth a visit are Porto, the Algarve and the Azores.

All-in all, I think Lisbon is an amazing city with amazing people and you will certainly not regret going there!

If you have any further questions, do not hesitate to send me an email:

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