

## **General information**

University: Università degli Studi di Milano-Bicocca

City: Milan

Country: Italy

Period: 01-09-2015 till 31-01-2016

## **Preparation**

Before I went to Milan there were several things that I needed to arrange, both at the Erasmus University as well as at Bicocca. I needed to fill out the application forms of Bicocca, this was quite easy because the forms were pretty self-explanatory.

Furthermore I needed to arrange my learning agreement. Because I didn't know which courses were given and in which language I emailed the exchange/Erasmus coordinator of the economic faculty and he provided me with a list of the courses that were given in English in the first semester. The ESE automatically registered me for the scholarship so I did not have to do anything for that. In the month before my exchange I looked a lot on the internet for housing possibilities and after some searching I had a pretty good idea in which part of the city I wanted to live. I decided that I wanted to live with a friend who was also going on to Milan on exchange. We decided to book an Air BNB for the first week and to look for an apartment when we were in Milan. The disadvantage of this was that we did not have housing for the exchange period when we arrived. The advantage was that we could see all the apartments ourselves and not rent something from an Internet site with the possibility of being scammed.

## **Arrival**

I arrived in Milan in the last week of August. I flew from Dusseldorf to Linate airport. This is the airport that is the closest to the city. From there I took the bus to the prearranged Air Bnb. The public transportation in Milan is very good, there are many ticket machines and for 1,5 euro you can buy a 90-minute public transport card that you can use in the entire Milan city area. In the first few days I arranged a lot of practical things. I went to a revenue agency office of the government to get my fiscal code. The fiscal code is a personal code you get from the government and you need it for some official things like a renting contract. If you go early to an office this should not take more than an hour. I also needed to arrange a public transportation card. Students can get a subscription with a special discount, therefore it only costs 22 euro a month. Furthermore I needed an Italian phone subscription. This is quite easily arranged at a phone store. I used Tim as provider but Wind is also fine. The monthly prices of the subscriptions vary from 12 to 20 euro per month including Internet. All of the abovementioned was fixed within 2 days so the rest of the week I could focus on finding a room for the coming months. This was pretty challenging but because I already had done some research in the Netherlands I had a pretty good idea where I wanted to live. There are a lot of rooms offered on different internet sites as well as facebook. The advantage of searching while you are in Milan is that you can see the room yourself and not have to pick on the basis of some pictures. After a few days of searching and visiting different rooms I eventually found a great room. It was in a big apartment with 6 rooms and a common area that was just renovated in the center of Milan. All the 6 rooms were still available so my friend and I could both pick a room. Because my university started at the end of September I had a lot of free time in the first few weeks to explore the city.

## **Courses**

During my exchange I needed to obtain at least 24 credits. The university provided us with a list of courses that were given in English. I chose the following 5 courses and used them to incorporate them into my elective space. A general remark about the level of the courses: all the courses (except for quantitative management science) were relatively easy compared to the level of the Erasmus University.

#### Italian Language Course 3ECTS

The university offered a free Italian language course to all exchange students. The course only lasted for about 1.5 months and therefore we had 3 times a week a session of 3 hours. This was pretty heavy at the beginning but everyone started to make a lot of progress because of the intensity of the course. The teacher was also very enthusiastic and we did a lot of interactive exercises. I learned during this course quite a bit of basic Italian and got a certificate at the end of the course.

#### Public Finance 5 ECTS

This course started a few weeks later than the other courses. It was given 2 times a week in a computer lab where we did a lot of different assignments on public spending and debt in the European union. Furthermore we had 1 small midterm in December and we had to write a paper about a public finance subject in pairs.

#### Management and Organization of Tourism Companies 10 ECTS

This course was a bit like the organization and strategy course and the management accounting course of the first year. In the lectures different concepts were explained and with the use of cases these concepts were discussed. The exam of the course was writing a company analysis for a player in the European tourism industry. You also had to present the paper to the professor.

#### Law for Tourism 6 ECTS

This was a course that I really liked because it was something completely different from economics. The basic concepts of tourism law were explained and different cases were discussed. During this course you also had to present a case in groups. The only bad thing about the course was that the professor translated everything she said in English to Italian so half of the time the lecture was not useful. The exam for this course was verbal.

#### Quantitative Management Science 5 ECTS

This was the hardest course that I took. The subjects were challenging but fun to study. Some students (including myself) could write a paper about a self-created linear programming problem. You had to solve this problem with the use of statistical software and in the end you had to write a report, which you had to present in front of the professor.

## Finances

Living in Milan is quite expensive, grocery shopping (especially for meat and fish) is more expensive than in the Netherlands. Going out, buying drinks in clubs or having a drink in a bar is also quite expensive.

Expenses		Income	
Rent	700	DUO	285
Mobile phone	15	Public transport	97
Public Transport	22	Erasmus+ grant	275
Groceries	250	Partens	100
social/nightlife	250	Savings	50
	1237	Rent room Rotterdam	430
			1237

## Daily life

Living in Milan is great. The people are very friendly and the culture is much more relaxed than in the Netherlands. The city center is amazing and Milan has many beautiful buildings including the iconic Duomo Square. For breakfast you can go to the many café's to get an espresso with a sweet croissant and eat it while you stand at the bar, this is what all the Italians do. You also have a lot of small restaurants where you can have lunch. They serve a plate of delicious pasta for only 4 or 5 euro's. People in Milan have dinner quite late so after the first week I was used to eating at 20:30 or even later. The ESN organizes a lot of different activities to get to know the city and other students. Milan has a vibrant nightlife and every night there is another club where you can go to for discount prices, the ESN organizes these parties. For some physical exercise you can go to the gym or just jog around Parco Sempione. A match of Inter Milan or AC Milan is also a must do, you can buy the tickets at the stadium on match day. Another great thing to do is to go to the Teatro alla Scala. All in all, you want get bored easily in Milan and you can enjoy a lot of different things!