

## Personal Report

### **Polytechnic University of Milan, Wintersemester 2018/19, 1 Semester Architecture, Fachbereich 4, Frankfurt**

#### **Language**

**Which language did you use? How did you communicate with your fellow students?**

I used Italian for my main course and English for the two other courses I took part. But mostly I communicated in English or German with my fellow students.

#### **Accommodation**

**Did the host university arrange for accommodation?**

Yes, in a dormitory.

**How high were your overall monthly costs for accommodation (in Euro)?**

550€

**How would you describe the quality of your accommodation?**

Bad.

**How well was the accommodation situated? How long did it take you on average to reach the partner university (in minutes)?**

I lived in a private accommodation, not arranged from the partner university, so it was not that well situated and it took me almost 60 minutes to reach the university in Milan.

**Which web sites, forums, facebookpages, contacts, etc. can you recommend for looking for accommodation?**

I can recommend facebookpages for looking for an accommodation in Italy. I got the impression that it is the only way you are able to find something. Otherwise, you have to pay for a real estate company.

**Where have you been accommodated (name of dormitory, location, part of town, etc.)? And how would you describe the surroundings of your accommodation (shopping facilities, distance to the city center, nightlife, etc?)**

I lived in the south of Milan, near Navigli, and I can highly recommend the area. The only disadvantage was the long distance from the Polytechnic University of Milan.

## **Arrival at the Partner University and Orientation**

### **Which is the best arrival time?**

I would say one or two weeks before the semester starts, so you can experience the city and get used to the cultural differences of the country.

### **How did you organize your arrival? Was the extent of the orientation program sufficient? What activities can you recommend? Were all important questions answered? What did you have to find out yourself? How fast were you able to get in contact with the domestic students? How were the services for exchange students?**

All important questions of the orientation program were answered before. Nevertheless, it was harder than I thought to find an accommodation without the help of the university and most of the people I met, lived in an Airbnb which was always very expensive. I came with a friend of mine and we both worked the month before already in Italy, so we came to Milan without having organized anything before. In the future I would organize an accommodation in advance.

## **Living Abroad**

### **Compared to Frankfurt, how high was the cost of living abroad?**

Higher, it cost about 200%

### **What additional expenses did you have during your semester abroad? How far were you able to travel with your semester ticket? How was your student life off-campus? How were the mensas/ student cafeterias? What types of meals were served? How much did the meals cost? How were the libraries? Was their use free? Did the university provide computer workplaces/ computer pools? Was Wi-Fi available on-campus? Were you able to use study rooms? Were you able to rent separate rooms for studying? Did the university provide a sports program? Was this free of charge?**

I had additional expenses for study materials, which are very high in an architectural education. We didn't have a semester ticket, but the monthly ticket for Milan was quite cheap (only valid in Milan). The Cafeterias were good, although a bit more expensive than in Germany and mainly they served pasta. The library was small and very noisy in contrast to German libraries. Their use was free. On the whole campus there was Wi-Fi available, although with a bad connection. The University did not even have enough space for their own students to work somewhere, that's why most of them worked in the corridors. The University did provide a sports program, which didn't cost a lot but you need a medical confirmation which costs 50 euro that allows you to do sports.

## Studying at the Host University

**How would you describe the academic standard of classes compared to Frankfurt?**

A little bit more challenging.

**Did you experience any difference in teaching methods/ class structure? Which were the difference regarding your expectations and your experiences at the partner university? What surprised you, what should newly arriving students know? How were the student services? Was the fact, that you were an exchange student taken into account (by professors or other staff)? If so, how? How were difficulties, which you or other exchange students may have met, handled by the partner university?**

I expected that it would be more organized, but I got the impression that the University is overstrained by the number of students studying there. There wasn't enough studying/working space; therefore the students were working in the corridors.

On the other hand I was surprised about the diversity of courses you were able to select.

## Final Remarks

**What should future exchange students know/ do/ avoid? How would you overall rate your exchange experience? In what ways have you benefitted academically, personally, linguistically for your future career?**

I suggest planning most things in advance, especially your accommodation situation, so you can concentrate on other things after your arrival. Furthermore, I would recommend not spending too much time with the ESN program. In my opinion you won't get to know the city in a right way, because they show you just a few, very touristic places.