

## Personal Report

### Instituto Politécnico do Porto, winter semester 2021/22 Business and Law, FB 3, Frankfurt

#### Language

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

My classes were in English, I took an additional Portuguese A1 class for fun.

#### Accommodation

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

No.

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

350 euro

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

Good.

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

By bus, 15 Minutes. By foot around 25 minutes.

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

Facebook, Inlife.

**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 stayed in Porto Studios, close by the university but far from the city center. I would not advise to live there, because I didn't like the landlord. It did have bus lines into the city center and also at night.

#### Arrival at the Partner University and Orientation

**Which is the best arrival time?**

If you can, arrive a little earlier than the actual beginning of the orientation week. Especially before winter semester you can still enjoy the warm days and travel a little.

**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?**

I arrived the weekend before the Orientation week, but I found a lot of friends, information and contacts in the first week, organized by the student Association.

## **Living Abroad**

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

Lesser about 75%.

**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 Mensa's/ 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 due to going out and partying a lot. Also, I had to pay for things like laundry, gym, public transport, ...

I chose the "more expensive" ticket, because the university is in an outer zone of the city center. My student life off campus was exciting, and the main part why Erasmus was worth doing. The university meals were cheap (3-4€) and always okay for their price. I did not visit any libraries in the University. There were some computer rooms but you could not just go in there without having an actual class there. There was WIFI and working space in the university though, you just have to bring your own devices. There was no opportunity for renting separate rooms. Sporting programs were offered, but only in Portuguese, I did not take part in any.

## **Studying at the Host University**

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

Little easier.

**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?**

The classes were made for Erasmus students, locals didn't participate in them. The teaching style reminded of school level, a lot of group work, little presentations etc. The level was not very high.

## 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?**

Guys, Porto is the best city to do Erasmus in. It is beautiful, historic, big enough to have a lot to see but small enough to not feel lost like you would in Lisbon etc. You have the beach nearby, a great nightlife, lots and lots of Erasmus students and activities to do. I would advise you to take an accommodation in the city center instead of the university district, because that's where you will spend more time. I can also recommend going to a house with a lot of roommates, since mine got my second family while being there. I would avoid worrying too much about university, since it's usually easy to pass the courses. Rather enjoy the social aspect of Erasmus and build yourself an international friendship network. I would rate my Erasmus as one of the best experiences of my life, and also as a "get away" from your normal life and responsibilities for a few months. I think my biggest advantages were growing up even more, being able to enjoy time with yourself but also social skills. I got to improve my social skills, got more confident and improved in finding new friends fast. On an academic level I could not improve a lot, sadly, but the soft skills make it up. Porto is the perfect city for your Erasmus and it will always be a home for me. Take time to get to know the people and build friendships, you will be amazed how much you are alike, even though you come from different continents (sometimes). The friends are what you can keep after the semester, hopefully for a long time.