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Country and city of destination: Salamanca, Spain
Receiving institution: University Hospital of Salamanca

Where were you informed about the Erasmus+ program?

I was informed about the Erasmus+ program by knowing upper year students who had done Erasmus+ the previous year/ the same year to countries like Croatia, Poland, Germany and Spain. I found the section of Erasmus Office of the webpage of Medical School University of Pécs and read up on the information about possible countries to practice in and other relevant information.

What were your expectations?

I was curious and excited on how it was going to be to live in Spain for 3 months. I had once been to Salamanca for 1 day before a few years ago, so I knew that it was a very beautiful, and relatively small city. However, I did not know how it would be to live there and practice in the hospital.

What kind of difficulties did you have to face? How could you solve these problems?

I had some issues with the matriculation. I was not matriculated to the University of Salamanca; I was only matriculated to the Faculty of Medicine. I had to go to the main office in the center and there they helped me out.

I was also not completely sure of the 4 practices I applied for were the practices I would be able to do, since they could not promise me that for sure in the Learning agreement. But there were no problems once I went to talk to the coordinator.

It was also a bit difficult to orient myself of where to meetup for each practice. But I always got a name from the coordinator of a responsible department manager to turn to and I also got help from fellow Spanish students that I did the previous practice with.

Traveling

To arrive to Salamanca you have to fly to Madrid and from Madrid airport/city you can either go by bus (www.alsa.es) or by train (www.renfe.es). For me the bus was easiest.

Also, if you wanted to travel during the weekends there were many possibilities. There's buses and trains to all cities around Spain. And usually it does not take long time to go due to excellent roads. Both the bus and train are quite cheap.

During my Erasmus stay, I traveled to Oviedo in the North of Spain. I also visited Sevilla in the South and Porto and Lisbon in Portugal. It was easy and convenient to travel.

Every weekend there were also trips to different cities and places which were worth visiting, arranged by different Erasmus organizations in Salamanca.

Accommodation (type, monthly fee)

I found various webpages to search for accommodation, there's also different facebook groups where they post apartments and also other students are looking for roommates. I recommend starting to look for accommodation early as I was a bit late and there were not that many options left.

I lived in a shared apartment with a Spanish girl, to improve my Spanish level even more. Monthly fee was 220 euros without utilities. We lived a bit outside the city center, in an area called Huerta Otea. It took me 10 minutes to walk to the hospital and 25 minutes to walk to the center of the city.

Most Erasmus students' lives in shared apartments, 3 or more students together.

The average price is around 300 euros per month.

Airbnb also has some apartments for long term stay.

The city (e.g.: public transport, restaurants, entertainment)

The city has everything for anyone's taste and you can go by walking to most places.

The city is filled with beautiful buildings and historical monuments, among cathedrals, old libraries and art museum (Casa Lis). Almost all the buildings are made of the same type of stone, giving them a golden like color. It is characteristic of Salamanca.

The main square of the city is called Plaza Mayor which is very beautiful and surrounding it there's all kinds of restaurants, cafés and bars.

There are many restaurants in Salamanca. There are local restaurants and also there's a variety of universal chain restaurants. However, many of the local restaurants, are closed after lunch (16-16.30 and open again around 20.00). It is very typical for the Spanish people to have dinner late around 22-23 o'clock.

There are also many bars, where in the morning you can get breakfast and coffee. During the day they serve different tapas dishes and drinks during the evening/night.

The city has many beautiful and green parks to enjoy and also a river.

Shopping: in the center there are a lot of shops, both local and international. There are also different commercial centers in the city like, El torme (the same name as the river) and El Corte Inglés. There are also 3 different cinemas, but the movies are mostly in Spanish.

For public transport it exists buses and taxis. Taxi costs around 5 euros for going most places.

The bus ticket costs 1,05 euro if you pay at the driver. You can also buy a monthly ticket or a 10 times ticket for cheaper price. The buses go with 15-20 minutes intervals.

The weather/climate is also amazing.

Costs of living

It was reasonable to live there, however a bit more expensive than Hungary. In all kinds of areas like supermarkets, public transport, restaurants, rent, shopping etc.

Erasmus life (e.g.: programs, local ESN, buddy system)

There are various companies for Erasmus students who organize trips, events and parties. I joined different groups on facebook where they posted different information and events. They also made a whatsapp group for all the Erasmus students for the first semester which I joined. The different companies are:

- ESN Salamanca
- Yeah Erasmus Salamanca
- Salamanca What's On / Salamanca Erasmus Trips

Also, on the whatsapp group they posted different groups for each country and each study program. I joined the Erasmus Scandinavia group and the Erasmus Medicine group. There was not a Hungarian group because there were too few Hungarian students. But via these groups I got to know people from my own country and also people who studies the same as me.

Receiving institution, description and evaluation of your studies/traineeship

There's 2 different hospitals in Salamanca, but they are more or less next to each other, so it is easy to get to both of them. I had practices in both of the hospitals.

The practices were good. In all my practices there were other Spanish 6th year students together with me. The 6th year Spanish students have 12 weeks of rotations from the start of September to the mid/end of November. So, for any upcoming students I recommend applying for those months.

I liked that there was a lot of variety in the practices, not only the ward and the operation room.

Emergency medicine: I was in both the hospitals for this practice. I was mostly at the outpatient clinic following a doctor or a resident. We were also some days in the intensive care unit for those patients who needed monitoring at bedside. The doctors explained well, and we practiced a lot of physical examination.

Pulmonology: here I was one week at the ward for those patients who was admitted, we followed the doctor and they explained us the treatments and examinations. The second week I was 2 days at the spirometry lab, one day as sleep analysis lab and 2 days bronchoscopy unit.

Neurology: I was at the stroke ward and neurology consult.

Surgery (esophagogastric): I got to assist and watch operations, participate at the ward with postoperative care and outpatient surgery unit.

I am satisfied with my traineeship and the practices. I got to participate and see and learn a lot. The doctors were friendly as well as the patients and the fellow students.

What was the best thing during your Erasmus studies/traineeship? What did you gain due to the program?

The best thing was that I improved my Spanish language level, which also was my goal. I grew a lot as person by being independent in another country other than Norway and Hungary. Almost everyone spoke Spanish, which was a bit of challenge for me in the beginning. I was not that confident with speaking Spanish and it was difficult to express and explain myself, but with the time it got much better.

I also learned a lot related to my practices and I got to meet medical students from Spain. I got to see how the Spanish health care system functions and compare the system to Hungary and Norway which I have already practiced in. More than that, I made new friendships with students from Norway, Germany, Italy, France and Spain which I will keep in contact with in the future. I have gained a lot of cultural knowledge which I will bring with me for the future.

Why would you recommend the Erasmus+ program to other students?

I recommend the Erasmus+ program because it is an experience for life. You get to live in another country of your wish, you will learn and experience a new culture and meet new people. You will also grow as a person and be more independent. There are also many opportunities to travel.

You also have an opportunity to learn new things and maybe see it in a new perspective.

Pictures



The famous Spanish sangria



In a village called La Alberca from an Erasmus trip



The Spanish flag on Plaza Mayor on the independence day



The University library and one of the hospitals

