

European Union & Erasmus??!

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What can the European Union do for me, a 20 year old student of applied sciences? Well, first something about the European Union you may or may not know:

The European Union is an unique economical- and political partnership between 27 democratic European countries. The goals of this partnership are:

Peace, prosperity and freedom for all the 498 million people living in the 27 countries. Also they want the world to be more honest and safe. The (most important) results of this union are until now:

- Free travel and trade without borders,
- the Euro,
- better food,
- better (care of the)environment(s),
- higher living standard in the poor regions
- acting together against crime and terrorism,
- lower prices for calling and/or texting to other countries.

And a lot more, but the most important result for us students is, in my opinion:

- The opportunity to go abroad for your internship, or a semester studying abroad.

Education

The European Union finds education very important. This because high quality education is necessary if the EU wants to develop itself as a know ledged society. And also if the EU wants to compete with all the other countries in the World. All 27 countries of the Union develop their own education policies, but together they determine the main goals. Also they work together when it comes to learning methods, good ones are exchanged from one country to another. But most important for us, students of applied sciences is that the EU gives money to a lot of programs of which we can provide from. Because of this programs students have the ability to work or study in another country. The EU has a budget of 7 milliard Euro for the period 2007-2013. The program that provides the opportunity for students of applied sciences to go abroad is Erasmus. The Erasmus program gives every student that goes abroad for study or internship , €250,- for every month spend abroad. The Erasmus program is part of the Life Long Learning Program. This program of the European Commission is there to stimulate collaboration between the countries when it comes to education.



Erasmus Experience

Going abroad as Erasmus is a great opportunity for every student. Students who went abroad said they learned the following things, and more, during their time in another country:

- You become more independent,
- your World gets bigger, you get to learn people from around the World,
- you learn about other cultures, it widens your view,
- you improve your English, and most of the time you learn another new language (the language of the country you are staying in),
- you get new (international) ambitions and goals in life,
- you get a new view and opinion on your home country because you now say with your own eyes how everything works in another country.

Almost all students who go abroad as Erasmus perceive this time as one of the best times in their whole life! And Erasmus time is not only fun, it is also very useful. When you finish your study and start looking for a job, you can be more attractive for employers because of your international experience. And of course, because you've made a lot of new international friends, you can travel the World and stay everywhere for free ;).

I also went abroad as Erasmus, and I can really recommend it to everybody. Maybe it sounds a bit weird, when you hear all those Erasmus people say that they learned so much, and not only in school, but I can say it's really true! Because the country and the culture you are going to are so different you really have to adjust yourself. You have to get used to new habits, people and languages and much much more.. Of course you also don't know anybody in that country, so you are forced to make new friends. But I've learned that these friends can become friends for life. This sounds like another cliché but it is so true! Erasmus can be hard (at first), but when I look back I wouldn't want to miss it for anything.

Impression

In this nice short youtube movie you get a feeling about what being Erasmus means. The movie is made by Daniel, a Portugese guy who studied in Denmark for one year.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SCOp11ppvF4>

