

Testimonial

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Before Your Arrival

What you need to prepare before you arrive are your visa, course registration, and accommodation. Erasmus Staff will send instructions for everything to you one by one. So, do not worry about all the details now. You will find some useful general information here.

In order for the university to arrange for your visa, you will have to send some documents and some amount of money as a proof of solvency. The money will be transferred back to you once you get a Dutch bank account in the Netherlands. After that the staff will e-mail you when your visa is approved. Then, you will need to fill in MVV form, bring it to the Dutch embassy in Bangkok, and receive your visa there afterward.

RSM or Rotterdam School of Management is your faculty at Erasmus University and IBA is its international program name. You will receive an email containing RSM course lists and schedule for classes and exams. Each trimester, you will have to choose at least 3 courses from 7 or 8 available choices. After you have made your decision about your courses, you will have to mail the course form for your first trimester to the university. And you will receive **ERNA username and password** which will allow you to login to any Erasmus system. Then you can register for the courses online in the RSM website called **sin-online**.

If you want to stay in the university dormitory, you will have to book early. You can also rent a room somewhere in the center. Both choices are very convenient since they are only 5 kilometers apart and you can go everywhere by bicycle. Rotterdam is the safest place for cycling. A second hand bicycle cost 80-200 Euros. It can be cheaper from 60-80 Euros online.



First Week Survival Tips

What you need to survive are mobile phone, Wi-Fi, money, transportation, and food. I know that everyone has their own mobile phone but what you might need here is a SIM card. You will be given a free one with your welcoming package on your first day at Erasmus University. If you need it earlier, you can find one at [Albert Heijn](#) or other supermarket. You can find [Albert Heijn](#) everywhere and you can find almost everything there like our 7-eleven. Wi-Fi is provided around the university area with the name 'eduroam'. You can login with the [ERNA password](#) I mentioned earlier.



Although the money you have to transfer in your visa process is intended to be enough for your whole stay, you should bring enough money to survive the first month including the first month rent. Credit card is not always accepted here. And the process of getting your visa money back can take a month.



Bicycle is the most beneficial way of traveling here. It is cheap and a good exercise. Public transportation is also very convenient but the price can be expensive without an [OV-Chipkaart](#). A tram ride usually cost about 4.5



euros per trip but with an [OV-Chipkaart](#) the cost will depend on how long you are on the tram. It cost only 4 Euros when you go to its end destination. From Erasmus to Rotterdam Center cost about 2 Euros.

You can also use [OV-Chipkaart](#) to get on a train to any city in the Netherlands. It is highly recommended that you buy the card on your arrival at [Albert Heijn](#) or [Hema](#) in Rotterdam Centraal, the main train station.

An average price for a normal meal is 4 to 8 Euros. It is a lot cheaper if you do the cooking yourself. You can buy all ingredients at [Albert Heijn](#) or [Plus](#) which is just across the street from the university. In case you want some Asian things like fish source, MaMa Noodles, or Oishi Green tea, you can find them at Chinese Market which is a block away from the main train station in the center.

How to Prepare for Studying

You will be studying in IBA program with regular students and exchanged students. The class size here is quite big with about 200 students in one classroom. Erasmus University students know how to study while playing



hard. You might see many skip classes, attend every party yet get very good grades. You are undoubtedly advised to attend lectures but it is not required to do so. RSM professors always upload their slides and announce important things on '[Blackboard](#)' which is a webpage where you can login using your [ERNA](#)

[username and password](#). You might find that you have plenty of free time on your timetable and then plan your trip around Europe. Exploring Europe is of course recommended but please be aware that most courses only have final exam. It means you are required to study the whole books for your finals. So, arrange enough time for your study. Although Erasmus arranges re-sit exams for students who failed or wants better grades, I am sure no one wants to spend their summer here studying. **There are two ways you can study for your exam.** One is to [study from textbooks and slides](#). You can buy your textbooks at [StudyStore](#) in the university which cost about 70 Euros each or you can borrow ones from the [library](#). The other way is to [buy summaries from Erasmus shop and study them](#). They will be available a week prior the exam. The summaries are cheaper and shorter but it does not always mean they are a better way to study. No choice is better than the other as long as you understand all the topics for your exam. Another suggestion is that **looking through past exam questions can always help**. Sometimes professors will upload them on [blackboard](#). Sometimes you will need to ask for outside link from your friends.

Life Style & Activity

Since **Amsterdam** is the most tourist visited city in the Netherlands, tourists learn that the Netherlands is a place for party. **Amsterdam** is known for its coffee shops, red light district, and fantastic canal views. When I said coffee shop I did not mean an ordinary coffee shop we know or a place like Starbucks. Coffee shops in the Netherlands legally sell soft drugs. You can find space cake, magic mushroom, weed lollipop, and so on in every coffee shop.



Rotterdam, on the other hand, is a quiet business area with stunning riverside view. Dutch people are famous for their passion in **cycling** and **ice skating**. Cycling across cities is very common for Dutch children. **Cycling** from your dorm **to Kinderdijk** where there are 19 windmills is highly recommended.

In winter **ice skating at Kinderdijk** is also a popular activity for Rotterdam people. Lastly, exploring Europe and trying local dishes are very vital activities for any exchanged student. I gained unforgettable experience from my exchange period in Europe and also learnt various cultures from my trips. I hope that you will enjoy your precious time in Rotterdam like I did.





Erasmus University Rotterdam



Bunch of experiences from overseas, I'm doubtful about your expectation on the exchange program that it will not fit the actual experiences you will get in just one semester or academic year. It is over your expectation and beyond your imagination. I'm warmly welcome those who are interested in spending their exchange life in Erasmus University Rotterdam or in short RSM. It's located in the city of Rotterdam in The Netherlands, which is the best hub for your journey throughout Europe. I'm here to provide some overview of my exchange life and tips for having fun!!!

What to do in the first week?

First thing I did apart from arranging my room is to collect my resident permit. Exchange students will receive email from immigration office about the visa and permit collection before they depart from Thailand. Just make sure that you go to the city hall and pick it because it is a premium ticket for your journey and discount ticket for many attractions in Europe.



During the first week I was worried about my paperwork and wondered where should I collect my school kit. Most of the paperwork can be done with Erasmus officers, in which they will help and guide us throughout the process. For the school kit, we will receive during the first meet. Erasmus will inform you place and time. In the school kit, there are city map, city guide book, Erasmus study guide, and most important sim card, which contains some call credit and data for us to use. (One of my exchange friends cried out because he brought one for 10 euro)

How to prepare for my study?



Erasmus University is one of the top ten ranking in Europe, study at here is not a piece of cake. I need to work a lot on reviewing suggested articles, reading text book, and doing exercises by myself. Lecture may provide some tools for exam but the rest I need to read by myself. Traveling too much caused me a big problem during exam. However this doesn't mean we don't have special bonus for improving our grade.

Erasmus is famous for the lab and research, by participate in their lab we can earn some amount of points that can help us to gain higher grade, even though they are not that much. For those who can't stand in front of big text book for more than 5 minutes, there are summaries for each subject in Erasmus book store. It contain all material needed for your exam but these summary will sell only one week before your exam. What I did when I study was to concentrate in class do exercises and read summary before going to exam.

Life in Rotterdam

Rotterdam is a modern city with all new infrastructure. It is a quiet city, unlike Bangkok, with very peaceful and calm atmosphere. All Dutch can speak fluent english eventhough their national language is dutch. You can find a lot of people in every bar on the evening.

For transportation, there are train and tram but I would suggest you to buy a bikecycle. Bikecycle is the best vihecle in Rotterdam and throughout Netherland. You can buy a good bike with cheap price in facebook by going to a group call "Commodity Market Rotterdam". It is a biggest second hand online market and dutch people usully like to make online trading. You may find some cheap text book at a price of 10-15 euro, which their original price is 70-90 euro.



At last for those who looking for dorm to stay, I would suggest you to wait for welcoming email from Erasmus. The email contain many helpful information and that include dormitory website. The provider is call SSH and there are 4 place for you to choose (It depends on your preference but you can contact me for some advices).

Travel throughout Europe

Always bring your passport and resident permit with you as you travel through Europe. You can go through all Schengen area plus Turkey and the best transportation is either by plane or train. Rail Planner and Google Map are very useful application during my trip. Both can be use offline. One can check for train timetable through whole Europe while another can download map in advance.

I have both experiences in traveling both alone and in a group. Both are valuable memory. Travel as a group I learnt to be together and joy with my friend. We drink and we talk from day until mid-night. You won't feel lonely if you travel with your friend but you won't ever feel exciting and challenging if you never travel alone. The experiences are immeasurable when you travel alone. You will make new friends in your hostel as you talk with others. You become more extrovert as you ask some other tourist to take picture for you because



selfie is not the best option for you to take picture of yourself. Your eyes will look around and see what you need to see as a backpacker without distract from your friends. You will be challenged to be independence as you need to plan the trip and walk through all attraction by yourself. You may feel exciting sometimes when you face some weird people and you need to find the way out. Those are experiences from my journey and I can say that this is the best part of my life!

At last I would like welcome you again to Exchange Program and Erasmus University. Feel free to contact me if you have any doubt. Europe is opening for you!!!

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