

MY STUDENT EXCHANGE EXPERIENCE

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I am a 4th-year Sociology student at Universidad Nacional de San Martín and in this short story, I am going to tell you a bit about an experience that was not part of my very structured study plan from the beginning. When in September 2021 I found out I had won a scholarship to study in the Czech Republic from February to June 2022, I knew nothing about this kind of experience. I did not know what to expect or how to prepare myself for it because this is not a normal thing in my country. Coming to study here is an immense privilege where I come from. Later I found out the reason why it is such a life-changing experience that should be more spread around the world.



The first and most evident thing I want to talk about is the part about studying. As a sociologist, I learned to see the world in structured categories that order it. These denominations and categories are built in my home country based on our own personal experience. Coming here I had the opportunity to understand the world in a different way. Also, the exchanges and the debates were super interesting because all my classmates came from different places. It was an amazing opportunity to have the chance to show the point of view from my field to all of my classmates, as well as they could also show me theirs. From this experience, I took a lot of opinions that helped me to understand societies from a wider angle. Thus, Erasmus is important because it creates a democratized space in classes where open dialogue is always welcome.

The second and most important thing I want to talk about is the people you meet here. You come completely alone and after all, you leave being part of a big family. Coming to a foreign country by yourself is not easy, but having a lot of people who are in the same situation as you make you connect very easily. Everyone on Erasmus is in the same position where they are a bit lonely but at the same time super open to making friends. These people are strangers just for a short time because soon they become the people that you see every day and make you smile when you miss home, help you with paperwork or invite you over for dinner. Friendships here become so strong so fast, and that is beautiful.

Finally, I have to say that Erasmus is an unexplainable experience that can not be summarized in words. It changes you as a person because it shows you how the world outside your comfort zone works. It makes you face challenges that lead you to grow up a lot. In this process, you don't only learn how to see the world differently, but it also makes you see how different lives can be and gives you a new perspective on how the world works. Therefore, for these and a thousand reasons more, I am super thankful for having the opportunity to live this unexplainable and great experience.

