Report

One Semester at the University of Trento with the Erasmus Scholarship

Besides the Corvinus University, the University of Regensburg and Ljubljana, the University of Trento is one of four universities, which participates in the Erasmus Mundus Master in Comparative Local Development. After Budapest and Regensburg our cohort was going to spend the third semester in Trento. Through the following lines, I would like to present my experience related to the city of Trento and its region, my studies, student life and accommodation.

Trento is a small city in the Italian region Trentino in the Italian Alps. The city never stopped amazing me, with its mountains, which can be seen from anywhere in the city. Located in a valley with historical importance for trade between Southern and Northern Europe, tourist can still enjoy the rich cultural and architectural heritage of Trento. The region is full of imposing castles, telling the story of kings, bishops, knights and traders. Trentino has many gastronomic products to offer: grapes, apples, walnuts and mushrooms can easily be found during hiking trips. The access to nature and wonderful views on the surrounding mountains is easy from the city center, for example by using the cable car. I was especially amazed by the different lakes surrounded by mountains in the Trentino region. Furthermore, the Garda Lake, Verona and Venice are not far away from Trento, places which absolutely worth visiting and which can easily be reached by train.

The University of Trento is located at the center of Trento and students shape the urban image. Taking a coffee with a pastry or an Aperol Spritz at one of the multiple bars in the afternoon was one of my great pleasures. Being sensible to the wellbeing of our planet, I was happy to find some shops with organic and fair-trade products, but only few second-hand shops. Every Thursday Trento hosted the local market and during December the Christmas market.

In the first weeks, I made great use of the program suggested by Erasmus Student Network Trento to meet people and discover the city and the region. Afterwards, the disadvantages of big group travels clashed with my interests and I focused on more specific activities. I signed in a rowing club of the university and joint a WhatsApp Group on hiking.

My experience in Trento related to studying is torn. On one hand some of our mandatory courses lacked academic standards, on the other hand, the few electives courses, our program allowed us to choose out of the common curriculum, were next to perfect. Unfortunately, except through our elective courses and our professor, we didn’t have any contact with Italians through
studies. The buildings were well equipped for academic activities and the technical assistance was always available to help. In general, the administrative and technical staff was mostly very friendly and helpful. The new library is very nice, however lacked seats and was therefore often fully occupied, especially during exam period. Its collection of books could also be further equipped.

A very important aspect of my life in Trento, was the time spent in the San Bartolomeo dormitory Opera Universita. It’s a large dormitory located in the South of Trento, at 15 min by bus from the city center. The reception is open 24/7 and their staff are very friendly. The dorm further procures clean bed lines twice in the month. The dorm buildings were built at different point in time, therefore the comfort varies. I was living in a very new building. The kitchen is shared by 10 persons, but as cleaning staff is coming every working day, therefore it is largely comfortable. The rooms are clean, functionally furnished and comfortable. The stay there didn’t only give me the possibility to get to know Italians but also other Internationals. It was the place, where students helped each other, exchange information or support each other psychologically. For newly arrived Erasmus student dormitories are in my opinion the best accommodation alternatives. It is the easiest way to get into contact with locals and reduce as far as possible the risk of isolation, very common for Erasmus students.

As a participant who wasn’t holding the Erasmus Mundus scholarship and as having high study fees, the possibility to apply and get the Erasmus + scholarship was a relief. The Trento Erasmus Team was very organized, hold two introduction session, giving all necessary information. This was very helpful. The opening hours of the international office must be paid attention.

To conclude I can only recommend every student who likes outdoor activities, to choose Trento as a place to study. Two semesters would be even better to fully appreciate this wonderful region.