

# ERASMUS REPORT



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Host institution: HoGent – Hogeschool Gent (University College Gent)

Place: Gent, Belgium

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

My Erasmus exchange was in my 5<sup>th</sup> Semester of my studies, since it is the only chance to go abroad in the Business Economics and IT course. I decided to go abroad in my 1<sup>st</sup> semester, because I wanted to go to as many countries as I can during my studies to get to know the intercultural differences and to evolve not only professionally, but also personally. I did not set myself targets to achieve, but I wanted to have fun while being on Erasmus. My first option should have been the Humber College in Toronto, Canada, but since it was still COVID when we had to send the applications, they rejected it. That is how I ended up in Gent, Belgium.

# 2. EXPERIENCES AT THE HOST UNIVERSITY

The process of choosing my classes was really easy and fast. First time I chose my courses from a different programme that I was supposed to do, so I had chosen all of my classes wrong. Therefore, I had to change everything again, but everything went smoothly and the Belgian coordinator, Fien, was extremely kind and helped me with everything and answered all of my questions. I would advise the fellow students to choose the subjects they are most interested in. Besides, we could change courses until mid-October, so we had the chance to change a course we did not like until then.. I did it as well, because there were overlapping courses or I went to class and did not enjoy it, so I thought it would be better to change it than to stress over it for half a year.

## SUBJECTS STUDIED

Fun fact: grades range from 1 to 20 and 10 is the passing grade.

### HRM

Teacher: Feys Marjolein - she helped Charlotte with the exam, Malengier Charlotte - she was the teacher who gave the lessons and was also examining the students

Exam: written exam (60% of the grade) + Permanent Evaluation or PE (40% of the grade)

About course and impressions: The permanent evaluation is basically a group work in some of the classes, but depending on the course it has more parts or just one delivery. In HRM there were three deliveries based on the course, from different parts and for two of them we had to give a presentation as well. The course itself was nice, I liked the teacher, she was really kind and helpful. I learned many things about HRM and it gave me a general overview of what I have to take into consideration when having a company and what kind

of tasks should the HRM department or someone in the company work on. In the end we had a 10 minute oral exam.

## BUSINESS SOFTWARE 1

Teacher: Madalijns Rudi

Exam: group work(30%) + written exam(70%)

About course and impressions: I did not know what to expect from this class in the beginning. We had an introductory class on the first day, and after that we worked in the Microsoft Navision 2018 and we have gone through the process of making a chair in this database. The group work consisted of 3 people having to make their own production of a product which we had to choose ourselves and go through this process in the database. I liked the course and have learned how to use an ERP system in real life, not only in theory as we talked about at KEA. One aspect which was not the best is the fact that the teacher was projecting his screen and was showing us how to do the steps but sometimes it was hard to look and do the steps in the meanwhile, but he was always telling us if we missed a step we could ask him to catch up. At the time I am writing the report I did not have the exam, but it will be a mix of questions about the theory and some steps to do in the database and make a printscreen about those steps and hand in as a word document, since the Covid cases are rising and the teacher decided to have the exam online.

## DIGITAL MARKETING

Teacher: Lippens Dennis

Exam: Permanent Evaluation(30%) + written exam(70%)

About course and impressions: The course consisted of 8-9 classes about the digital marketing topic. I think that they were interesting and engaging. We had topics like Websites, Search Engine optimization, Social media and advertising, Artificial Intelligence and how digital marketers use it, Google Analytics where we also did some exercises. At the end of each course we had a Kahoot session, which I waited for each time because there were interesting questions not only about the things he asked in class. Also the teacher had a gift each time for the one who was in first place. The exam was an online exam with multiple questions, which was not hard, if you looked into the things he was teaching. The PE consisted of choosing a Digital marketing tool and to enhance one marketing aspect of the app the teacher developed.

## DIGITAL MARKETING BY GOOGLE

Teachers: Lippens Dennis, Van Corp Bieke– English Teacher

Exam: English Language Course + group work assigned to an NPO, 2 Google Certificates, no exam

About course and impressions: The course started with an introductory class where we were told what we are expected to do, what tasks we have to do during the course. After that, we did not have courses, only one or two to meet with the teachers and have guidance. So we had around two weeks to do the Google Ads Measurement Certificate and Google Ads Search Certification. After that we had to choose a group and work with that group. We got assigned an NPO and had to work with them to improve a campaign of our choice. Unfortunately, not all groups got assigned to NPOs for different reasons. We were one of those groups and we have worked with the other groups who did not get assigned to an NPO, with one NPO, but on different campaigns. Besides, we had some requirements we had to hand in during the campaign period, like reports, how the meeting with the NPO was.

I would advise the students who want to study at Hogent to take this course, since you will get 2 certificates, which are really good and companies will look for students who have these. Besides, if you have a really good campaign you will get another complementary certificate which improves not only your skill but also your CV.

For the English Language Courses (one part of the course) we had to do an advertising video for a fictional company, two people in a group.

## GRAPHIC DESIGN

Teacher: Barbara Mestdagh

Exam: written exam

About course and impressions: This course taught us the basics of graphic design and how to use the Indesign program from Adobe. Good to know is that you have to purchase it if you do not have it(-70€). Hands on course, I had to look into each course afterwards to familiarize more with it and to learn how to do different things in InDesign. The teacher is really nice, if we had questions we could write her or ask in class and also before the exam she said if we have anything we do not know or understand we can message her or make a team call if it's more complex. Moreover, we were provided tutorials, from the previous teacher, which was useful before the exam to freshen up the knowledge.

## INTERNATIONAL MARKETING

Teacher: Bruyr Karin

Exam: written exam (80%) + group work (20%)

About course and impressions: The course was interesting, and I learned new things about marketing, since this is my 3rd marketing related course during Erasmus. Lots of visual representations in class, more focused on talking freely but also giving us an overview of international marketing. The theory was in the slides but she did not stay to read it. That part we learned more at home.

In the PE we had a report about a topic or a brand and we had to compare it in two or more countries in the case of the brand. At the end there was a small presentation for each group about the topic they have chosen.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Teacher: Brusselle Joeri

Exam: written exam

About course and impressions: The course was very engaging with interesting topics. We had small group talks during classes, and the teacher showed us different videos about sustainability. I liked the course overall, and the exam was not hard, I did not have to study everything by heart. The teacher is talkative and it is not boring in how he teaches.

## WEBSITE MANAGEMENT

Teacher: Vermeulen Steven

Exam: written exam(make a website) + oral exam

About course and impressions: This course gives you the basics of HTML and CSS and how you put a website online. The teacher is nice and helps you every time you have questions. You have to purchase the Dreamweaver program from Adobe, but also you can use the program on computers on campus, but then you will not have it home to work on your website. The exam was about making our own website, which we had to put online before the exam in January. The teacher gave us a template, but those who are more interested in this topic could make their own template. At the exam in January we had to present the website and had a couple of questions regarding it.

## SURVIVAL DUTCH

Teacher: Van Stichel Mira

Exam: written exam + oral exam + portfolio

About course and impressions: This was a course I had chosen when I switched classes, but I was thinking about taking this course before coming to Belgium. I liked the course, gave the basics of Dutch and could say more than you and Hi in Dutch. The teacher provided a lot of sources to learn from, and gave different exercises. The only aspect I did not like or so that I could not keep up with the many things we had to do, because we had to do the pages she gave us, then we had to do the homework and also learn it, which is quite hard when you are new to a language and get so much information in a short period of time. The written exam was online and we had to do different exercises as we had in our course, and the oral exam was about basic questions regarding us, like where do we live, what do we study, how old are we and other questions like this.

The portfolio was about doing a presentation video of yourself, and some papers we had to fill out, and to send the vocabulary and grammar notes we did during the semester. I would recommend taking this course if you want to learn some Dutch, and are prepared to give some time yourself to sit down and learn, otherwise it is not worth learning a new language.

## STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

Teacher: Buekens Willem

Exam: written exam (100%)

About course and impressions: The course was based on the teacher's book, so we had to buy it, because it contained both the theory of Strategic management, but also different cases of different companies, which he asked about on the exam. I did not like the teaching method, he was only speaking and putting up a presentation, no engagement from the students, he was not teaching interactively. Also, it was from 4-6 after having courses from 8.30 until then, so most of the time I was already tired and I could barely focus. I expected this course to be more engaging. The exam was about the theory and examples the teacher gave us during the classes,

## 3. SOCIAL AND CULTURAL EXPERIENCES

Before the university started we had some Welcoming days organized by the university. It started with getting our student cards and other documents, after that we went to a picnic and had a city tour in groups where we had to do some tasks while visiting the city. This tour ended with a welcome beer (or two) for the Erasmus students with the coordinators.



The second day we had a boat trip on the beautiful canals of Ghent. We have also got a candy called Gentse neuse = Ghent's nose which is a typical candy here in Ghent.



If you go to Ghent, I recommend being part of the ESN community as they organize many different activities for the Erasmus students. If you have an ESN card (you pay 15euro) you can take part for free or for a very low fee in different activities they are organizing. Besides, they have some discounts for different services (Flibco bus, Ryanair, different cafes/bars).

You can meet people by staying in the dorm of the university where there are mostly exchange students. You can find someone to hang out with, watch a movie, cook something together. Also, there were parties on the 7th floor where the people from the

dorm went to socialize. But keep in mind, that if you do not like parties it is not a place to live as there is much noise most of the time.

During the exchange period we had longer weekends where we had some free time to go and visit different cities in Belgium and other countries. We went to Brussels, Antwerp, Brugge, Leuven, Waterloo and had a longer trip to Italy, as we found cheap tickets there.

Brussels:



*Manneken Pis*



*Parc du Cinquantenaire*



*Atomium*



*Grand Place before Christmas*



*Royal Gallery of Saint Hubert*



*Me in a greenhouse in Leuven in the botanical garden*

## Antwerp

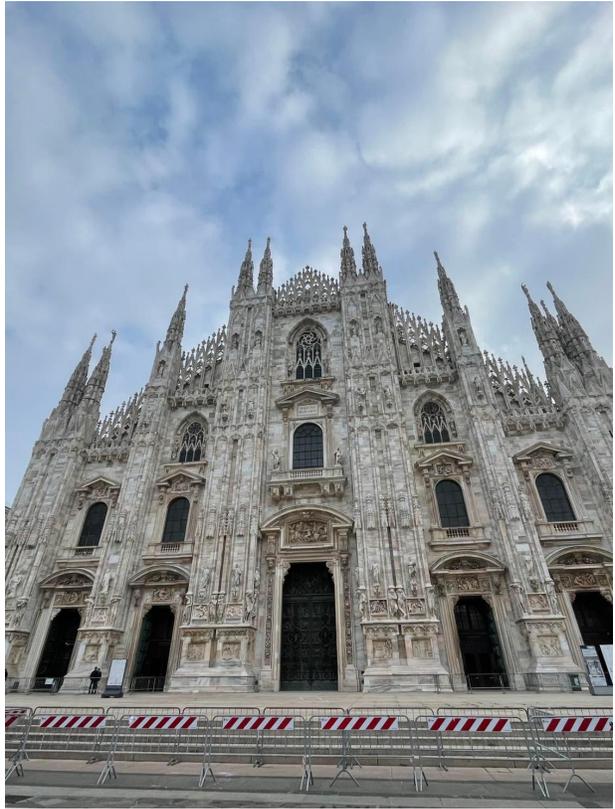
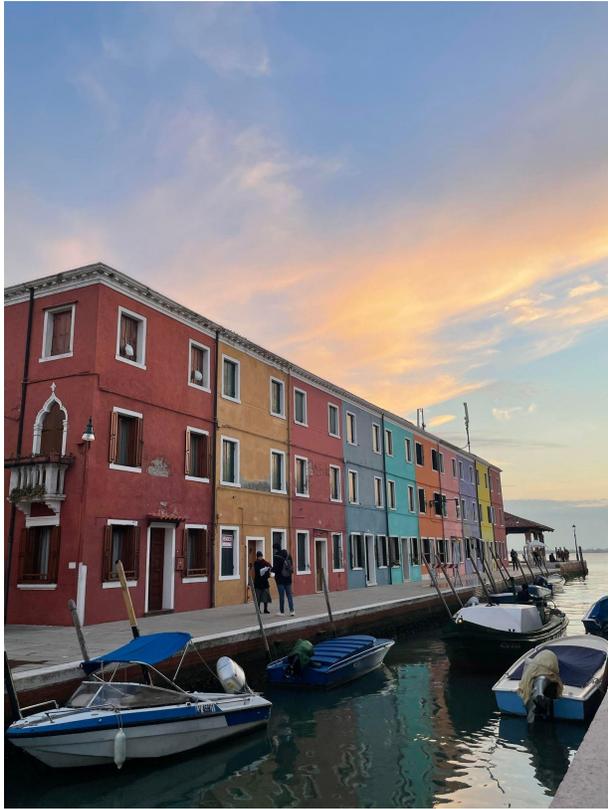


*Train Station*



*Het Steen*

Trip in Italy:



With some friends we went to the Lichtfestival Gent which is organized every 3rd year. So we were lucky to be able to attend it, since we were in Gent.





*LichtFestival*



*Waterloo*

The Belgian culture and atmosphere is really nice and welcoming. There are many hygge cafes, bars and restaurants you can go to. Make sure, if you will live for some time in Gent, go to Overpoortstraat which is the party street of Gent and it is very crowded on Thursday. Because for the international students Thursday is the new Friday.

We went to a dog cafe, where volunteers work and there are dogs you can adopt.



Also, the city is really nice. I had rented a bike, so I can easily go from one place to another. The dorm is 5-10 minutes away from the center, But there is also a good connection of buses and trams, but they can be sometimes late. Some pictures from Gent:



As I started climbing, I wanted to continue in Gent as well, so I looked into a gym to go there climbing. Then I decided to take a course where I met some nice local people with whom I have also gone on a road trip. Also after classes we stayed with them and drank something and talked. So, I would say that if you have a hobby/interest you can find a community there and try to connect with the people interested in the things you are too.

## 4. PRACTICAL EXPERIENCES

The application process went smoothly, on both sides, although I had to send my application twice, once to KEA and once to HoGent. Both coordinators Anne, from KEA and Fien, from HoGent were really kind and always helpful.

I got a room in a dorm, but there are only 50 places, so if you get the opportunity take it then, since I had classmates who did not get a room since they sent the response too late. The dorm for the whole period was 1225€ and I had to pay beforehand and a 250€ deposit to secure the room in June, which you get back if you leave the room in good condition.

I mostly cooked for myself. I would say that if you cook around 100-200€ would be more than enough, but it depends on the food you eat. If you eat out, then you should have a higher budget for food.



*Belgian beer and Belgian waffles*

I have flown to Belgium, so I did not bring kitchen tools, bought them there and also washing powder and other things like this. It cost me around 80-90€.

The bike rent was 65€ for 6 months and 80€ deposit which you will get back in the end if you had no damage.

Other costs: 2€ a bus ticket for 60-minutes, 6.6€ a train ticket between 2 destinations in Belgium under 26 years, but if you buy 10 rides it costs only 55€, so you save 11€, which is okay, but I would advise to take that from the beginning if you plan to visit more cities in Belgium. In the beginning I also bought only 1 ticket at a time, but I was traveling a lot and it would have been better to buy them all at once.

These were my fixed costs, but there are more, depending on the needs and wants of each person. If people go shopping for example, or travel more, go out every day and so on. Keep in mind to count them in. The Erasmus grant covered most of my expenses, but as I said it depends on how people live and what they buy.

## 5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion I would say that it was a very good idea to choose Gent, it is a vibrant student city, with beautiful landscape, it is surely an experience for a lifetime. I made new friends, got to know another culture, learned some Dutch and made memories I will remember forever. I would encourage people to go to a new place, meet new people, and get out of their comfort zone.

Professionally I would say that my expectations were met, I liked the tuition and also I think that my exams went well. As for the cultural and social experiences I say that all my expectations were met and I liked my time in Gent. I can only recommend for people to go to another country and have the Erasmus experience.