



Report on Erasmus+ Study Abroad

Bewerbungsnummer



GENERAL INFORMATION

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Personal information

Surname	
First name	
Study Programme at RUB	International Humanitarian Action_Master
Exchange	Humanitarian Aid International (HAI)
Subject at Partner University	International Humanitarian Action

Duration of the stay

Academic year	2024/25
Start semester	Sommersemester 2025
Duration in semesters/terms	2

STAY ABROAD

Motivation of stay abroad

Experience new academic environment/different university system	3
Improve your knowledge of the language	3
Academic reputation/quality of the host institution	2
Living in a foreign country	3
Discovering a new culture/way of life	2
Social/cultural life	4

Selection criteria

Which criteria motivated you to choose this institution?	reputation of the host institution, reputation of the teaching staffsonals
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HOME INSTITUTION

How do you assess the general support of RUB?	1
How would you describe the services provided by RUB (information meeting, level of information...)?	RUB staff were helpful, especially in the IFHV
Did you receive support from RUB while abroad?	Yes
If yes, which kind of support?	Administrative-wise
Did you receive all necessary information from RUB before you left your home country?	Yes

HOST INSTITUTION

Host institution

How do you assess the host institution generally speaking?	3
Was there an orientation programme?	No
Was a preparatory intensive language course offered?	No
Was the completion of any language test at the host institution requested?	No
Did you have a buddy during your exchange?	No
Please describe the registration and enrollment formalities.	Completed online registration via USOSweb and submitted required documents (passport, acceptance letter, and visa) at the International Relations Office
Please describe the host institution buildings and installations (IT, library...).	The University of Warsaw has modern facilities, including well-equipped libraries (e.g., BUW), computer labs, Wi-Fi across campuses, and accessible study spaces.

Academic year schedule

Preparatory language course duration	4
First semester/term duration (in weeks)	The first semester lasted 15 weeks, including exams.
Second semester/term duration (in weeks)	
Third term duration (in weeks)	
Examination period duration (in weeks)	The examination period lasted 3 weeks after the semester.
Did you have holidays/a semester break?	No

STUDIES

Studies/Semester description

Which courses did you attend (brief description, evaluation, credits)?	Courses Attended: Prevention of Mass Atrocities – Early warning systems and international response mechanisms. Reconciliation – Post-conflict justice, truth commissions, and restorative practices. Crises in Eastern Europe – Geopolitical tensions, hybrid warfare, and regional instability. Advanced Management – Strategic leadership in NGOs and international organizations. Methodology – Research design and qualitative/quantitative methods in social sciences. Forensics in Humanitarian Action – Techniques for documenting human rights violations. Contemporary Armed Conflicts – Case studies (e.g., Syria, Ukraine) and conflict trends. Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflicts – IHL, UN frameworks, and operational challenges. Project Cycle Management – NGO project design, budgeting, and monitoring.
How did you get information on the content of courses you attended?	Through the Coordinator
What was the language of instruction at the host institution?	English
How was the academic support/assistance?	It was vary (sometimes helpful, sometimes not helpful)
How do you assess the quality of the courses compared to RUB?	Not as good
Did you have any issues with courses recognition?	No
Please describe the grading system of the host university.	Grading System: The University of Warsaw uses a 5-point scale: 5.0 (Excellent / bardzo dobry) 4.5 (Very good / dobry plus) 4.0 (Good / dobry) 3.5 (Satisfactory plus / dostateczny plus) 3.0 (Satisfactory / dostateczny) 2.0 (Fail / niedostateczny)

ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation

Which kind of accommodation did you find (student housing, shared-flat...)?	I did rent one bedroom apartment
Did you receive help from your host institution to find accommodation?	Yes
How did you organize your accommodation? Why did you like it or not? Do you have other propositions? (Please provide website links, newspaper name... if you have any.)	The accommodation was comfortable and well-located, though relatively expensive. However, finding housing proved challenging as most landlords required a minimum one-year lease, making short-term rentals difficult to secure.

HOST COUNTRY

Host country

How do you describe the city, the country and the people?	The city itself was a fantastic place to live—vibrant, culturally rich, and full of life. From its charming Old Town to its modern cafes and green spaces, Warsaw offered the perfect blend of history and contemporary energy, making it a truly enjoyable place to study and explore.
Did you need a visa?	No
Did you take an additional Insurance?	No

COSTS

General costs

How were the living costs compared to your home country? Higher

Did you receive a grant during your stay? No

Monthly costs

Monthly housing costs 950

Monthly catering costs 500

Monthly transportation costs to study place 20

Abroad health insurance coverage 129

Other monthly costs

Total amount of your monthly costs 1500

Additional costs

Immunization, medical care

Visa

Travel costs for arrival and departure

Costs for books, copies, etc

Language course costs (language of the country)

Orientation week

Other non-monthly costs

Total amount of your non-monthly costs

SUMMARY

Summary

How would you summarize your stay abroad?

Summary of My Stay Abroad In conclusion, my Erasmus+ exchange at the University of Warsaw was an incredibly enriching experience, both academically and personally. Living in Warsaw allowed me to immerse myself in Polish culture, improve my language skills, and build international friendships. Academically, I appreciated the different teaching styles and course offerings, which broadened my perspective in my field of study. Beyond the classroom, I explored Poland's history, traveled to other cities (i.e., Gdańsk), and participated in university events, which deepened my understanding of the country. While there were initial challenges—such as adapting to a new academic system or navigating bureaucracy—however, the experience strengthened my independence and problem-solving skills. Overall, the exchange exceeded my expectations. I return to RUB University with newfound confidence, intercultural competence, and memories that will positively influence my academic and professional future.

Describe your greatest experience/achievement

Greatest Experience/Achievement During My Stay Abroad One of my most memorable achievements during my Erasmus+ exchange was strengthening my understanding of Humanitarian Action. Academic: Excelling in multiple courses actually, where I collaborated with other international students on projects about (Project Cycle Management, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflicts, Conflicts in Eastern Europe, Prevention of Mass atrocities, etc) . Presenting our work to a diverse audience improved my confidence and cross-cultural communication skills. Personal: Overcoming the language barrier by learning basic Polish and connecting with locals—this made everyday life smoother and enriched my understanding of Polish culture. This experience pushed me out of my comfort zone and proved that I could thrive in an unfamiliar environment. The sense of accomplishment—and the friendships I made along the way—made it the highlight of my time abroad.

Describe your most negative experience

While my Erasmus+ experience was overwhelmingly positive, I did face some administrative difficulties, primarily related to bureaucratic processes and a lack of coordination between institutions. 1- Complex and Unclear Procedures Tasks like course registration, or legalization of stay for exchange students often involved excessive paperwork, unclear instructions, or delayed responses from administrative offices. 2- Lack of Centralized Support Information about deadlines, finding accommodation. Example: it took lots of efforts to find accommodation in Warsaw, some landlords refused renting their apartments, and others refused to rent for less than one year. At the end, I had to rent expensive apartment which affected my budget significantly. Impact on My Experience While I adapted, these hurdles consumed time and energy that could have been spent on academic/cultural immersion.

What was the biggest difficulty you faced while abroad ?

The most significant challenge I encountered during my Erasmus+ semester was navigating the bureaucratic processes at both institutional and national levels. Key Issues: Dual Administrative Systems: Coordinating requirements between my home university (RUB), Brightspace (NOHA), and host university (University of Warsaw) often led to confusion, particularly regarding course approvals, credit transfers, and document deadlines. RLegalization of my stay in Poland as an exchange student: The Polish visa/residence permit process involved unexpectedly complex paperwork, with last-minute requests for additional documents (e.g., notarized translations, proof of funds in specific formats). Delayed Communication: Critical information about registration steps or policy changes sometimes arrived late, leaving little time to react. How I Adapted: Became highly proactive in seeking clarifications (e.g., scheduling in-person office visits when emails went unanswered). Built a support network with fellow Erasmus students to share solutions. Developed strong organizational systems to track deadlines and documents.

Overall notation of your stay abroad

2

Do you recommend your host institution for an exchange program?

Yes

What would you have liked to know before your stay abroad?

Reflecting on my experience, below are the key things that would have better prepared me for my stay in Warsaw: 1- Administrative & Practical Challenges Visa/Residence Permit Complexity: I underestimated how time-consuming and detail-oriented the Polish residence permit process would be (e.g., needing apostilled documents, specific bank statement formats). A step-by-step guide from past Erasmus students would have helped. 2- Academic & Social Adjustments Grading System Variations: Polish grading scales and expectations for participation differed from what I was used to. A pre-semester workshop on academic culture would have eased the transition. Erasmus Network Importance: I didn't realize how much social integration would depend on self-initiative. Joining Erasmus Student Network (ESN) events early on would have helped me build connections faster. 3. Personal Preparedness Budgeting for Hidden Costs: Prices for groceries, transport, and travel within Poland were reasonable, but I didn't account for expenses like winter clothing or visa fees. A realistic budget template would have been useful. Cultural Nuances: Small things—like store closures on Sundays. A cultural "cheat sheet" from former students would have been invaluable. Suggestions for Future Students Request a Mentor: Pairing with a previous Erasmus student at the host university for practical advice. Pre-Departure Checklist: Official guides often omit "unofficial" tips (e.g., which banks are foreigner-friendly, best Polish language apps).

Other comments/improvement proposals

Nil

SUBMIT REPORT

Can we publish an anonymous version of your report on our website? Yes