

Can you introduce yourself please?

My name is Evelina. I am studying international information management with a minor in political science. I did my semester abroad at a private university in Madrid. Now I am writing my bachelor thesis.

Why did you decide to spend a semester abroad?

In my degree program, it is compulsory to complete a semester abroad. This was one of the reasons why I chose this study program. It's easy to integrate the semester abroad. I really wanted to study abroad, live in another country for a while, travel, and get to know new cultures and people.

I learned Spanish for two years at school and I took Spanish courses at the university. So I really wanted to go to Spain. In my semester abroad, my Spanish skills definitely improved. It is still not perfect, but I have gotten better. I have developed a better feeling for the language and I am more confident to speak.

Have you also improved your English skills?

There were many students from England and America in my semester abroad. I spoke to them in English. But my knowledge of English was already quite good, so my knowledge of English has not improved significantly, but I was able to expand my vocabulary.

How did you find the partner university in Madrid?

I was glad that I had the opportunity to study at Universidad Pontificia Comillas de Madrid, because the university is said to be like Oxford University but in Spain. We went to campus every day, so there was normal classroom teaching and the support was very nice. You can notice that it is a private university. If I could, I would like to do another degree at this university. However, studying there is very expensive when it is not within the Erasmus+ program.

How was your everyday life at the university compared to that at the University of Hildesheim?

I lived very centrally in Madrid and the university was a bit outside. So I had to take the train to the university. It is the same here, because I do not live in Hildesheim. Everyday life at the university in Madrid was more dynamic because you were at the campus. The city of Madrid is very big and offers many possibilities. In Hildesheim, I am usually only at the university. I return home in the evening. That is why I have hardly gotten to know Hildesheim as a city so far. But this is really because I do not live in Hildesheim.

How were your first days abroad?

On my first day, I went to my apartment that I had never seen before. Then I went out to dinner with my flatmate. I found the apartment through a Facebook group. I just texted to a few people who had made a nice impression in their picture and asked them if they knew anyone who had a room available. A girl then answered that she lives alone in an entire apartment. The room was not expensive because it was an old apartment.

Did you meet many friends in Madrid?

Yes, a lot. Actually, I got to know many international students on the first day at university and the courses were held in smaller groups so that I met other students very quickly. We also had WhatsApp groups through which we could exchange ideas. I just wrote if anyone would like to gonto town. So we got to know each other better and formed a group. This group passed the whole semester. We have traveled a lot, tried Spanish cuisine and learned with and from each other.

I also got to know many local students who helped Erasmus students and organized events. But with the other international students I really became friends.

Were there any problems?

Unfortunately, I was infected with Covid-19. Fortunately, my friends and I were healthy however, we tested positive. After my quarantine, my landlady threw me out of the apartment. She was afraid of Covid-19 and asked me to throw my duvets, curtains and other things out of my room. Then she rented a hotel for me. Unfortunately, I stayed in the hotel for my last month. That was a shock to me. However, it was a personal shock and had nothing to do with my studies in Madrid.

It total it was great and I can really recommend spending a semester abroad.

Thank you for the interview and good luck for the rest of your studies.