

Hello,

I had the chance to study at the Instituto Politecnico de Castelo Branco in the city of Castelo Branco in Portugal with the Erasmus+ program in the Fall Semester of the 4th grade. Although the idea of studying in another country in Europe was actually something I wanted to do even before I started university, there were also a lot of issues that I was worried about that I did not dare to do it until I came to the last year of my study. The first of these issues was the idea of being separated from the people I loved for a long time because it was a situation that I had never experienced before. Other things that I was worried about were my level of English, especially my speaking level, difficulties I could face academically, and going alone without any of my friends. To be honest, it was my sister who encouraged me to take advantage of this opportunity last year, I had the courage to go to Erasmus through her.

The first month of Erasmus was the process of getting used to the city because Castelo Branco was such a small city that you can discover and finish everywhere in almost a day. I can say that I had the difficulty of adapting from a big and crowded city like Izmir to a small, quiet and calm place. But over time, I met the whole Erasmus group with Erasmus meetings and activities, and I realized that it is a much better opportunity to be in a small place for Erasmus. Because you are so intertwined with everyone and you are planning meetings every day. You are socializing with everyone from Erasmus that even if the city you live in is big or small it doesn't matter anymore. In this respect, I felt very lucky because I both overcame my shyness which was an obstacle to my socialization and improved my English speech by using English in daily life due to these meetings.

If I talk about education at school, to be honest, I came across a much easier education than I expected. At the end of each lesson, lecturers were giving a short summary of the lesson in English for Erasmus students. As Erasmus students, we were preparing assignments, presentations, etc. in English. The studio course was not really challenging compared to ours. We only had one day in a week of the studio and we had no juries during the semester. In IPCB, I can say that lessons are more practical and hand-based than the ones here. Since the school had its own wooden and metal workshops, we learned to use these machines and produced our own project in the workshops. First, our teachers were showing the use of machinery as practical, and then under their supervision, we were also cutting our own parts. Teachers were helping us on machines that were hard to use. The teachers were very understanding and helpful in every subject. They were closely interested in Erasmus students and were always trying to find solutions to any problem.

Atelier Workshop;



Apart from that, one of the biggest factors that I wanted to join the Erasmus+ program was to travel more to Europe. I have never been to Portugal before, so I started my trips starting from Lisbon, Porto, Leiria and Coimbra cities of Portugal. Then I went to San Sebastian because my sister was also in the Erasmus+ program in San Sebastian, Spain. I also went to Barcelona and Madrid in Spain. I spent the New Year in Milan with my sister and my friend. We went to the Azores, the Portuguese Islands, with my friend group that I met from Erasmus, and we visited the whole island with them for a week. Before leaving, we went to my roommate's house in Poland and I had the opportunity to meet her whole family.

Now when I look back, I cannot believe how the months passed so quickly. It always seemed like we had a lot of time there. Even now I miss those days so much. If you have an opportunity to join to Erasmus+ program, I would say to you to take this chance. I have made such beautiful friends that I am sure that we will meet again in the future or we will always be in touch. I admit that everything seemed very scary or impossible before I go but then I saw that they are not. Erasmus was the biggest and most correct decision I could take and encourage in my life. Apart from friendships, places to visit and talent developed, Erasmus's most important contribution to me was to stay in a foreign city with people from another culture and to cope in a completely free environment where I can re-express myself. I can also say that the self-confidence and maturity I have gained are the greatest contributions to me.



Castelo Branco, Portugal



Castelo Branco, Portugal



Porto, Portugal



Leiria, Portugal



Lizbon, Portugal



Belem Tower, Lizbon, Portugal



Castelo Branco, Portugal



Azores, Portugal



Azores, Portugal



Azores, Portugal



Azores, Portugal



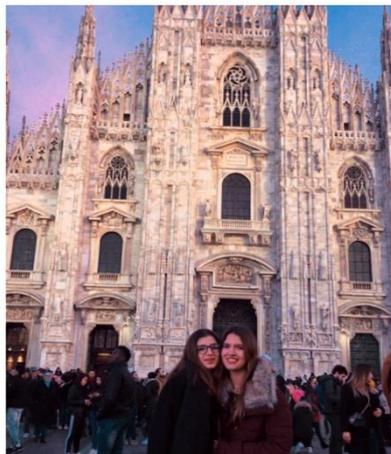
Barcelona, Spain



San Sebastian, Spain



Madrid, Spain



Milano, Italy



Warsaw, Poland