

ERASMUS 2017-2018 FALL SEMESTER
Instituto Politecnico de Castelo Branco|Portekiz
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I'm Aslı Tatlıbaş. In 2017-2018 fall semester i was a part of Erasmus+ Programme during my 7th semester. Even though i heard a lot about it, being a participant was not on my mind until it actually happened and i received my acceptance letter from Instituto Politecnico de Castelo Branco. One of the reasons why i chose Portugal was it's rare culture, which we do not get to see very often, even though it is a European country. Having the opportunity to experience the culture, the language and the historical texture of this country as a part of the community was so much different than being a tourist.

Erasmus experience is something very special. Aside from its academic gains, it helps you grow as a human being and allows you to make friends from different parts of the world. I have always thought for someone who studies design, it is important to experience different mindsets and different visions as a part of the process and Erasmus was a great opportunity for me to do that. It allowed me to be a part of a pattern and environment of education different than i have already seen and experienced in my university. In my opinion, the classes i took during my Erasmus gave me a lot and helped me evolve.

Living abroad was uneasy in the beginning but it was easy to get used to it and blend in with the help of people who are actually very willing to help. As i was living in a small city i was able to meet with all of the Erasmus students and made a lot of friends from all over the world. It was great to learn about a lot of different cultures from people who actually were born and raised in those cultures because it is very different than reading about them. I was always interested in learning different languages. Before i went to Portugal for my erasmus i was taking an online Spanish course and when i was there i had the opportunity to practice with the people i met there and my interest into the language grew even more.

One of the best parts of being an erasmus student is to be able to travel a lot. I had the chance to travel different locations of Portugal like; Algarve region which is very famous with its beaches, Lisbon the capital of Portugal, Porto, Aveiro, Coimbra and many small cities and villages. Portugal is a great country with its natural beauty and its historical past. I was amazed by the way they preserved their history and carried it to this day. During my travels through Portugal i was lucky enough to hear stories from local people which made my travels very valuable for me. Also i had the opportunity to travel to different countries during Christmas break. In those 2 weeks i travelled through Germany, The Netherlands and Belgium. Christmas and Christmas markets are taken very seriously in these countries and i got to see some of the worlds best christmas markets and had the chance to try traditional christmas foods in these countries.

Being able to visit some of the most valuable artworks of the world and museums, observing the architecture and the daily life in this special time was an unforgettable experience.

Even though i had my doubts and fears before i went i am glad i took this opportunity because when you return the only thing that matters is the experience you had. The memories, the friendships and the dreams that came true. Erasmus was one of the biggest decisions of my life and it sure was the best.