

ERASMUS 2023-2024 FALL SEMESTER Instituto Politecnico de Castelo Branco | Portugal Esra İPEK

Hello, I am Esra İPEK.

As a third year student of Interior Architecture and Environmental Design, I spent a semester of my education with the Erasmus program at Instituto Politecnico de Castelo Branco, located in Castelo Branco, one of the smallest settlements in Portugal. The Erasmus+ Program provided a way to live in a different country and share the daily life of local people, as well as learn about their traditions. Meeting new people and making international friendships was also one of the beautiful aspects of this experience. It was very enjoyable to meet with students from different countries and share things with them. I made friendships that will last for many years from this experience and it was really valuable to me.

Castelo Branco is a small, student-friendly city. Despite its size, it was a sweet place filled with friendly and welcoming people. When I was leaving, I had many questions in my mind, both about the city and about adapting, but everything went very smoothly, and everyone there really helped in my adventure. Now, looking back, I am glad I went.

I also had many questions about the education before going, but the education here is focused more on workshops and production rather than studio courses. In the studio class, which takes place once a week, we did not frequently present before juries; instead, we received our critiques and made a presentation at the end of the semester. Workshop classes were one of the most enjoyable parts of my education. Being involved in production and creating what I had envisioned was a very instructive process.

One of the biggest factors in joining the Erasmus+ program was my desire to explore Europe more. First, I visited many cities in Portugal with my friends. Afterwards, I had the chance to visit several countries such as Spain, Italy, France, the Netherlands, and Belgium. Each one was unique and impressive. It was a truly wonderful feeling to approach each city with a different perspective and leave with a more enriched outlook. Experiencing different cultures and meeting different people was also very valuable..

In short, definitely leave your worries aside and embark on this adventure.