

My Erasmus semester at the Universidad de Murcia



Applying for study place

I study International Business English and the year abroad is compulsory for me. I decided to split the year into one semester of studying abroad (WS 23/24) and one semester of doing an internship (SS 24). I started with the planning of my semester abroad approximately six months before leaving Germany. The first step was to choose the university. I chose the Universidad de Murcia because I always wanted to go to Spain due to their climate, their culture, and way of living. The application for a study place and the Erasmus funding was very easy because the International Business office and the International Office took on all the paperwork and helped with emerging questions.

Courses at the University

Round about three months before the start of the semester, I had to choose the different courses in Spain. Their studies are split into year 1,2,3, and 4. Every year has two semesters starting with the winter semester, so I had to choose from the first semester of each year. Courses either give 4.5 or 6 ECTS. I only chose courses from the third and fourth year because they matched my studies in Germany the best.

The courses are all very practical and include lots of homework, deadlines, mid-terms, and presentations. In general, the study system at the Universidad de Murcia is very different to the German study system. Additionally, almost everything is getting graded under a continuous evaluation. Especially, when the exam season started, it was challenging to get everything under one roof. It really took me some time to adapt to the Spanish system after studying years in the German one. In general, the relationship between professors and students is more familiar. For example, they introduce themselves only with their first name and expect that the students only approach them with their first name.

Additionally, I wanted to participate in an intensive Spanish course to improve my Spanish skills. The university made me do a level test to see which level I already had and how they can help me to improve. The test included MC-questions about grammar and an oral exam with a Spanish teacher. However, I was unable to attend the course because it overlapped with courses of mine and additionally was in another building of the University approximately 20 minutes away from the Campus Espinardo where the economic faculty is situated.

Finding an apartment

There are several options to search for apartments in Murcia. I would suggest finding a shared apartment in or around the city center. There is a student housing right next to Campus Espinardo but this is situated approximately 5 km outside of the city center. On the one hand the location is very convenient to go to university but on the other hand there is nothing going on outside the city and the busses and tram don't operate the whole night. I found a student housing, called El Recreo, right in the middle of the center where they have multiple shared apartments which are very modern. If you don't want to live right in the city center, the districts El Carmen or Vistabella are nice but quite far away to the campus. Apartments close to Plaza Circular are very good connected to the tram.

Additionally, there is a housing service, called Vimur, offered by the Universidad de Murcia but I found it easier to search on my own. Some friends of mine found their rooms on the webpage Idealista.

Arriving in Murcia

The best way to commute to Murcia, is the airport of Alicante. Afterwards there is a shuttlebus company, called Alsa, that connects the airport to Murcia. They are very reliable. Murcia also has an airport but there are usually only national flights.

Furthermore, the Universidad de Murcia has a very detailed webpage where you can log in and there is every important information listed.



Living in Murcia

The region of Murcia is one of the hottest in Europe. I was there from September to January and the temperatures were almost never under 18 degrees. There is a lot of sunshine, and it almost never rains. In the summer temperatures over 40 degrees are possible.

Murcia itself is the seventh biggest city in Spain and is very calm with a lot of sights and festivities during the year. Restaurants and bars are everywhere and have low to middle ranged prices. In general, the prices in Murcia are lower than in Germany.

Very important is the “Siesta”, which means that between 14:00 and 17:00 a lot of stores, restaurants, and bars are closed or only offer drinks. Usually, the restaurants open their kitchens at around 19:00 or 20:00. The food in Murcia is very good and mostly typical Spanish. Specialties are “Ensaladilla rusa murciana” and “Paparajotes” which you definitely should try. However, there are also a lot of restaurants with different type of cuisines.

Furthermore, there is the ESN Murcia which organizes a lot of parties, events, and trips. It is easy to apply for a membership. However, it is very easy to organize trips on your own. A lot of beaches are only 40-60 minutes with for example the shuttle busses away. Additionally, cities like Alicante, Granada, Cartagena, or Valencia are not far away and easily connected.

To commute in Murcia, I would suggest getting a student card combining the buses and the tram. With this card a tram ride is only 20 cents and the bus 30 cents.

Overall, Murcia is a relaxed city with very friendly people which makes it easy to connect with the Spanish culture and lifestyle.