

Erasmus+ Mobility Report: Experience in Portugal

My Erasmus+ mobility program in Portugal was a valuable experience that allowed me to grow academically, culturally, and personally. This report outlines my journey, including my studies at ISLA Santarém, cultural discoveries, challenges faced, and key takeaways from the program.

The main goals of my Erasmus+ mobility were:

- To expand my academic knowledge in an international environment.
- To experience cultural exchange and develop language skills.
- To enhance my professional and personal competencies.
- To understand different educational approaches and methodologies.

I studied at ISLA Santarém, a university known for its high-quality education. The courses were engaging, and the teaching methods encouraged active learning. Studying in a smaller city provided a focused academic environment where I had the opportunity to collaborate with international students, participate in interactive classes, and gain new perspectives on my field of study. Additionally, I worked on various projects that enhanced my problem-solving and analytical skills. The professors were supportive and encouraged discussions, which made the learning experience even more engaging.

Living in Santarém allowed me to explore Portuguese culture firsthand. Some of the highlights included:

- Discovering the historical charm of Santarém and its surroundings.
- Enjoying traditional Portuguese cuisine and cultural events.
- Traveling to Lisbon on weekends, where I visited famous landmarks and experienced the vibrant city life.
- Participating in local festivals and engaging with the local community.
- Meeting students from diverse backgrounds and exchanging cultural insights.

At ISLA Santarém, I engaged in various extracurricular activities that enriched my experience. Some of these included:

- Attending guest lectures and workshops on business, management, and international relations.
- Participating in student-led discussions and collaborative research projects.
- Engaging in networking events that connected me with professionals and fellow students.

Apart from academic activities, I also spent time in the central part of Santarém, where I:

- Explored historic sites such as the Church of Santa Maria de Marvila and the Portas do Sol viewpoint.
- Visited museums that showcased Portuguese art and history.
- Took part in outdoor activities like hiking and nature walks in the nearby landscapes.
- Enjoyed the relaxed atmosphere of local cafés and experienced the welcoming nature of the people.

During my time in Portugal, I actively participated in sports, particularly volleyball. I competed in a championship at the Ismaili Sport Festival in Lisbon, where I secured first place. This experience was incredibly rewarding, as it allowed me to showcase my skills, connect with fellow athletes, and be part of an international sporting event. Playing volleyball also helped me stay active and build friendships with people from different backgrounds.

Despite the enriching experience, I faced a few challenges:

- The language barrier made some daily interactions challenging, though I gradually adapted.
- Adjusting to a new educational system required some effort and flexibility.
- Adapting to cultural differences and social norms took time but ultimately helped me grow.
- Managing time between studies, travel, and social activities was sometimes difficult but taught me valuable organizational skills.

My Erasmus+ mobility significantly contributed to my development in multiple ways:

- Improved communication and cross-cultural understanding.
- Greater adaptability and problem-solving skills.
- Enhanced teamwork and collaboration abilities.
- A broader global outlook on education and business practices.
- Strengthened independence and ability to navigate new environments confidently.
- Gained discipline and teamwork skills through sports participation.

Overall, my Erasmus+ experience in Portugal was transformative. The welcoming environment of Santarém, the high standard of education at ISLA Santarém, and the cultural immersion contributed to a truly rewarding journey. The pleasant weather added to the comfort of my stay, and my trips to Lisbon made the experience even more exciting. The various activities, both academic and recreational, allowed me to fully engage with the local culture and broaden my horizons. Additionally, my success in the volleyball championship at the Ismaili Sport Festival was a highlight of my experience, reinforcing the importance of teamwork and perseverance. I highly encourage other students to take part in Erasmus+ programs to gain international exposure and personal growth.

