

**EXCHANGE REPORT****Name****Year and term for exc**

Luis

Fall 2023

Exchange university

TU Eindhoven

Degree programme

Computer Science MSc

Climbing in the multi-cultural flatland

Before departure

As an international Master's student at KTH, I was motivated to experience a third academic environment and further expand my knowledge of the academic landscape in Europe. For this I chose the Netherlands, since I have found the country interesting due to its bicycle culture and multiculturalism. However, due to the constant rain I would not like to live there long-term. Originally, I applied to TU Delft. However, the grades from my first semester at KTH were not released in time for this application. I never expected this to be a problem, having had strict grade submission deadlines at my previous university. Due to this delay, I then submitted a late application to my next available choice, TU Eindhoven. As an EU citizen, preparations were not really needed apart from finding accommodation, which you can apply for through the university. Here, you will be entered into a lottery system. I was lucky enough to win this lottery and be offered accommodation. One then receives an email, where you choose your desired room category and pay the full 6 months' rent in a single payment online. So be prepared for this large payment (~4000€ in my case for the cheapest room available one day after receiving the offer).

Upon arrival

I arrived the day before the exchange student introduction afternoon. Here, we received an introductory presentation about general university services, student and sport clubs, and life in the Netherlands. The following day the Math and Computer Science student union organized an additional exchange student introduction day for their students. During this day, we were shown around the city of Eindhoven, had a typical Friettafel (deep-fried food directly on the table) for lunch, and went out for beers in the evening. I found my friend groups through these events and would definitely recommend attending them.

Financials

I received the Erasmus scholarship from KTH, which helped with the higher accommodation cost compared to SSSB (~650€/month in student housing). Food and general life was about the same price as in Sweden. The Student Sports Center (SSC) in Eindhoven costs about 100€ per semester for entrance to a gym, pool, etc and allows you to join associated sports clubs. The clubs usually have an additional member fee of ~30€ per semester. I definitely recommend the SSC subscription and to join a sports club. Additionally, I joined the Math and Computer Science student union for 30€ for the semester. However, the student union is very Dutch and it is difficult to feel included as an international student. The trains in the Netherlands become quite expensive when used often. For regular commuting, I would buy a subscription from NL (the Dutch train company), and for sightseeing trips I would buy a group ticket. Both of these options make it quite affordable.

Accommodation

The application for accommodation was included in the Mobility Online process from TU Eindhoven. I then received an email with an offer for accommodation. The email included a link to a platform, where I could choose my room category and directly pay the entire semester's rent for it. This international student housing includes furniture and kitchen utensils, so no big purchases are necessary upon arrival. However, you do need to rent/buy a bike. My room was 15 minutes away from campus by bike, which is perfect for me.

University and studies

TU Eindhoven is the second largest technical university in the Netherlands and offers wide range of technical subjects. The university campus is large and modern, with lots of greenery throughout and situated close the Central Station of Eindhoven. Studies at TU Eindhoven employ challenge-based learning, meaning small to medium projects throughout the courses. TU Eindhoven is a very international university and almost all courses are in English (except for a few Bachelor's level courses). Language courses are offered and some of my friends attended the Dutch beginner's class with good results.

Courses

I chose the following courses (5 ECTS each) to correspond to my remaining credit requirements of my degree with a custom track in Networking and only 20 remaining credits: Architecture of distributed systems (2IMN10): Introduction to theoretical Distributed Systems concepts. Projects were only loosely connected to the topics. Internet of Things (2IMN15): Continuation of 2IMN10, focusing on IoT protocols, knowledge directly applied in a project implementing an energy-aware room lighting control application. Vehicle Networking (5AIC0): In-depth studying of automotive networking concepts and protocols, accompanied by a project implementing some aspects of the CAN-Bus protocol. Interconnected Resource-aware Intelligent Systems Seminar (2IMN05): Individual research project to prepare for a Master's thesis, topic determined in collaboration with the professor before applying for the course, hard work for 5 credits and intensive supervision (weekly meeting with 2 professors and myself only)

City and country

Eindhoven is a medium-sized city with a modern history. The city exploded in the 1900s, when the Philips light bulb factory expanded massively. Philips and its subsidiary ASML still have large offices in town and are generous sponsors to many student projects at TU Eindhoven. The city is perfectly sized for cycling everywhere. The culture-shock should be minimal coming from Sweden, since both are international, european cultures.

Leisure and social activities

As mentioned before, the Sports Centre provides a great value sports offering, including many sports clubs. I joined the alpinism club and attended regular climbing trainings multiple times per week. The club also organized parties and a skiing trip, offering great possibilities to make friends. Most friends outside of the alpinism club were exchange students, whom I met during the introduction events. Since TU Eindhoven is a proud international university, it offers many events for international students, has an international student union and it is generally quite easy to find friends as an exchange student.

Sustainability

The bicycle infrastructure in the Netherlands is best in Europe and allows all trips within Eindhoven to be done by bike. For further trips, one bikes to the train station and has regular train connections to Germany, Belgium and the rest of the Netherlands for an okay price (for visiting cities in the Netherlands I recommend going with friends and buying a group ticket!).

Other recommendations and observations

Take into account the weather in the Netherlands, fall is typically quite rainy.