

**Exchange university**

Politecnico di Torino

**Degree programme**

Electrical Engineering at Politecnico di Torino (Electric Power Engineering at KTH)

## Turin, a hidden gem in Italy

### Before departure

I had heard from other students and my family about the amazing opportunity of going abroad on exchange studies with Erasmus so it was quite an easy decision for me to apply. The choice of Italy was due to several reasons; I wanted to be close to the Alps to be able to ski, felt that the culture of Italy was intriguing, the food and the weather. Before, I thought that the studies would be a bit easier and influenced by the more relaxed southern European culture, but it became evident quite quickly that Politecnico di Torino was a university of rang and the studies of high quality, much like KTH.

### Upon arrival

I arrived a couple of days before the introduction for exchange students in order to explore the city a bit. The week before the school started there were a lot of events organized by the school and by the Erasmus student organization, such as exploring the city, going to museums and clubbing. One thing that can be good to know is that one is required to get an Italian “fiscal number”. During the introduction week the university organizes time slots to get the fiscal number via the university; be sure to book that on Politecnico’s student portal site “Portale della ditattica” quite early because otherwise all the slots might be taken as it was in my case and then you have to go to the immigration center in the city to get the fiscal number which is a bit more of a hassle.

### Financials

In terms of scholarship I received the Erasmus scholarship which I guess all European students who does an Erasmus exchange in Europe get. That scholarship covered almost all my rent for the entire stay. Italy was cheaper than Sweden, especially the food and drinks. The lunch food offered at the school canteen was very cheap (2,5 euros per lunch) so I ate there a lot and barely ever had to prepare lunch during the weekdays which was great.

### Accommodation

Regarding accommodation I found a room through the Erasmus student housing portal (<https://erasmusu.com/en/student-housing>) in a 6-room apartment. The apartment was rented out by a company called Stanza Semplice which I can really recommend. I had good and transparent contact with them through WhatsApp (everybody uses WhatsApp in Italy, even companies via company WhatsApp numbers). The university could also help to find accommodation so it is not too hard to find rooms. However, one should try find a room/apartment early so that one can get it in a nice neighbourhood such as in San Salvario, Crocetta or Quadrilatero. I payed 550 euros/month in rent and I think a one-time payment of around 360 euros for the apartment manager fee. However, I

did not have to pay a deposit. My apartment was in San Salvario which I can recommend; it is quite close to the university (around a 25 min walk) and close to the Valentino park which is very beautiful.

### **University and studies**

It became clear quite early that the university had a good reputation and that the quality of studies was quite high. I study electric power engineering at KTH and thus I was mapped to the electrical department at Politecnico di Torino. One had to take at least 18 credits of courses that belonged to the department one was in, so I took three courses that were linked to the electrical department. Some differences to KTH was that there was a lot less projects and small tasks during the semester, but the final exam period was a lot longer and tougher; the final exams were not tougher in quality but since all courses during the semester had their final exams in the same exam period it became a lot more to study (compared to KTH where the semester is divided into two periods and hence, each final exam period only consist of courses worth of 15 credits). One thing to note about the university was that it had few study places and the library was very small so it was quite difficult to find a place to study. We Swedes finally found a lab called "Labinf" where there were usually spots available and studied there.

### **Courses**

I would say that about one third of the master courses offered were in English so there was not a lot to choose from. I had two to three classes in each course every week. The credits are already in ECTS so it is easy to transfer to KTH. These were the courses I took:

01SBDNC: (8 ECTS) Propulsion of Hybrid and Electric Vehicles: Interesting course and not too tough. However, the examination was based on a very big project that was done throughout the course and took quite a lot of time.

01SRQNC: (8 ECTS) Laboratory of Power Converters and Electrical Drives: Quite a tough course. Very good and interested teachers. Did a lot of laboratories (however, no lab reports) so a lot of practical skills were developed. The final exam was based on a final project and an oral exam.

01UQONC: (10 ECTS) e-Transition, Sustainability and Economics: This course was the easiest of the electrical courses even though it was a 10-credit course. It was quite an interesting course. The final exam was based on a group project and a written exam.

02NDLLZ: (6 ECTS) Italian language course: The other courses took a lot of time so I didn't really go to the Italian classes. I studied a little bit for the exam (which consisted of 50 multiple choice questions). I had heard it was going to be easy, but it wasn't as easy as I expected so one probably needs to put a little effort into it after all.

### **City and country**

Italy is a beautiful and fun country to live in and Turin does indeed fit into that description. Turin is located close to the Alps so if you are interested in skiing, mountaineering or climbing, Turin is certainly a place for you. Furthermore, Turin is a very pleasant city to live in; not too big and not too small and there is a lot to do and a quite a lot of energy at the same time as being quite a calm city. My family and friends who visited all liked Turin and was impressed by the city. Moreover, many Italian cities are overcrowded by tourists but Turin is not one of those cities, it is a hidden gem in Italy. Most Italians that I met in Turin said that Milan was not a nice city to live in (too crowded, expensive and too much traffic) and they all agreed that Turin was a better city to live in (I think KTH has exchange programs with Turin, Milan and Bologna). To be fair I visited Milan and thought it was pretty nice also but the word of mouth among Italians was that Turin is a lot better. Moreover, Italians are very nice and friendly and I felt welcomed in the country. Some culture differences that became clear were the time of eating dinner and not being on time for meetings/classes etc.

### **Leisure and social activities**

I went skiing a lot. Bardonecchia is very close to Turin and one can go there over the day (about an hour and 20 min train ride from Turin). Also close to Turin is Sestriere which is a big and beautiful ski resort. If you are able to go a little bit further, I would recommend the three valleys of

Champoluc/Gressoney/Alagna; insanely good skiing and extremely pretty. If it is warmer I strongly recommend you to go to the coast of Leguria; amazing nature and water and many small cities to explore. In Turin, San Salvario is a great place to go to bars as well as restaurants. In San Salvario there is also the Valentino Park where many people hang out. Moreover, the Erasmus student organization organizes a lot of events in bars and clubs. If you like electronic music I recommend you going to Kappa FuturFestival which is in the beginning of July.

#### **Other recommendations and observations**

Best pizza: The burrata pizza in the restaurant “Libery Pizza & Artigianal Beer”.

Best gelato: Casa Marchetti - Alberto Marchetti (try the Fior di Latte gelato).