



RSM, Erasmus University – Spring 2011

- **Rotterdam**

Rotterdam is a city in the Dutch province of South-Holland, situated in the west of The Netherlands and part of the Randstad. The city is the second largest in the country (behind Amsterdam), with a population of approximately 600,000 people. The city has 1.3 million inhabitants in its metropolitan area.

The port of Rotterdam is the largest in Europe. From 1962 to 2004, it was the world's busiest port; then it was superseded by Shanghai.

Rotterdam is known as a city of architecture. A few square kilometers of the city centre offers a complete overview of what the twentieth century has produced in terms of modern architecture.

The city was destroyed during World War II and rebuilt; therefore none of the old and unique architecture remained, as in Amsterdam. There are many students in the city, domestic and foreign, so there are many activities for students and rich nightlife.



- **Visa information**

Israeli citizens who wish to study in the Netherlands for a period greater than - 3 months have to worry about two things:

- 1) A student visa - passport stamped and valid for 3 months.
- 2) Residence permit - get it in the municipality after your arrival, it is normally valid until the end of the studies (not necessary).

The cost is about € 430 and you can get a refund from the University for about € 215. The University helps to care for them both so it's not too complicated. It involves a bit of running around, for example going to the bank and the embassy, and therefore, I recommend dealing with it long enough in advance.

- **Housing:**

I lived in the "International House" which is provided by the university and organization named "Stadswonen" for students aboard. It costs 600 euro per month and if you decide to live there it's important to register early. It is 10 minutes from the University and close to everything. Also many students from the program are living there.

The other option is to rent an apartment with roommates; the average rent is between 400 to 500 euro. I recommend renting if it is in the university's neighborhood, close to the "I-House", where most of the students live.

- **Living expenses:**

My living expenses were around 2000€ for one month:

Rent= 600€

Food= 200€

Expenses= 600€

Travels =500€

- **Transportation**

Inside Rotterdam:

Option 1-bike: One of the main attractions of the Netherlands. Cool weather and the flat surface made the bike very popular transportation tool. There are bike paths everywhere. I strongly recommend buying a bike on arrival. This is part of the experience; it's the first thing you should do when you arrive to Rotterdam.

If you live in the "I house", there is always a junky that will come there and sale you a bike for 10-20 euro. Another option is to find someone that you heard about him from friends, it will cost you 30-50 euro. Second hand bike from the store is about 80-100 euro. There is also a new option to buy it through the web site: <http://www.fietstrade.nl/bicycles> which you can use also in the end to sell them.

Option 2- tram: One Ride at the tram cost around 1.5 euro and it goes all over the city.

You should buy a card at the train station when you arrive to Rotterdam and charge it. The magnetic card can be bought at € 7 and can be charged with money as needed. It can be used for any urban transportation (tram, metro, bus) .

Outside Rotterdam:

Option 1- trains: To travel around Holland you need to use the trains. The trains are pretty expensive in Holland (train to Amsterdam costs around 20 euro for one side) so if you are planning to travel a lot you should buy a

student card (between 50-80 euro) which gives you and 3 more friends 40% discount for each ride (you need to have local bank account).

Option 2- flights: there are chip flights to all over Europe which are much recommended: Easyjet, Ryanair, Transavia, Vueling, Wizz Air- more at: <http://www.etn.nl/lcosteur.htm>.

- **Travel in Europe**

There are so many attractive destinations in Europe you cannot possibly catch them all; Because of the cheap airlines, you can plan trips of long weekends anywhere you want in Europe at affordable prices. Small advice is to book a ticket as early as possible in advance; this may lower the price. Partners are usually not hard to find, especially among the foreign student population. You only need to ask in the pub who wants to come, most people are spontaneous. I recommend jumping on every opportunity that comes and looks tempting.

- **Phone**

The University will supply you a SIM of Liberia to your phone which you can charge for any amount you need. It's the chip option and many of the students use this company also.

- **About the university**

Erasmus University is intended for students from the EU, therefore the lectures are in English. The University has an office for foreign students and they are intended to advise and help you with what you need and they can answer all your questions buy e-mails before you arrive .

In addition, any foreign student gets his arrival help local student (Buddy) aims to assist students in acclimating. Near the beginning of the semester, the University is organizing a trip to familiarity (Integration trip) to students who come to exchange students. This is helpful to break the ice and meet new friends. I believe that it is very important to participate at this trip which the program offers. You will meet there your friends to this period and will have a great time.

- **Courses:**

Spring semester begins in January and ends in May. Semesters do not coincide with those of Tel Aviv and that could create problems. So you need to plan carefully the courses in the country and abroad. Faculty tends to help students in the exchange program and if you miss a test because of the trip you are entitled to take a special date.

Most of the courses include attendance at lectures, participating in class, plenty of reading material (e.g. students are required to read an average of about 50 pages for each lecture), homework (usually in teams), case studies, and sometimes students are required to prepare presentations and present them in class.

My first course was Strategic Management Consulting which is highly recommended but it requires a lot of work: reading and weekly assignment as well as a big project for a real company and a final exam.

The second course was International Management which was pretty boring but it's a short course (only ten meetings) and not requires a lot of effort.

During the entire semester I did the International Business Project. The success of this project depends on your team and company. You need to be ready to invest a lot of effort and time.

I recommended doing two courses without the IBP. The companies are usually small and the issues are not always business issues; but if you are looking forward to this experience it's better to do with the IBP only one course in the first period, you probably want to travel more when the weather is better.

The score of the courses is in units of ECTS that are in accordance with a uniform European standard. 10 ECTS correspond roughly to two YC Recanati terms of credit score. Each semester is divided into two blocks of 6 weeks; most courses are during one block and equal 10 ECTS. Most students learn to 20-30 ECTS per semester.

ESN

There is an organization on behalf of the university called ESN which arrange social activities of foreign students. The organization takes care of a variety of activities from evening activities to the package holiday; all at affordable prices for students. The organization emphasizes on the Dutch experience points and a combination of foreign students in it. It is strongly recommended to follow and catch up with the organization's activities.

General experience:

The exchange program was one time experience for me and I enjoyed every second of it.

I met great friends from around the world, learned about other cultures and experienced a lot. I travel all over Europe (Germany, Poland, Paris, Barcelona, Prague, Canary Islands and more) and inside Holland in only four months.

⇒ **For more information you can contact me at adiostry1@gmail.com or at 054-7872262.**

Have Fun and good luck,

Adi Ostry