



EISTI - Student Exchange

École Ingénieur De Science Et De Traitement De l'Information

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“MANY BELIEVE THE GRASS TO BE GREENER ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE FENCE, AND IN MY CASE THE GRASS WAS GREENER, LITTLE DID I KNOW THAT THE GRASS WAS ARTIFICIAL, MADE OUT OF PLASTIC.”

INTRODUCTION

My school of choice was EISTI, situated in Cergy, France, do note when reading that I chose this school because my mother studied there, and I am half French, half Icelandic.

This report is separated into two parts, the first is general information about the school, French school system, last but not least practical information about staying in Cergy, Paris and everything else that might come in handy when going to study close to Paris. The second part talks about my experience at EISTI, what problems I faced from departure, until the end of the school year.

GENERAL AND PRACTICAL INFORMATION

About The School

E.I.S.T.I. (École Internationale des Sciences du Traitement de l'Information) is a private college, founded in 1983 in Cergy Pontoise, France, which is 30 km away from the center of Paris. A second campus was added in 2011 in Pau, France. The number of undergrad students is around 360, and graduate students is not far from 700 a year. The school is in Class A in France, which is the best ranking you can get and it is ranked between 13-15th in computer science in France. E.I.S.T.I. Quickly specialized in Finance, Computer Science and mixing it with Applied mathematics, they are best known for their masters degree in Business Intelligence - though they offer various others see here: <http://masteres.eisti.fr/>.

Difference In Study Structure Between France And Iceland

First thing that is important to know is that in France you don't talk about Bachelors and Masters degrees, you talk about cycle préparatoire and cycle ingénieur, this is a purely French system. The "classes préparatoires aux grandes écoles" (CPGE), commonly called "classes prépas" or "prépas", are a two-year curriculum extensible to three-years, created specifically to train undergraduate

students for enrollment in one of the “grandes écoles”. The “grandes écoles” of France are higher education establishments aside from the mainstream public universities, they usually emphasize on one subject area, such as engineering or business, and are highly selective of their student body. In order to get into these schools there is a long evaluation period, with national exams, oral exam at every institute etc.

Once you are done with your “prépa” and accepted in one of the “grandes écoles” you applied to, you can finally choose what subject area to study. Once in a “grandes écoles” after a year you get the equivalent of a bachelors degree, but the system is created in such a way that you have to finish 3 years of study to get a diploma, then you get the equivalent of a masters degree..

The problem going there as an exchange student is due to the radically different structure in France from most of the world. For those who are going to study in a “grandes écoles” in France will have a hard time finding what year to enter. Students that have already chosen their field of study will not belong in prépas, and normal studies in a “grandes écoles” start at the 3rd year of a bachelors degree. Another problem faced by students that were not in a prépas before entering a “grandes écoles” is that they won't have the same mathematical level as their peers (they have a radically different approach on mathematics in France as well) but they will be bored out of their mind because the students from prépas have studied little as nothing in selective fields such as computer science, finance, etc. People will be coming from different prépas, with different emphasis, so the first year is a common track to even out such differences, so you will have little to study in your selective field.

This is something you have to have in mind when applying to a school in France, and do know it will be problematic, there is a lot of formalities and administration in French schools, tailoring a solution to your needs will not be worth the hassle.

Study Structure of “Les Grandes Écoles”

The structure is very different in “les grandes écoles”, the first year you spend at school, while in the second year and third you alternate between school and internships or what they call “stage” in France - this is something the universities can't evaluate as credits, at least not in my case. Another cause for concern since you spend very little time in school, they cover many courses in little detail, and the rest of the time is spent in an internship, so you get few credits evaluated. Getting an internship is a very difficult task as an exchange student because most places need you to speak French. Getting classes evaluated is an almost impossible task, they will

evaluate them as “optional” credits, and every student has a limited amount of those, and would probably like to use them for something other than mandatory courses at the exchange university for material they have probably studied to some extent before.

Ideology and Structure of E.I.S.T.I.

The ideology of EISTI, when it was founded, was that each and every individual would have the necessary skills and knowledge to be able to found their own company. With that being said you study a lot of different subjects, communication, finance, accounting, and spend less time in computer science, which often may be the area of study of your choice. Many of the former students from the beginning of EISTI have done exactly that, led or otherwise created their own companies. At EISTI you have 1-2 projects per semester, and their duration is almost all the semester, and is related to a couple of fields you are studying all at the same time.

This again causes a lot of problems, because we spend little time in classes in computer science, each class worth 1 - 2.5 ECTS they are not compatible with the normal 6 ECTS courses as in Reykjavík University, so these courses will be evaluated almost solemnly as optional credits and can't be evaluated for similar classes at Reykjavík University. The semester projects are simply not evaluated for any credits, and this often represents the biggest part of your workload. Since you will be studying a lot of subjects not strictly related to your field, you will be behind in your area of study once you come back, though, not purely negative as you will learn other subjects, though that might not be what you are seeking.

Yet another thing to note is that you don't need to pass with the minimal 10/20 grade in every exam, the courses are structured by sections, if the average in each section is over 10/20 they consider you to have passed all the exams, the average is weighted by the number of hours you pass in a given subject within the section. So for example in one section you could have Computer Architecture, Numerical Analysis, Linear Algebra, Integration, and you can fail linear algebra and integration with 5/10 while you have the adequate grades in computer architectures and numerical analysis, you pass all the courses.

Academic Calendar, Housing, Tricks of The Trade and Everything Else

Academic Calendar

First semester starts in mid September and ends in end of January, the second semester in beginning of February and ends in end of June, though this only applies to first year students, the calendars are shaped differently for each and every year. Exams for the second semester are in end of January, and for those who want or need to re-take exams they do so in end of February, which is very common in France. The exams in the second semester are in beginning of June and the re-take exams in the end of June.

Traveling To France

Traveling to Paris is fairly easy, but beware in august the tickets are very expensive, the sooner you get your tickets the better, the prices are much lower in beginning of september, something to have in mind when making travel arrangements. There are direct flights all year long from Keflavík, the Icelandic airlines are very expensive in this period so I would recommend a company like Transavia a subsidiary of Air France. To get to Cergy from the airport it is easiest to take a bus, number 9500 if I am not mistaken, rather than taking the RER B to Paris and then RER A to Cergy.

Housing

EISTI offers you a couple of different housing options, I would personally recommend Résidence La Boucle de l'Oise which is in a city close by called Neuville, one station in RER A (train) - a list of available residences comes with the information package of the school. I have seen the other residences and they are in such a horrible state that it is simply not worth mentioning. Do note that in these residences that internet is simply horrible, skype doesn't even work, so I would recommend going to SFR (télécommunications company) and simply getting what they called "La Box" for internet, it is about 30 euros a month.

For those who wish to live in Paris, it is possible, I lived in Paris myself but housing is very expensive, and you'll have to take the train every day to school, just remember to live close to RER A, if that is a possibility for you don't hesitate. Living in Paris is an extraordinary thing compared to Cergy, though a nice place, it is not Paris.

You can apply for financial aid for housing in France called "CAF" which is important to know, but you can only ask for it once settled in a room and have a French bank account. You won't receive this money right away, but it is more than worth it, for half a year it can cover about a months rent.

The best housing I have seen was for students at EBI (École Biologique Industrielle), they have a partnership with alogessec, something to have in mind when looking for accommodation, the residence was called Les Linandes Oranges. Here are a few websites to look for rooms yourself: www.appartager.com, www.pap.fr, www.loceservice.fr, www.entrepaticulliers.com.

Public Transportation

For those who don't live in Paris and think they'll travel a lot to Paris and its vicinity I recommend getting a Navigo. It comes in very handy, you would take a Navigo for zone 4-5 for those who live in Cergy, for those who think they'll be spending a lot of time in Paris on weekdays, take for Zone 1-5. For zone 1-5 it is about 70 euros/month but you have access to all trains and buses. For those who'll take a Navigo only for their zones do know that on national holidays and weekends the Navigo works everywhere, so you can go to Paris over the weekend, this is something that most students simply don't know, which is a shame. From Cergy taking the RER A to Paris takes about 50 minutes and runs until midnight. A single train ticket from Cergy to Paris is 6 euros at the time of this writing.

Traveling In France

For those who wish to travel around France while on vacation, you have numerous holidays in France, the best way would be with the TGV (high speed train) or normal trains. The thing to note is that in France you need to plan ahead, they open for train tickets 3 months in advance, and they only increase with price as time goes by. If you get your tickets early you can get tickets for as low as 25 euros for the TGV. Otherwise you can take domestic flights with Air France, they are often cheaper than TGV tickets if you buy your tickets late.

Social Activities

The amount of social activities is very limited at EISTI, they do have parties with EBI which is a biological school which consists of girls mostly, while EISTI the opposite. They have ski week, which is astonishingly not a holiday, they will not mark your absences if you go with the school - I recently heard that this activity will be cancelled indefinitely.

What I would recommend if you want to have a good time and get to know people is to go to Pub Crawl at la Bastille in Paris. It is a great way to get to know

people and have a good time. They have regular couchsurfing events for language sharing which is another good place to get to know people. There are free dance classes at cité universitaire, which is an awesome way to enjoy a good evening, but often too crowded.

There are so many other things that I could list for social activities in Paris such as museums, and free Jazz nights at la Bastille, the marché de noelle at la défense and les champs elysée, the endless exposés at cité des sciences and the list goes on. If you have no idea what to do simply buy a brochure called “le journal des spectacles” which has a list of all kinds of activities for a week and costs around 50 cents.

THE ERASMUS EXPERIENCE

The Why? And The What?

After being one semester at the University of Reykjavík I soon decided to go to Paris as an Erasmus student. My mother often talked about her studies in Paris at EISTI, I also had the opportunity to meet a lot of her former classmates, I was fascinated with the people I met, they were all masters of their craft. After what I had heard about EISTI I thought it would be great to go there as an exchange student and living on my own. But one of the main reasons I left for Europe was trying to find like minded people and making connections around the globe. When my mother found out that Reykjavík University had partnered up with EISTI, it seemed like the perfect opportunity, I jumped at the chance of getting to know my French heritage as well as EISTI.

Before Departure

Getting the approval to go abroad was easy and straightforward, the problems arose once I had to communicate with EISTI, Vanessa who is usually in charge was on maternity leave, getting answers usually took around one week, communication finally got better once Vanessa was back. As I have depicted earlier the French and They informed me that I could be with the French students not the international students,

since I spoke and read French, though they said I could get to take the exams in English.

All of their course material had never been translated into English, that took quite a bit of time, and once I finally received the material they had only translated about three quarters of the courses. I sent them the course descriptions of the courses I had taken at the University of Reykjavík so that they could have a teacher evaluate in which year I would best fit in. They told me that I was supposed to enter their second year of engineering in cycle ingénieur which is the equivalent of first year of a masters degree. They were not happy with that answer at the University of Reykjavík since I am in bachelors degree. This process took in int's entirety about 3 months just to reach no conclusion and the international relations office had gone on holidays. My only option was to resolve these issues once I was there.

Reception

I went to the school two days earlier to resolve my integration issues, I went to see the teacher who evaluated my portfolio, he gave me an entirely different answer this time around. I didn't have the correct pre-requisites to follow 2nd year classes because I had no experience with Java or SQL. To further complicate things they did not have the ECTS for every subject by itself, instead they had the number of hours for each class, which again took two weeks to acquire after a number of trips to the international relations office. And for somewhat some weird reason no one is ever responsible for anything, I was sent on a snipe hunt a number of times looking for someone to get the right information. I ended up in first year of cycle ingénieur (i.e. 3rd year of bachelors degree).

The first week for the international students was an ill planned and otherwise waste of time, the worst part about this initiation week was that I was missing out on classes of the first week! The first days are some of the most vital ones, this is when social structure and groups are being established, something that I unfortunately missed. The first day was simply an introduction which took about two hours and we were allowed to leave, it felt badly planned, though the teachers seemed amiable.

Second day was breakfast with the international bureau, just a bunch of students that were supposed to support the international students, they did nothing of the sort, after having talked to them in French I realized that this was just a good way to get out of classes - presence is mandatory at EISTI. The brunch felt rather awkward

and the students from the bureau did little to communicate with the international students.

The third day was worst of all, we had to go to school to get our photo for our student id and get the laptops from the school, the printer for the student id's broke down so we had to wait two hours just to be told to come friday to pick them up - typically French. Everyone got their laptops that day but I couldn't, nor could I take part in the initiation process for the laptops, why? I was still enrolled as a second year student not first, and it is not the same laptop, they could not hand me the computer nor could I take part in the laptop initiation procedure. Again no one seemed to be responsible for this error nor know how to fix it, so I passed the next two hours being sent around school. I didn't bother going on the fourth day for moral tutoring and how to use Arel, EISTI's equivalent of MySchool, especially since I didn't have a computer.

The First Semester

I will try my best to portray the teaching situation and anything else that stood out during my stay. During my first semester I encountered many problems, the school managed to mess up the simplest of tasks, and I was thrown back by the lack of knowledge and enthusiasm from the students.

The students are arranged in two different tracks, one for those having a good foundation in computer science and the other for mathematics. For those who had a high level in computer science had a semester long project and spent most of their time studying mathematics, and those with a good background in mathematics the opposite. This period had a duration of five weeks, we also had a week long seminar in communication these five weeks.

The communications seminar was rather slow and dull, the teacher just stood there asking questions about how to communicate, she never gave us anything concrete, always political answers such as you have a point or that is an interesting thought. Since it was the first week everyone was shy and afraid of sharing their point of view on the subject. Although it was very good to get to know other classmates since the groups were usually small. In the end we had to write a report about the whole seminar and what we had learned - I asked the teacher three times to explain what she wanted exactly in the report, I didn't understand what she wanted us to write about. The teacher asked us to have the report longer rather than shorter. I ended up handing in a 21 page report, I went from the basis of communication to comparing

cultural differences in communication methods between France and Iceland. Once I received my grade 12/20 with a comment on the report saying that I didn't follow the guidelines correctly. The teacher presumed I took the liberty of writing the report as I did out of my own interest - the teacher knew I study body language in my free time. As I was not happy with such an answer I went to the human relations director thinking: "How ironic to have communication problems in communication class?" I asked the director what I should have done differently because this is what they asked for, I asked if I could write it again the way they wanted, the answer I got was that I should be happy with my grade and that it was impossible because the teacher was from another school, then the man started manipulating me telling me that I was an "intelligent guy" and should have known better - a man that has never met me, to use such manipulation? I saw this is a fruitless endeavor, thanked him for his time, and left.

After having worked three months on the semester project, which was to create a panorama application in C, in a group of 4, I ended up programming everything, I even had to write 10 pages in French in a report and got penalized for it, because my French wasn't good. The project was evaluated in three steps over the semester. The first time I got 12/20 for the project, I went to the teacher asking him what went wrong. He told me that there was a lot that did not work in the program and functionality missing for the first version. I told him to show me, right there in front of me, because I knew what he had mentioned worked on my end - surprise, surprise, the program worked as expected. Our grade was increased to 16/20 because our report was lacking. I worked all christmas on the project trying to implement the SIFT algorithm, only to get stuck in the final steps, I went to the teacher for help because I had spent numerous hours trying to implement it and understanding it. The teacher obviously did not know what SIFT was, nor did he have any intention of helping me, the answer I got is that I should use a simpler algorithm, after asking him a few things about the algorithm I soon realized the man obviously did not know what I was talking about. At the end of the semester we had a presentation to make about panoramic applications and our approach on the problem at hand, I noticed that the teacher did not actually know the material, as if he were studying it through our presentations. Once I got our final grade 12.5/20 I was again unhappy. I went to the teacher where I got little as no explanation for the final grade because we had got 16/20 for the first two steps of the evaluation. Since teachers are untouchable in this school they feel they owe you no explanation for the grade they give you. One of the things that surprised me is that no one in the entire school managed to create the final program as the teacher wanted. On top of that the teacher never came to class, we simply worked on our own, to this date I still don't know what I did wrong in my implementation of the SIFT algorithm, I

ended up creating my own key-point localization algorithm from all the material I had read. What shocked me most is that we never got any feedback what we might have done better, what was lacking, or any explanation for that matter.

What surprised me the most is how students are treated in school. There is a strong division between teachers and students, France is very traditional when it comes to hierarchy in society, you are supposed to “respect” teachers, which basically means you should accept everything they say and know better than opposing them. Students are treated as kids, not as adults, we can’t even think for ourselves - everything has to be done as the teacher wants, no other way exists. Students are simply afraid of speaking or asking questions to the teachers and I soon noticed no one was paying attention in class, most of them couldn’t even follow the teacher, I thought at first it was only me because of my French. The teachers are untouchable and the students know it, if they don’t smile and put up a false face they know the teacher will make their lives miserable. I couldn’t stand this mentality and continually got into trouble for questioning the teachers knowledge and analysis.

When we didn’t have lectures we had lessons where the student were simply playing games in their computers from the school on the local network. In each and every class it took 15 minutes just to call out the names and get the attendance of the students. You would just sit there during the lessons waiting for the teacher to write down the solutions to the assignments for the week on the board and copy it. You had to attend because the solutions would not go online and of course attendance was mandatory. There was virtually no homework except for a lot of presentations in communication classes and semester projects that took up a lot of our time, we had two of those.

Our mathematic was the meanest and worst teacher I have met to date, it was the head of the mathematics department. She was way too old to teach, spent her time complaining that the students were horrible, when during lectures she would stand there and talk to herself. No one dared answer her questions because it had to be exactly the answer she likes, structured her way, if you didn’t answer correctly, she would in most cases say that you were either an idiot or you would achieve nothing in life because you weren’t focusing during her classes. All the students got together to complain over the teacher, there was a meeting with two representatives for the students and the teacher. In our next class our teacher started talking about how we were obviously not focusing during her classes and essentially it was our fault that we were doing bad not hers - completely oblivious to her own faults.

I could keep going for a long time, but now I'll just summarize what I saw and experienced. The teachers didn't know what they were talking about and had little knowledge about their respective fields, something I tested with each and every teacher. Around 82 percent of the student body failed the mathematics exam, so what does the school do? They simply changed the weighting of the exam, instead of finding out the root of the problem. The same applied for accounting, macroeconomy, and computer architecture - the school will never admit to it, but asking the right people it was easily found out, especially since there was no way I could have passed computer architecture with the number of questions I answered. They had also promised me I could take the tests in English, which also turned out to be a lie. I had wanted to take part in the research they were doing at EISTI, I talked to the head of the research facility, I always got some defensive answers but positive. I started talking to second year students what they were doing in research and somehow no one knew, I asked the third year students and they were just as ignorant. It wasn't until I talked to a graduate from EISTI who told me that there was virtually no research, it was actually a scam, they had invested 40.000 euros in research just so that they would increase the rankings of the school moving it to A class ranking in France. They do have a few exchange students who do some research, I befriended one, and to get his insight on the workings of the school were awful at best.

The first semester was not the one I was interested in, it had a lot of subjects I did not know such as finance, accounting, project management, and communication. I assisted to all classes even those who were not evaluated by RU just to get the full experience and show good faith. I was waiting for the second semester for the hardcore computer science.

The Second Semester

After having requested the description for the courses of the second semester I had to wait roughly a month and add another three weeks due to christmas vacations. Then I had to send them to be reviewed by RU, which took another week, just to find out that a lot of the courses incorporated material that I had already learned. Then the administration at EISTI realize that they should have put me in the second year, again their administration lacking in every corner, giving me three different answers. I went to the director of studies asking what to do, who sent me to the international office, where you could see the resentment even the employees have for EISTI, because this error should supposedly not occur. They offered no viable solution, the second year students where out in internships and the calendars are different so they couldn't give

me other courses to enroll in. In the end they blamed this on me, after having waited several months for getting the course descriptions translated, and them screwing up which year to put me in. At this point I was so sick of the endless problems they offered and not solutions that I told them I would figure this out by myself.

In the end I would have ended up having 14 ECTS evaluated for the second semester, I still decided to attend all classes, since it was mostly computer science. I soon noticed that I knew most of the material, and the teachers teaching the other courses were just dreadful. The first thing my java teacher says: "I am not here to create good developers, I am here so that you pass the exam", I was furious at that statement, who cares about a piece of paper? It didn't take long to notice the teacher had no prior knowledge in java, the teacher didn't even know what an object was in object orientated programming. This only got worse with numerical analysis, I don't even know what we were doing to date, and fellow students didn't either, again the teacher was in his late 60's. One of the big problems with this school is that there are no books, no way to know what will be covered next week, or any easy way to study by yourself - I went to teachers on numerous occasions to get material or at least know what to study ahead, or simply to catch up, I didn't even get help for that, you are left alone completely in the dark.

I went to all of the human relations classes, team work, cultural openness and intercultural communication for three weeks, the same applies to computer science related classes, and I simply got enough of this system, I would have little as nothing evaluated, the teachers obviously did not want me there and I was sick of being treated as an idiot. I kept attending a few of the classes. At the same time I was offered a job, programming, where I learned a lot, much more than I could hope to learn at this school, a decision I do not regret. I didn't go to class regularly, I stopped attending classes and launched myself into heavy work, I was never contacted for my absences, something that any other student was contacted for and sent to a hearing with the director of studies. I thought this very symbolic, at that point a lot of the teachers did not like me, simply because I questioned them and disapproved if I thought them wrong.

An Icelandic student from the RU enrolled in their masters degree in January, someone who is to date a good friend and shared a lot of my views on EISTI. I want to tell you about some of the stories I heard from the international students at EISTI since I was studying with the locals. One of their teachers who was teaching them two different courses simply disappeared for three weeks, right before the exams, so what was the schools solution? Have no exam and give everyone the credits for the courses

- this is obviously anything but acceptable for an institution. They had an oral mathematics exam, where the teacher could evaluate you freely based on whether she liked you or not, I have never heard of oral mathematics exams. The international students were shunned by the local French students, they simply did not exist, something that I noticed very early on, I soon became one of them as well even when studying with the French students.

A good friend of mine from EISTI contacted me a week ago with more disturbing news. In the beginning of the semester we were informed that we had to get 10/20 average to pass, 52% of the school had a lower grade than the average necessary. The school simply changed the grade necessary to pass, so for the first time ever only 10% failed a semester - again just unacceptable from an institution of higher education.

I did have some amazing teachers such as Nesim Finz, his finance classes were some of the most animated and interesting classes I've had in a long time. The best teachers were the language teachers though, my French teacher Valérie and English teacher Harold were amazing, in every way, it was the classes I attended the most, because I actually learned something there. Not only about French or English, but also about life, they both had a unique perspective on life that they liked to share with us and had unconventional teaching methods.

The Positive

The best lessons in life are learned the hard way, I learned a lot there, maybe not academically, but about life, I learned a lot about myself and about different cultures. Instead of going to class, having teachers telling me how intercultural communications worked, I went out and got to know people from all around the globe, made friends and connections that will last a lifetime, hell I even fell in love with a Brazilian girl - it was an adventure, full of discoveries good and bad, but what is good without bad?

We had to do extreme amounts of presentations at EISTI, I really got to hone and work on my communication skills, body language, profiling, and what I call psychological strategy. Holding a presentation in front of the entirety of the freshmen student body, roughly 320 people, was no problem at all, on the contrary I enjoyed it.

Being in a school such as this one, filled with illusions, deceit as well as hypocrisy, gives you a front row seat to understand and see how much of the world works today. I made it my goal to open the eyes of the students there, oppose the

teachers, doubt them, don't let them determine your faith let alone depict how much you are worth. I quickly got a reputation for not being afraid of the teachers, I was unafraid to disagree with them and doubt them - they didn't like that one single bit. They threatened to fail me, they even went so far as to tell me I wouldn't get anywhere in life if I couldn't follow the rules, once they saw that their threats did nothing, they simply ignored me as if I didn't exist.

This experience really opened my eyes, you have to adapt to a different environment, you don't have your family there, you are on your own in a place you don't know at all in the long term. This is something extraordinary, tiring, difficult and enjoyable all at the same time. I traveled to Spain and Italy, met great people, made connections and made incredible memories. Experiencing cultures on your own is different than with friends, throwing yourself into the wild, forcing yourself to make new friends and adapt is very healthy and crucial to understand the world.

I got to know my French heritage from a different point of view, I got to practice my French and experience France in a radically different way. There is something so uplifting and inspiring about Paris, I loved everything about my trip abroad except the school, but even with such a dreadful school I don't regret going abroad as an exchange student. It helped put me on a new track, I know what I want to do and how to do it, I have a clear vision and I got to know people who can help me make it happen.

I will appreciate the University of Reykjavík much more after my stay in France, I thought I would maybe belong there more than in Iceland, that didn't turn out in my favor. The University of Reykjavík is a good school, no doubt, but after seeing other schools out there it is in fact not a good school but an excellent one.

Conclusion

Though I was disappointed by the school, to say the least, I still don't regret going to study abroad, I wouldn't hesitate to do it again. I believe even though the experience at school was tough, I could draw a lot of lessons from it, and simply moving abroad on your own will change your view on life. In truth I would do it all over again, without hesitation, one of the most important things in life are the people, I got to know some amazing people, the kind of people I wasn't even sure existed. I would recommend going abroad as an erasmus student for anyone, just beware that it may set you back in your studies, but I guarantee it will not set you back in life.