

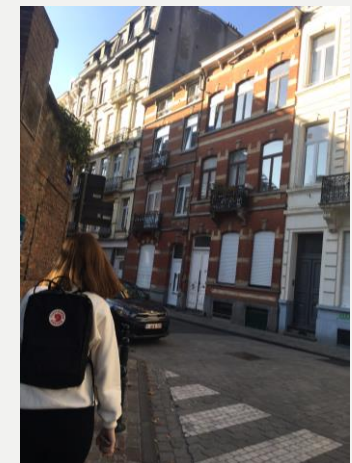
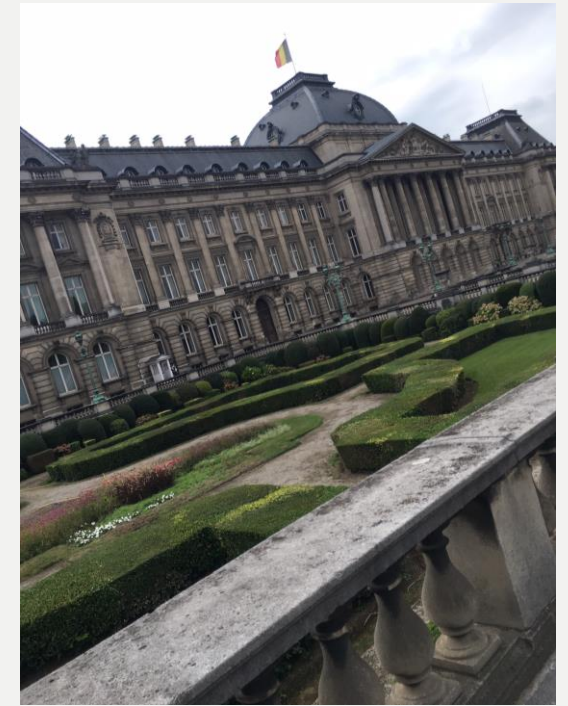
LIFE AS AN
ERASMUS STUDENT
IN BRUSSELS

Why Brussels?

There are many reasons why Brussels is a fantastic place to spend your year abroad:

- Tight-knit, culturally diverse city
- Easy to find, affordable accommodation
- A university that specialises in translation and interpretation, perfect for students who are interested in the technical aspects of languages
- An abundance of other Erasmus students to meet!

Although not overly popular as a university city, there is a lot that Brussels can offer to students. If anything, students who study in Brussels all agree that it's an entirely multicultural experience.



The University

Institut supérieur de traducteurs et interprètes (ISTI) is an off-campus department of ULB that Warwick students studying French will go to.

ISTI is located in the centre of a quaint municipality called Uccle which is full of shops, museums and cosy cafés.

As ISTI is a small department outside of ULB, the classes and seminars are small and perfect for language learning, so Warwick language students will feel right at home.

Classes range from French phonetics and linguistics, to philosophy and law. The options available are expansive and specialised.

My favourite class so far has been phonetics, as each student gets a pair of headphones and a microphone to practice the intricate differences between certain French sounds, whilst the teacher listens in and corrects the students. Phonetics is one example of many classes which are designed just for Erasmus students to master French.



Image of ISTI building, *Institut supérieur de traducteurs et interprètes*, Wikipedia, https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Institut_sup%C3%A9rieur_de_traducteurs_et_interpr%C3%A8tes

The Accommodation

As a city that isn't as popular amongst university students as Paris for example, which has huge competition for accommodation causing students a lot of stress, Brussels is full of available, affordable accommodation all over the city.

Students can choose from dorm rooms or private student housing. Dorm rooms are particularly affordable and are great ways to meet other students (and practice French!), however facilities aren't as good a standard as private student housing, which provides students with everything they need and are usually in great locations in Brussels, however can become pricey.

I personally recommend a private student housing company called Xior, who have accommodation all over Belgium and the Netherlands. In my Xior room I have my own bathroom, mini-fridge, desk and double bed. I've met so many cool people in my building and it's been great so far! Prices range from €400-€600 a month depending on location and facilities.



Image of room, Avenue d'Auderghem, Xior website,
<https://www.xior.be/en/room/483/avenue-dauderghem>

The City

As Brussels is the heart of the European Union, the city is very culturally diverse.

Brussels is also famous for its chocolate, grand museums and huge Market Square which is especially beautiful at Christmas time.

In my first term, I stayed in one of the most beautiful municipalities in Brussels – Ixelles – which hosts chic restaurants, museums and boutiques. My friend Lauren and I stayed in a penthouse Airbnb apartment for a reasonable price. It wasn't close to university, but since Brussels is relatively small and the transport system is so great and consistent – it was no issue.

Now in my second term, I'm staying in private student housing in the centre of Brussels, near the central station. I've found that this area is quite dense with Flemish people, as the Flemish parliament is here and the central station goes to many Flemish cities. As I've been learning Dutch as a hobby, it's been very helpful to live near so many Dutch speakers!



References

Image of room, Avenue d'Auderghem, Xior website, <https://www.xior.be/en/room/483/avenue-dauderghem>

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All other images taken by Anna Robinson