

Field Report
Free University Bolzano (BIP Italy)

Submitted by:
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1. Preparation

Prior to the mobility, I completed all required formalities through the Erasmus+ coordination office at TU Ilmenau, including documentation and pre-departure procedures. The process was clear and well-supported.

The program took place from **13th April to 17th April** at the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano in Italy. I made travel and accommodation arrangements in advance and connected with fellow participants beforehand, which made the transition smooth upon arrival.

2. Host Institution & Program Structure

The Blended Intensive Program titled *"Citizens' Lab: Cinema, Democracy, and Interdisciplinary Futures"* offered a unique interdisciplinary perspective combining media studies, film, and societal discourse.

The structure of the program included:

- Lectures by academic and media professionals
- Film screenings
- Interactive discussions with filmmakers and experts

One of the most enriching aspects was the diversity of speakers. Professionals from different backgrounds shared varied perspectives on cinema and democracy, making each session intellectually stimulating and engaging.

A particularly memorable idea shared during the program was: *"In order to see, you need to get blind."* This perspective encouraged critical reflection on perception and interpretation in cinema.

While the program was highly engaging, introducing small group tasks or student-led activities throughout the week could further enhance participation and deepen learning outcomes in future editions.

3. Accommodation

I stayed at Ferrari Tower, a conveniently located accommodation in Bolzano. While I arranged the booking independently, the host institution provided guidance and support to students in finding suitable options.

The accommodation was comfortable and well-suited for the duration of the stay, allowing easy access to the university and city center.

4. Academic & Cultural Experience

A highlight of the program was the opportunity to attend the Bolzano Film Festival, for which participants were provided free passes. This allowed us to experience contemporary cinema firsthand and connect theoretical discussions with real-world artistic expression.

In addition to the academic schedule, students took the initiative to explore the city independently. Small group outings across Bolzano helped us experience local culture, architecture, and daily life.

For future programs, organizing guided excursions or cultural activities could further enrich the experience and provide deeper insights into Italian culture.



5. Networking & Interaction

One of the strongest aspects of the program was the opportunity to connect with a diverse group of participants. I actively interacted with fellow students, speakers, and professionals, exchanging ideas and perspectives on various topics.

Building these connections and sharing experiences across cultures was a major highlight. The open and inclusive environment made it easy to communicate and form meaningful academic and personal relationships.



6. Interdisciplinary Learning

The program offered valuable insights into how cinema and media influence public perception and democratic processes. Coming from a business academic background, engaging in these themes provided a fresh perspective on how storytelling shapes understanding in subtle yet powerful ways.

It highlighted how interdisciplinary approaches can broaden thinking and encourage critical analysis beyond one's primary field of study.

7. Organization & Suggestions

As this was the first time such a program was organized by this specific department of the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, it was overall well-structured and thoughtfully executed. The coordination, communication, and academic content were commendable.

At the same time, a few additions could further improve future editions:

- Inclusion of student projects or group assignments to increase engagement
- More structured cultural or city-based activities
- Additional interactive formats alongside lectures

These enhancements could make the experience even more immersive and participatory.

8. Personal Reflection

This Erasmus+ experience provided a meaningful opportunity to explore new academic dimensions and engage with diverse perspectives. The combination of cinema, media, and democratic discourse offered a unique learning environment.

I gained a deeper appreciation for how narratives influence society and how interdisciplinary collaboration can lead to richer understanding. The connections made and ideas exchanged during this program will remain valuable for my future academic and professional journey.

Thank you for making it until here. I hereby confirm that this field report is exclusively made by me and I give the right to publish this for academic purposes.

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