

# Erasmus+ Exchange at TalTech: A Memorable Erasmus+ Experience in Tallinn, Estonia

## M.Sc. Research in Computer and Systems Engineering

My Erasmus+ exchange journey at Taltech in Tallinn, Estonia, during the winter semester of 2023/2024 was a memorable experience. I am an Indian student who has been living in Germany for 12 months. After experiencing moving abroad and meeting so many foreign students during my studies, I was motivated to allow myself to go abroad again. I must say that it was one of the best decisions I made. This report encapsulates my preparation, studies on site, accommodation, free time activities, and the unforgettable adventures I embarked on during my time abroad.



I first approached Ms. Franziska, who is the Erasmus representative at TU Ilmenau. I wrote to her telling her about my interest in doing an exchange semester and that I was interested in knowing how the Erasmus program works. She offered me a video call where she answered all my questions and doubts and she suggested I join Taltech as it is good for computer science students. Then I sent my transcript and letter of motivation to the professor for approval.

Post approval, a learning agreement must be prepared, which states the subjects you have chosen to take at the host university. Next, the Erasmus managers of the host university must confirm that you can take those subjects and sign the learning agreement. Additionally, the Examination office of my university must also sign it. Once the learning agreement is finalized, the Erasmus contract is signed, which specifies how much money the program can give you. A checklist helps verify all the steps to follow before departure (for example: visa, health insurance, and accommodation). Everything was online so it was convenient for me.

With the health insurance, I had no problems, as mine has good coverage throughout the European Union. Regarding the visa, I had some problems, since I am not European and I live in Germany with an Aufenthaltstitel (residence permit). Also in Estonia, I do not have to do anything as my stay was less than 6 months so my residence permit was sufficient for the stay.

**Accommodation:** I opted for on-campus accommodation, which is at the Academic Hostel, fostering a sense of community among international students. The convenient location and well-equipped facilities provided a comfortable living environment conducive to academic focus and social interaction.

### **Studies at TalTech:**

Engaging in coursework at Taltech was intellectually stimulating. The curriculum offered a blend of theoretical knowledge and practical applications, enhancing my understanding of Computer and System

Engineering concepts. Collaborative projects and seminars encouraged interdisciplinary dialogue, fostering a deeper appreciation for my field of study.

**Course selection:** I chose courses relevant to my research interests, ensuring compatibility with my home university's curriculum.

**Learning experience:** The professors were approachable and knowledgeable. I enjoyed the interactive learning environment and diverse student body.

### **Free Time Activities:**

Exploring Tallinn and its surroundings during free time was a highlight of my exchange experience. Weekly gatherings at Gruvv for karaoke on Mondays and beer pong tournaments on Wednesdays provided opportunities for socializing and unwinding with fellow Erasmus students. Additionally, I seized the chance to embark on exciting trips organized by ESN Taltech, including the exhilarating Pirates of the Baltic Sea cruise and a breathtaking Northern Lights expedition. These adventures not only showcased the beauty of Estonia and its neighboring countries but also created lasting memories of camaraderie and adventure.

It was very easy to explore nearby countries like Latvia, Lithuania, Finland, and Sweden.

### **Overall Experience:**

**Academically:** My Erasmus+ exchange at Taltech in Tallinn, Estonia, provided an enriching academic experience. Through rigorous coursework and engaging lectures, I gained valuable knowledge and expanded my understanding within the field of Computer and System Engineering. The curriculum challenged me to think critically, problem-solve creatively, and apply theoretical concepts to real-world scenarios. Collaborative projects and seminars facilitated interdisciplinary dialogue, broadening my perspective and fostering intellectual growth. The academic environment at Taltech nurtured my passion for research and innovation, laying a solid foundation for future academic and professional endeavours.

**Personally:** On a personal level, my Erasmus+ exchange journey was transformative. Living in Estonia encouraged self-reliance and adaptability, fostering personal growth and resilience. Interacting with students from diverse cultural backgrounds broadened my worldview and deepened my intercultural awareness. Building lifelong friendships with fellow Erasmus students and local Estonians enriched my experience, fostering a sense of camaraderie and belonging. Overcoming challenges and embracing new experiences during my time abroad instilled confidence and self-discovery, shaping me into a more confident and adaptable individual.

**Culturally:** Immersing myself in Estonian culture was a highlight of my exchange experience. From participating in traditional Estonian festivals to exploring the country's rich history and heritage, I gained a deeper appreciation for Estonian traditions and customs. Exploring diverse landscapes, from the medieval charm of Tallinn's Old Town to the pristine beauty of Kadriorg Park, allowed me to connect with Estonia's natural beauty and cultural diversity. Embracing new experiences, such as witnessing the breathtaking Northern Lights and swimming in the Arctic Ocean, provided unforgettable memories and

further enriched my cultural immersion. Overall, my Erasmus+ exchange journey in Tallinn, Estonia, was a profound cultural experience that broadened my horizons and left a lasting impact on my perspective and appreciation for global diversity.

**Conclusion:** My Erasmus+ exchange at Taltech, Tallinn, Estonia, was an unforgettable journey filled with academic enrichment, cultural immersion, and thrilling adventures. The supportive community at Taltech, coupled with the vibrant city of Tallinn, provided an ideal backdrop for personal and academic growth. The experiences and friendships forged during my time abroad will remain cherished memories, shaping my perspective and future endeavours in profound ways.

Tallinn

Old Town



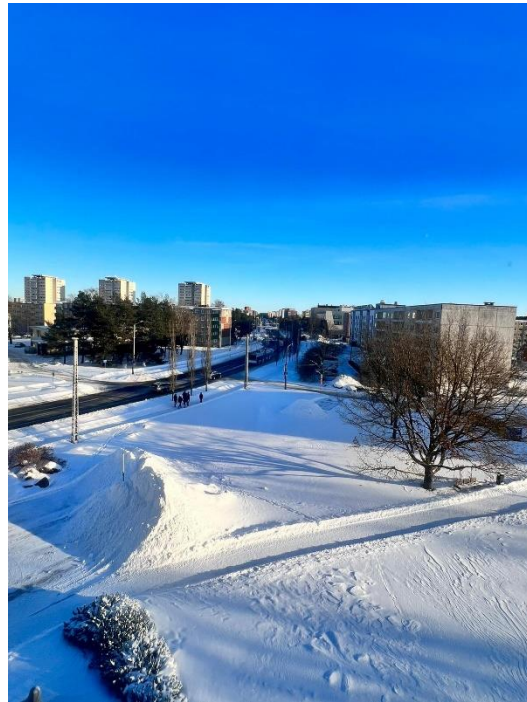
Beach in Winter



Kadriorg Place



View from my Accommodation



ESN TRIPS: Northern Lights, Santa Claus Village, Crossing Arctic Circle, POBS

