

Faculty of Law, Maastricht University (The Netherlands)

1. Overall impression

The courses are quite demanding compared to the ones at University of Zurich, but the exams are much easier because there are only 7 weeks for two subjects at a time. I can especially recommend the courses from the International Trade and Investment Law specialisation.

2. Making preparations

(e.g. administrative matters, finding information)

The university is very much geared towards international students, which makes finding information and handling administrative matters easy.

3. Contacts/Responsibilities

(e.g. important contact persons at the Partner University and Faculty)

The Double Degree Coordinator of University of Zurich is helpful with any questions you might have in relation to your studies abroad in the Double Degree programme context. Questions relating to Maastricht and studying at University of Maastricht are best addressed to the Student Services Centre.

4. Housing / Finding accommodation

Be very careful when looking for accommodation and stay far away from rent agencies. The agency fees that rent agencies make tenants pay are illegal in most cases and it is a very complicated and burdensome process of reclaiming these fees in court proceedings. Also, quite a lot of the houses in Maastricht are rent-controlled, meaning that the landlord is not allowed to charge more than a certain amount for the room depending on the room size, how many tenants use kitchen/showers/toilets etc. You can go to the Housing Helpdesk of the Student Services Centre (<http://www.housinghelpdesk.com/home/>) to check if this applies to you and claim back overcharged rent within 6 months of the start of your rent contract.

More information about the housing situation in Maastricht can be found at the address provided above and here:

[https://www.observantonline.nl/English/Home/Articles/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/10419/He-was-paying- 625-Based-on-the-point-score-system-we-came-up-with-280](https://www.observantonline.nl/English/Home/Articles/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/10419/He-was-paying-625-Based-on-the-point-score-system-we-came-up-with-280)

<https://www.iamsterdam.com/en/living/everyday-essentials/housing/rental-property/unjust-agency-fees>

<https://www.wooninfo.nl/english/reclaim-unjust-agency-fees/>

<https://www.dutchnews.nl/news/2019/02/housing-agencies-are-still-charging-tenants-fees-despite-court-ruling/>

<http://www.wearelawyers.nl/expats/housing-the-netherlands/>

<https://mymaastricht.nl/get-settled/housing/>

5. Arrival

I didn't have time to participate at the introduction week (INKOM week) or the introduction day, but this wasn't a problem.

6. Telephone

(e.g. costs, carriers)

As most places where I spent most my time had Wifi (at university buildings and at home), I didn't get a Dutch SIM card.

7. Bank account

You can get a Dutch bank account, ING is the most popular for students, as it is free. For this you should make an appointment already before you get to Maastricht in late August/beginning of September, otherwise all appointments to open a student account will be booked and you will have to wait a couple of months. You can schedule an appointment here:

<https://www.ing.nl/particulier/betalen/bankrekeningen/betaalrekening/index.html>

8. Transport (e.g. from Switzerland, to the University)

It always takes a bit of time to get to Maastricht, but the most convenient way I've found is a train connection that leaves at Zurich main station at 8:00 am and arrives at Maastricht Station at 15:00 (unless the trains are delayed in Germany, which happens quite often unfortunately). You can buy the tickets via the Omio app, if you have a Swiss Halbtax it's cheaper.

Within Maastricht everything is quite close, but I would still recommend getting a bike because some lectures are a bit outside the city centre at the MECC exhibition centre, which is also where the exams are. I bought my bike via the Facebook marketplace, but most of my friends here use Swapfiets (like a bike subscription service).

9. General information about the Partner Faculty and student life

Student life in Maastricht is okay, but bear in mind that most people doing the Globalisation and Law or European Law School master programme are quite determined and busy because of the considerable workload. If you are expecting a stereotypical Erasmus exchange year with lots of partying and socialising, Maastricht might not be the best place.

10. Teaching and studying at the Partner Faculty

(e.g. program structure, methodology, exams, etc.)

The level of courses and especially tutorials is quite demanding and you have to prepare more during the semester than at University of Zurich. However, because the periods for two subjects only last 7 weeks, there is less material for exams, which are thus easier than the ones in Zurich. Exams are generally 3 hours, but usually there is also a research paper component to the final grade that accounts for 15-50% of the final course grade.

The 2 semesters are split into 6 periods, during periods 1, 2, 4 and 5 you usually take two courses each, whereas periods 3 and 6 are reserved for writing the master thesis.

11. City

(e.g. cultural activities, sports, discounts, nightlife, must-sees, short trips, etc.)

Maastricht is a very small city compared to Zurich, but it does have its charm with lots of hip cafes and restaurants and bars. There are some cool alternative clubs like Mandril and Landbouwbelang.

I got a membership at UM SPORTS, which is the equivalent to ASVZ. However, I have also heard good things about the private competitors to UM Sports like Fit For Free Sportschool Maastricht. If you want to play tennis you can become a member of Stennis, a student tennis association that offers weekly trainings and a myriad of social events.