

**Exchange university**

Trinity College

Degree programme

Master programme in Sustainable Technology

17-week of life-long experience

Before departure

It has always been a dream for me to be an exchange student sometimes in life. As a mature student, I missed the opportunity to do that when I was younger. Therefore, I was so excited to know that the door could be open for me when I started on my Master degree courses in 2022.

There are a number of reasons that Dublin or Ireland became my first choice. With regard to the short distance to Stockholm as I have a family with kids, I would like to have a destination that both is close and has great universities with relevant courses related to suitability studies. One of the other contributing factors for Dublin was that I previously have visited the city and the country a couple of times before and I particularly loved the nature there and have during the course of years built up a little network there. Thanks to my contacts there, I could make a quick trip to Dublin in March to visit Trinity College and check out some of the things on-site. It was really helpful to do that pre-visit.

Upon arrival



Dublin welcomed me with marvellous summer weather and I even did a swim in the sea in the beginning of September, which was a couple of days before the semester started. The following two weeks at Trinity College were spent on selecting course modules, which was a bit surprising for me regarding the manual process involved. Many contacts with Academy Registry and module responsible as I needed to select courses that I was both eligible to take and were relevant to my studies. Therefore, I found the selection process cumbersome and inefficient. It was not until the last week of September that I felt that I could really start focusing on the studies. One of the fun factors was the possibility to join different student societies. I joined two student societies: the philosophers' debate society and Trinity Hiking society. One could choose with varied ambition levels and popularity from probably nearly 50 or 60 different societies. It seems to be a special feature related to Irish universities.

Financials

The hardest part during the Erasmus semester was the financial part. Dublin has become quite expensive, as it has attracted many international talents and corporates to the city, which has triggered an inflation on everything from accommodation to food. Not much value for money to dine out at the restaurants and you shall expect that it would be more expensive in Dublin than in Stockholm. On the other hand, the Irish food retailers offer marvellous selection for you be both successful in the kitchen and cost-friendly for your wallet. Strongly recommend to explore the home-cooking options to save money. The Erasmus grants of 450 euro every month could hardly cover 1/3 of the minimum living

costs in Dublin. The accommodation will most likely cost you around 800-1200 euro each month. So living in Dublin as a student on Erasmus grant is not possible.

I was lucky to have some contacts in Dublin from previously through which I got the chance to rent a room from a friend mother's house. The Georgian town house was beautifully situated in a trendy and well-reputed part of the city, about 20 minutes on foot to Trinity College, which was such a blessing. On that note, most of the Erasmus students that I have talked to revealed that their accommodations costed them between the price range of 1000-1500 euro each month. Most of them (from other European countries) relied heavily on support from their parents and relatives to be able to manage the exchange semester.

University and studies



The Trinity campus is unique and is centrally located in the city center. Being the oldest university in Ireland, it has many fine academic traditions that are new to us from the Nordics. It offers a wide array of study fields with particularly great reputation within Bio medicine field. As my major “Sustainability Technology” is more transdisciplinary in nature, there are currently no matching programmes that I could select from. Therefore, I had to compose my course by selecting different modules from four different faculties: Geography (Exploring the Sustainable City), Trinity Business School (International Governance and sustainable business), Biology (Sustainable production: food & drinks), Civil engineering (Transportation policy, Energy policy & Energy Storage, Management for Engineers)



Courses

As the choices for Master Erasmus students are somewhat limited, the level of teaching varied from course to course.

Among the six modules I took, I loved these courses: Exploring the Sustainable City, Sustainable production: food & drinks), Energy policy & Energy Storage.

Transportation policy was a big disappointment as the course went into so many details such as how to design a roundabout instead of discussing on a strategic level as the title suggested. I tried my best to attend the lectures and I had to give up half way as it felt like I was totally wasting my time.

Management for Engineers was a good course for new engineer students.

The grading system is somewhat different from Sweden and seems to be more demanding. To achieve 80%, which is First level of distinction at Trinity, is said to be hard to achieve.

City and country



My 17 weeks in total spent in Ireland have certainly enriched me as a person. Dublin is such a thriving city with cool international vibes. Most of international talents I encountered in Ireland all shared how well they were received and the local Irish people were open, warm and friendly. One of things that was particularly important for the local culture is to remember your roots as Ireland has probably one of

the largest diaspora communities around the globe. Music and Pub life are two of the very distinctive things in Ireland.

The best about Ireland is without doubts its nature. I have done a number of hiking trips with the Trinity hiking society and on my own with friends and they were amazing. Strongly recommended! The food experience was also much better outside of Dublin and more value for money.

Leisure and social activitie



There were loads of activities that one could engage in. I tried Rugby once and twisted my ankle so that was my brief Rugby career. However, I have now seen three Rugby matches and learned how Rugby works.

Dublin has good buzz and every week there was some kind of festival going on in the city with loads of activities to attend. The cultural scene was vibrant and Christmas market and light show was an experience itself.

Sustainability

I could not travel by train to Dublin from Stockholm. At Trinity, they encouraged to use re-fillable mugs for coffee and tea so I bought the mug for 2 euro as deposit so I could use it for the entire semester. There was also a cleaning unit for the mugs, which made it possible for more hygienic re-use.

Other recommendations and observations

Make sure that you have fixed your accommodation before you go. In addition, make sure that you have enough savings for your stay as it's more expensive than Stockholm.