Retour d’expérience   
de ma mobilité internationale

*Prénom Nom - email*

[PAYS en majuscule] – [Université en minuscule]

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# Your overall feeling after your semester abroad

*[Help : How was your experience abroad? If you could go back I time, would you go to this university and why ?]*

Ghent was actually my second choice for Erasmus. At first, I felt like it might be too small for me, especially after having lived in a big city like Berlin for my internship the year before. After experiencing Berlin, it was hard to find a place that felt just as exciting. Ghent is a student town, and a lot of people absolutely love it for its youthful, vibrant energy. If you enjoy the size and atmosphere of Montpellier, you’ll probably find Ghent to be a younger, more fun version of it.

Personally, I spent a lot of time in Amsterdam, it’s only a 3-hour bus ride away, and I have many friends there. That definitely made a difference in my overall experience.

In terms of academics, Ghent University is very demanding. It’s ranked among the top 100 universities worldwide, so the level is quite high. Thankfully, the grading system follows MOMA’s structure, meaning your subjects can complement and support each other in your final results. That said, I didn’t pass all my exams, especially Change Management, which was taught at a Master’s level.

I attended every single class for that course, but the evaluation method was particularly intense. You had to write a scientific research paper using at least two academic sources, pitch your paper to a jury, answer ten minutes of questions about your work, and then another ten minutes of highly detailed theoretical questions from the course. I had initially thought it would be more about showing your understanding and ability to explain concepts clearly, but the professor expected extremely precise answers, almost word-for-word from the lectures. One of my friends was even asked to draw a graph the teacher had briefly mentioned for about a minute in class.

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| **GRADE : [3/5]**  ***=> 0 (I do not recommend this semester abroad to my best friend) – 5 (I totally recommend this semester to my best friend)*** |

# Before the travel

## Preparation

### Visa

If you’re not from the EU but you have a titre de séjour (residence permit) from France, Ghent University will help you get the documents you need to complete the Annexe 33, which is required to stay in Belgium for your Erasmus. Just a heads-up: they might initially reject your proof of solvency—not because your documents are wrong, but because what they’re actually asking for is the Annexe 33. Unfortunately, their emails aren’t always very clear about that, so I had to figure it out on my own.

That said, the overall process is pretty straightforward. As long as you have permission to stay in Belgium for the full length of your Erasmus, UGent will handle communication with the migration office and guide you through the steps.

### The flight

My Erasmus journey started a bit differently. My ex is Dutch, so when I moved out of France in December, I flew to Amsterdam and left some of my clothes at his place. Then I went back to El Salvador for the holidays. After that, I flew back to Amsterdam and took a bus from there to Ghent. It was a bit of a detour, but it actually made the transition smoother.

### My luggage

*I don’t think I’ll give the best advice because I’m a fashion victim, I have racks and racks of archival clothes.*

### Bank account

*I never changed it Revolut is the best, eventho they are so complicated with cards in BENELUX, sometimes they don’t accept visa or mastercard but you’ll always find a way not an actual problem.*

### Insurance

*I’ve always had American international Insurance.*

## Housing

### Where to live

As I mentioned earlier, Ghent feels quite small, especially if you’ve lived in bigger cities before. That said, pretty much anywhere within Ghent is manageable and well-connected. I’d personally recommend living in the south or in the city center. Find a flat or a room

### Find a flat or a room

I’m not the best example for this, because a friend of my mom was selling her house in Ghent so I rented it while it was on sale, then when it got sold I move to a big shared house that I found in the site coloc housing.

### Cost

*I use to pay 750 for the house, and now I pay 791 for my room in a super big house.*

# When I arrive at the university

## Inscription at the university

The course registration process at UGent was quite easy and smooth overall. You first choose your courses, then officially register them within the first two weeks after classes begin. One important tip: make sure you don’t accidentally choose Master-level courses unless you’re academically prepared for that level, they’re much more demanding and can be hard to pass, even if you attend every class. Stick to Bachelor-level options unless you’re confident.

## Information on the university

### Class

* Public Management: Honestly, I found this course quite boring. It focuses on how public organizations are managed, and since I know I don’t want to work in the public sector, it just didn’t interest me. The only upside is that the classes are recorded, which gives you flexibility.
* Change Management: This course was actually super interesting—it’s about how to implement and manage change within organizations. That said, I don’t recommend taking it unless you’re prepared for a challenge. It’s taught at a Master’s level, with a complex evaluation method, and the expectations are very high.
* Economic Globalization: This one was interesting because it covered real-world topics like tariffs, global trade, and policies from leaders like Trump. Classes are recorded, which is convenient, and the content is current and relevant.
* Marketing Fundamentals: While this was one of the more accessible courses, it’s still not as easy as it might sound. The level is definitely higher than at MOMA, and the final exam can be tricky. You’re assigned a group project with randomly selected classmates from a large lecture hall, which makes up part of your grade. For our project, they actually invited a Belgian beer brand to class, and we had to come up with marketing recommendations for them. It was a fun and practical way to apply what we learned. The rest of the grade is based on a multiple-choice exam that, despite being just MCQs, still requires good understanding of the content.
* Economics of Migration: This was especially meaningful for me, being a migrant myself. The subject is fascinating, but the lectures can feel long because the teacher doesn’t always distinguish clearly between essential and less relevant information. Still, she’s incredibly kind and genuinely wants her students to succeed. The grade is split between a final exam and a creative video or podcast project.
* International & Cross-Cultural Marketing: This was by far my favorite course. If you come from an international background, you’ll really enjoy it, it helps you understand how cultural values shape consumer behavior and influence business decisions. Part of the grade was a group project where we were paired with both Belgian and international students. The task was to choose a product or service from one of our home countries and adapt it for another culture represented in the group.

My group chose the Museum of Hangovers from Croatia and adapted the concept to fit Belgian culture. We had to think about how humor, public perception, and marketing would differ across the two cultures. Our teacher really liked our idea, and it was a fun way to apply cultural theory in a creative and practical way. Also, fun fact: during this course, I realized just how different Dutch (individualistic) and Latin American (collectivist) values are… which helped me make sense of my past relationship with my Dutch ex. So in a way, this course gave me both academic and emotional clarity. 😅

### Organization of the Class

One big difference I noticed compared to Montpellier is how classes are structured. At UGent, they’re generally much less participative. In many cases, especially in the large auditorium courses, the experience is more like a lecture than an interactive class.

### List of courses and recommendation

Looking back, I wouldn’t have chosen Public Management, simply because I have no interest in working in the public sector, it just wasn’t relevant for me. I also would’ve avoided Change Management, not because the content wasn’t interesting (it was!), but because the course was taught at a Master’s level and ended up being overwhelming.

On the other hand, I really enjoyed Economics of Migration, it felt personal. And while I absolutely loved International & Cross-Cultural Marketing, I do regret not choosing the Business Skills course. A few of my friends took it and said it was very easy and practical. It probably would’ve balanced out my workload better.

### Exam

The exam period at UGent runs from the end of May until the end of June. The exams are definitely harder than at MOMA, both in terms of content and expectations. However, one advantage is that they’re more spread out over time, if you’re lucky you have several between exams, which gives you more time to study and prepare properly.

From February to April, you have a lot of flexibility to travel and enjoy your Erasmus experience. But once May hits, it’s time to lock in and focus on studying. The academic pressure really kicks in during this final stretch, so it’s important to plan your time well.

# When I life there

## Safety

I always felt super safe in Ghent, whether walking around during the day or at night. That said, one of my friends did get her phone pickpocketed in the city center so as always, you have to stay aware of your surroundings. Honestly though, I feel like that was more of an isolated case. I never heard any other bad stories, and I personally never felt unsafe during my time there.

## Phone and Internet

In France, I have a plan with 70 GB of data, which is more than enough. But once you’re outside of France, you only get 35 GB of roaming data, and after that, they charge €0.002 per MB. It doesn’t sound like much at first, but it adds up quickly. There were months where I ended up paying €130 instead of my usual €70, just because I went over the limit without realizing.

## Events

Personally, I’ve never been into student associations like the BDE or Erasmus groups, they’re just not my vibe. I’m more the type to find my people naturally, especially those who are into creative, fashion-forward, and avant-garde scenes. And honestly, Ghent has more of those people than Montpellier.

If you’re into real techno (as in Berlin-style techno), you have to check out a small bar called Funke. For trendier or harder techno, definitely check out Kompass, and always keep an eye out for local collectives organizing events. Once spring kicks in, there are lots of free open-air parties around the city, there’s this super cool festival that happens in all the bar and clubs in. Ghent called full circle and in summer there is Modulair.

## Sports

*I use to go to reformer pilates everyday at yoko studio for* €*199 a month, it was expensive but because I had unlimited access there’s for sure cheaper subscriptions.*

## Eating

*I’m more of a walking around type of person.*

## Go to the university : bus, car, bike

I personally love walking, so I never got a bike, even though everyone I know either owns or rents one. To be honest, I’m a bit scared of biking, especially in traffic. But biking is definitely the most popular way to get around in Ghent.

I also never paid for a tram subscription because, as I said, I really enjoy walking. The city is small enough that most places are maximum within a 40-minute walk max, so if you don’t mind walking, you can easily get by without public transport.

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## Travels

One of the perks of being in Ghent is how easy it is to travel. I went to Amsterdam about twice a month, it’s only a 3-hour bus ride and always a fun escape. I also made trips to Berlin to visit friends, Paris for interviews (just 4 hours by bus), and even Malta during the break.

If you’re into fashion, you have to keep an eye out for events and exhibitions in Antwerp there’s always something happening, especially in the contemporary and avant-garde scenes. And don’t forget: Antwerp is a fashion capital in its own right. Let me remind you, Demna (former Creative Director of Balenciaga, now at Gucci), Martin Margiela, and many others studied at the Antwerp Royal Academy of Fine Arts. The iconic Antwerp Six are also from there.

## Any other information you would have liked to know about

*I wish I went more to ANTWERP!!!*

# After your semester abroad

## What are you planning do to?

*I haven’t decided yet, I have an offer to work in Rick Owens new store in Berlin or do an Alternance in fashion in Paris.*

## Did you apply for master?

*Yes got accepted at LISAA Communication de marque et Image de Mode*

*Modart Communication de Mode*

*EIDM Fashion Art and Event Director*

*I don’t know where Im going yet.*

[remember to fill in the excel : <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/11-vB4ABdkzIJR1AQ82drWyAVXfnCpRYr8COkeKihnIs/edit?usp=sharing>]

1. To update the agenda just click right on your moose [↑](#footnote-ref-1)