

[ROUMANIE] – [université babeş-bolyai]

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I. Your overall feeling after your semester abroad

My semester abroad was a truly enriching and transformative experience, both academically and personally. Living in a different cultural environment pushed me out of my comfort zone and helped me grow in many ways from gaining greater independence and adaptability to improving my intercultural communication skills.

If I could go back in time, I would absolutely choose the same university again. The academic environment was stimulating, the professors were accessible and engaging, and I had the chance to meet students from all over the world. Beyond the classroom, the city offered a vibrant social and cultural life that made every week exciting. Overall, it was a unique opportunity that helped me develop both as a student and as an individual.

GRADE : 4

=> 0 (I do not recommend this semester abroad to my best friend) - 5 (I totally recommend this semester to my best friend)

II. Before the travel

A. Preparation

1. Visa

Romania is part of the European Union. If you are a resident of an EU country, you theoretically don't need a visa. However, if you stay in the country for more than 90 days, you are required to report to immigration services. This is quite a long, bureaucratic, and unpleasant process. The office is located in the underground parking lot of a shopping mall, and it's only open on Mondays at 11 a.m., which means you have to skip class, stand in line, and then come back the following week to pick up your document again, after queuing.

Based on the feedback from my fellow students, I decided not to register with the authorities, and nothing happened to me.

2. The flight

Several options from Montpellier:

Option 1: The easiest and most comfortable

Flixbus/Train: Montpellier → Nice

Turkish Airlines flight: Nice → Istanbul → Cluj-Napoca

Option 2: Might seem like the cheapest, but paying for luggage on two Ryanair flights = a nightmare

Flixbus/Train: Montpellier → Marseille

Ryanair flight: Marseille → Brussels → Cluj-Napoca

Option 3: The cheapest option

Flixbus/Train: Montpellier → Marseille

Ryanair flight: Marseille → Budapest

Flixbus: Budapest → Cluj-Napoca

3. My luggage

There are few things I regret not bringing, but many things I regret bringing.

Don't bother packing heavy winter coats. Yes, the temperatures can sound scary (down to -10°C), but I can confidently say it feels much colder in Montpellier because of the wind. In Romania, the cold is dry and actually quite bearable.

Plus, the weather warms up quickly, so you really won't need heavy clothing for long.

4. Bank account

As far as I remember, there was no minimum amount required on your bank account. That said, I strongly recommend having two bank cards. Romanian payment terminals work about half the time some only accept contactless, others only work when you insert the card. I had one card from Caisse d'Épargne and another from Boursorama.

Romanians widely use Revolut, and you can be sure it works everywhere.

5. Insurance

I didn't take out any insurance other than standard health insurance.

B. Housing

1. Where to live

I recommend living in **Hasdeu**, a student residence area with over 50 buildings where the vast majority of Cluj's students live. It's right next to a party street, a shopping mall, a supermarket open until midnight, a gym, and the river perfect for walking. It's also well connected by public transport.

If you don't want to live in a student residence, I suggest staying in the **city center** or in the **Zorilor** neighborhood. I recommend avoiding **Mănăstur**, **Mărăști**, and any neighborhoods near the airport.

2. Find a flat or a room

There are two main options: student residence or private housing.

Option 1: Student Residence

I chose to stay in the accommodation offered by UBB (Babeş-Bolyai University). Within a large student housing complex of over 50 buildings, one building is reserved specifically for Erasmus students.

- *The building has 4 floors, each with one shared kitchen, about 15 rooms per floor, and 2 students per room.*
- *Beds are placed very close to each other. Each room includes a private bathroom, toilet, and a balcony.*
- *The kitchen is open from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m.*
- *If you want to share a room with a friend, you can request it in advance. Otherwise, you'll be placed with another student of the same gender, often from the same country.*
- *There's a free gym in the building and a laundromat downstairs.*

The atmosphere is great, it's a perfect place to meet new people, make friends, and stay informed about parties and social events. I definitely recommend it. However, not everything is perfect. I've heard complaints about noisy or messy roommates, so it depends on your luck.

Option 2: Private Housing

If you prefer private housing, you'll have to go through an agency there's really no way around it.

III. 💰 Cost

- *A room in the student dorms costs about €30/month, all charges included.*
- *A private student apartment or a room in a shared flat will cost around €300–500/month.*

IV. When I arrive at the university

A. Inscription at the university

There's nothing you really need to do in advance everything is explained during the welcome seminar organized for Erasmus students, and most things are already handled for you.

B. Information on the university

1. Class

The teaching style in Romania is very different from France. At the beginning of the semester, the professor usually uploads the entire course on Moodle: full lecture slides, corrected exercises, and even a sample exam.

As a result, most students don't actually attend class and prefer to study independently. Attendance is not mandatory, and when professors do hold classes, they don't really "teach" in the traditional sense they often discuss current events, share personal stories, and facilitate light debates.

2. Organization of the Class

Courses are divided into **Lectures** ("Courses") and **Seminars** ("Seminars" or tutorials). Each class (lecture or seminar) usually lasts **1.5 hours**, and I had about **10 classes per week** (5 subjects: 5 lectures + 5 seminars), which added up to around **15 hours per week**.

As mentioned before, professors don't really teach new content beyond the **200-page PDF** they upload at the beginning of the semester on Moodle.

Professors are very laid-back, which really makes you reconsider the traditional student-teacher dynamic we have in France.

I had the personal phone numbers of several of my Romanian professors. It's common for Romanian students to follow their professors on Instagram **or** Facebook, and to know about their personal lives.

Students come and go freely during class arriving late, leaving for the bathroom, grabbing a drink, taking a phone call, or even leaving early has no consequences. One of my classmates even brought his dog to class regularly

3. List of courses and recommendation

SLE0035 Foreign Policy and Diplomacy

- *Not part of FSEGA, offered by the European Studies School.*
- *Very difficult and boring.*
- *I do **not recommend** this course.*
- **Exam:** Oral exam.

ELE0117 Multinational Corporations

- *Highly recommended.*
- *Very friendly professor, easy course.*
- **Exam:** 3 presentations during the semester.

ELE0255 Introduction to International Economic and Diplomatic Practice

- *Moderately recommended.*
- *Nice professor, easy course, but the general knowledge of Romanian students about international relations is quite low, more like middle school level in France (knowing European capitals, EU member countries).*
- **Exam:** Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ).

ELE0142 Communication Deontology

- *Very interesting, psychological, and innovative.*
- *Relatively easy.*
- **Exam:** MCQ.

ELE0072 International Business and Trade

- *Extremely difficult.*
- *Pure economics and mathematics.*
- *I do **not recommend**.*
- **Exam:** Open quantitative questions.

ELE0099 International Management

- *Quite similar to Madame Bez's Management course.*
- *Very interesting, moderately difficult.*
- **Exam:** MCQ.

ELE0105 International Tourism

- *Not very interesting.*
- *Fairly easy.*
- *I do **not really recommend**.*
- **Exam:** MCQ.

V. When I lived there

A. Safety

Cluj-Napoca is considered the safest city in Europe.

B. Phone and Internet

There is public Wi-Fi in the dorms and at the university.

It's very slow, so you'll need to rely on 5G most of the time.

I used an eSIM card, but it was quite expensive. I recommend buying a local SIM card once you arrive.

C. Events

The ESN (Erasmus Student Network) is very active and organizes events every week, ranging from parties and concerts to picnics.

D. Sports

There is a gym inside the dorm building.

E. Eating

There's a canteen near the dorms and at FSEGA offering a full meal for €2–6.

Otherwise, groceries are very cheap if you prefer to cook yourself.

Best traditional Romanian restaurant: Roata, with meals around €15.

F. Go to the university : bus, car, bike

From the dorms, it takes about 20–30 minutes by bus to reach FSEGA.

I personally used to walk, which took me about an hour.

G. Travels

I traveled solo to Budapest, Vienna, and Bratislava.

ESN also organizes trips to various places within Romania.

VI. After your semester abroad

A. What are you planning do to?

- ESCP : Master in Management – Programme Grande Ecole

B. Did you apply for master?

Admitted to :

- ESCP : Master in Management – Programme Grande Ecole
- EDHEC : Master in Management – Programme Grande Ecole
- EM Lyon : Master in Management – Programme Grande Ecole
- SKEMA : Master in Management – Programme Grande Ecole

- Université Paris-Panthéon-Assas : Master in Business Law