

Projecte

Erasmus Diary:

My experience in International Trade



Laia Viñeta Prims

International Trade - Carles Vallbona

Erasmus+ 2024-2025



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1. INTRODUCTION

My name is Laia Viñeta, and I am 19 years old. I am currently studying a Higher Education Degree in International Trade at Institut Carles Vallbona in Spain. This project is about my Erasmus experience in Romania. During this month, I have the opportunity to work in a company and learn new things related to my studies. The main goal is to improve my professional skills, discover a new culture, and live an international experience. In this report, I will try to be as honest and transparent as possible about my experiences, what I have done, and what I have learned. This experience is helping me grow both personally and professionally.

Before coming to Romania, I started my internship in Spain. During the internship, I talked with clients from all over the world and also with potential new clients. I attended meetings with them, sometimes in person and sometimes online. When things were very busy, I helped prepare small orders for the clients. I really enjoyed it because the atmosphere was very nice. Most importantly for my professional career, I was learning a lot of new things every day.

This is my first time participating in the Erasmus+ program, and I am doing my internship at ACA Market in Romania. I decided to take part in the Erasmus program because I wanted to improve my English skills, live a new experience in another country, and gain practical knowledge related to my studies. I also wanted to challenge myself by adapting to a different culture and work environment. My main goals for this Erasmus experience are:

- Learn more about international trade in a real business setting and understand how companies operate in another country.
- Improve my language skills, especially English, by communicating with people from different backgrounds.
- Discover new ways of working and develop professional skills that will help me in my future career.
- Grow personally by becoming more independent and confident while living abroad.
- Build an international network that could be useful for my professional development.



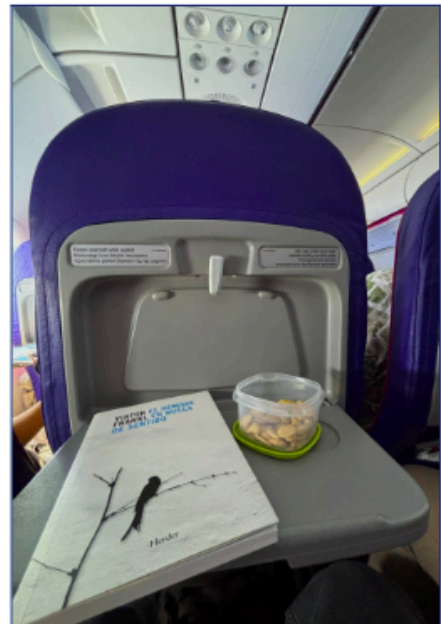
I believe that this experience will not only help me gain important knowledge and skills in international trade but also open my mind to new cultures and perspectives. I am excited to share my journey and what I learn during these 30 days in Romania!


2.1 DAY 1 (MAY 26TH)

I woke up very early this morning. I said goodbye to my mum and also to Anna, my sister. Furthermore, I cried a little because I was really scared of losing my suitcase or not being allowed to take my backpack with me. When they left, I stopped crying, I packed the last things, and I got ready.

At 11:45, I said goodbye to Grandpa Josep and headed to the train station. There, I met Fawad (my colleague). I also said goodbye to Dad and Grandma Montserrat. We looked for Nasira (other colleague) and the three of us arrived together at the airport. Once there, we went to check in our suitcases. Genís (colleague too) was already in queue. We checked in and then went through security. Nasira was stopped for a random check, maybe because she was looking like a wanderer (just joking).

After that, we found our gate and waited. We also took the chance to have lunch. After sitting for about an hour, we started queuing to board the plane. I was fear of my backpack, because it was a little bit bigger than the measures permitted, but they didn't say anything! Oh, and I was tracking my suitcase with an AirTag I put inside.



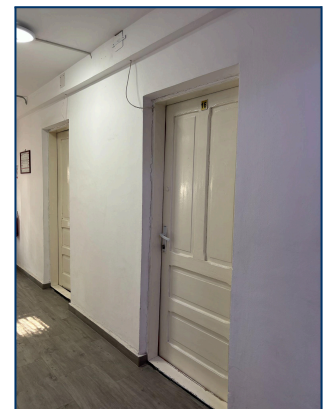


I sat between Fawad and a Chinese lady, she was so kind. I tried to sleep, but I couldn't, so I read for a while and snacked on almonds. After 2 hours and 20 minutes, we arrived. The airport was quite small. As soon as we entered, the police stopped us and asked for our ID, but there were no problems (luckily).

We went to the luggage belt, and our suitcases came out quickly, I felt really happy. Outside, Samuel, a taxi driver, was waiting for us. He drove us to Arad (about 45 minutes). He was driving very fast, talking on the phone with one hand and wearing headphones, but we arrived safely.



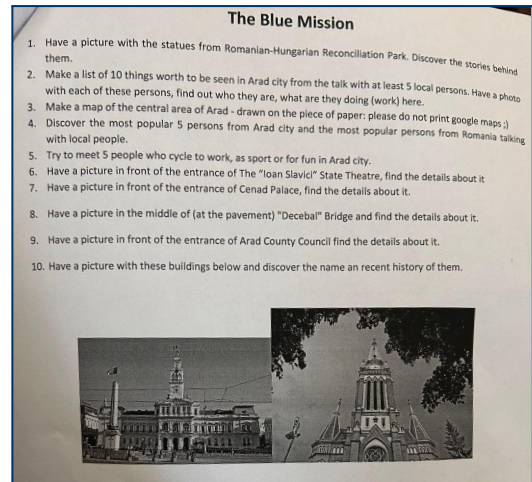
When we got there, Delia (our tutor) was waiting and gave us a tour of the residence. Nasira and I are in room 16. We got settled and went to find a supermarket where I bought some water, I was really thirsty. We came back to the residence and had dinner. Two Portuguese guys and a Spanish guy knocked on our door to introduce themselves. We made our first friends!



Finally, I called my family to update them and tell them that everything is fine, I unpacked my suitcase.

2.2 DAY 2 (MAY 27TH)

I started my birthday with a cold shower, which was quite refreshing but also surprising! Delia came by to check on us and gave me some useful tips about the city. She gave us a mission (The Blue Mission), we had to visit some historical places and talk with some strangers. There were 10 challenges we had to complete that same morning. Some were taking photos and others were interacting with local people.



Finally, we went out to explore the Arad centre. We visit the most famous places and that gave us a global vision of the city. I tried to talk with some Romanian people, which was a bit challenging but fun. When we finished all the challenges, we met Delia again.

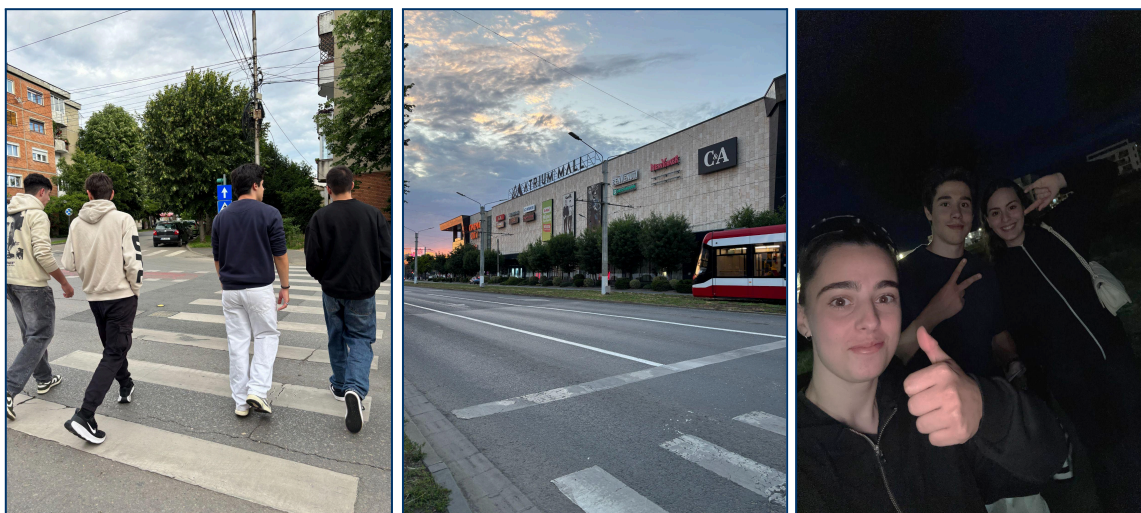


For lunch, I ate at a kebab place (I don't like it, but anyway I ordered something else to eat). After that, we took the tram to go back to the dormitory. The first problem appeared, my ticket card wasn't valid. It made me very embarrassed because the ticket reader started making a lot of noise, and people were laughing.



Back at the residence, I went for a walk around the neighbourhood with Fawad, and then I also walked alone to get to know the area better.

In the evening, I met up with the two Portuguese guys (Fábio and Ruben) and the guy from Mallorca (Guillem). We went to the city centre to have a drink together. Later, we visited a shopping mall called Atrium Mall.



We had dinner and then returned to the residence. Unfortunately, I couldn't sleep very well. It was a bit hard to relax, but I finally managed to fall asleep.

2.3 DAY 3 (MAY 28TH)

I started the day with a shower. Delia came to pick us up and took us to work, I was a little nervous about this first day of work in another country. Oh, I forgot, I'm going to work at the same place as Nasira: ACA Market in Via Carmina. The boys, Fawad and Genís are going to work in a different town. Our supermarket is located in a good neighbourhood, or so it seems.

At the company, we signed the internship agreements and met our supervisors and new colleagues. My company tutor is Violeta, a kind woman. Everyone was very friendly, and they made me feel comfortable.



At work, my task was to check the expiration dates on all the products in the store. The people there were really kind and let us have free drinks and food. However, Nasira made a mistake and ordered sparkling water instead of still water, now we have 10 bottles of sparkling water that we don't like!



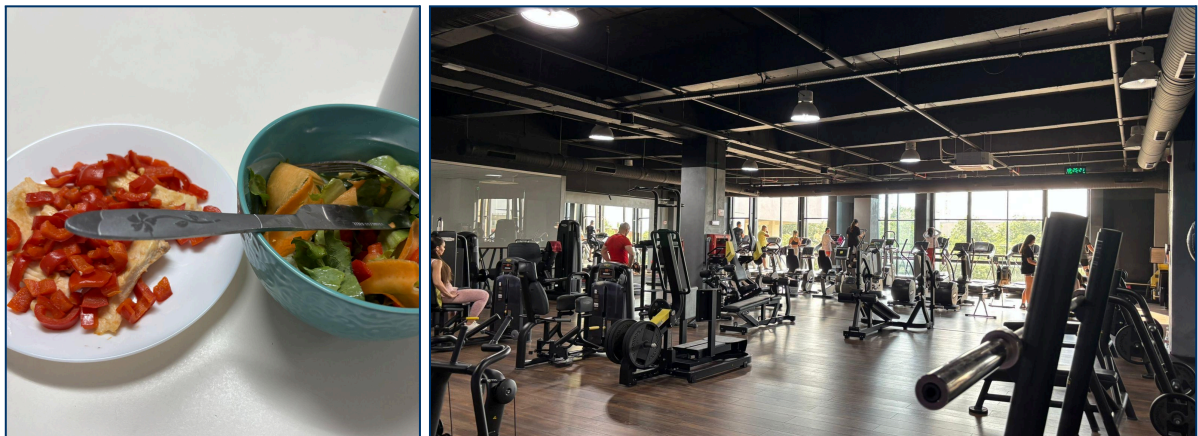
I asked Violeta if I could take some pictures of the supermarket, and she said no problem.



After work, we took the tram back. The tram was very old and felt like something from the Third World. It was a bit of a scary journey...



For lunch, I ate with the Portuguese guys and with my Spanish colleagues too. Later, I went to the gym, bought some food, and took another shower.



For dinner, I was feeling a bit sad and frustrated because it takes a lot of time to go to work and come back (about 2 hours in total), and the assigned task was very boring. A slightly disappointing day, but with hope that the next ones will be better.

2.4 DAY 4 (MAY 29TH)

We woke up early to walk all the way to Micalaca. It took us about one hour on foot, and when we arrived, Violeta came to pick us up. In the end, we realized we could have just taken a Bolt (like a local taxi) for only 1 euro!

I was hungry, so I bought a pastry, but it tasted terrible. We had breakfast at the supermarket where we work.

Then, we spent four hours checking expiration dates on products again. Luckily, we could leave after that.

We took the tram back and met Genís and Fawad. We started walking to the residence, but it began to rain. And no, we didn't have an umbrella, although luckily I had a raincoat. By the time we arrived, we were completely soaked!



We had lunch, and in the afternoon, we didn't really do anything special. Later, I went to the kitchen to prepare some chicken for dinner. When I came back, I worked on my Blue Mission project.

In the evening, we went downstairs to have dinner together.

2.5 DAY 5 (MAY 30TH)

Just like yesterday, we got up at 7 and walked for one hour to Micalaca to meet with our company's tutor.

At work, we did the same as the others days: checking labels and also restocking products on the shelves.

After lunch, I went to the gym with Fawad. Then, we went shopping for some basic things: water, tuna, salad, and strawberries.

When we got back, we saw that there were no washing machines available at first. We took a shower and finally managed to put our clothes in the washing machine. Everything was fine, but my mum made me a bit nervous by saying that if I didn't put enough clothes in, the machine might get stuck. To avoid panicking, I put my clothes together with Fawad's.



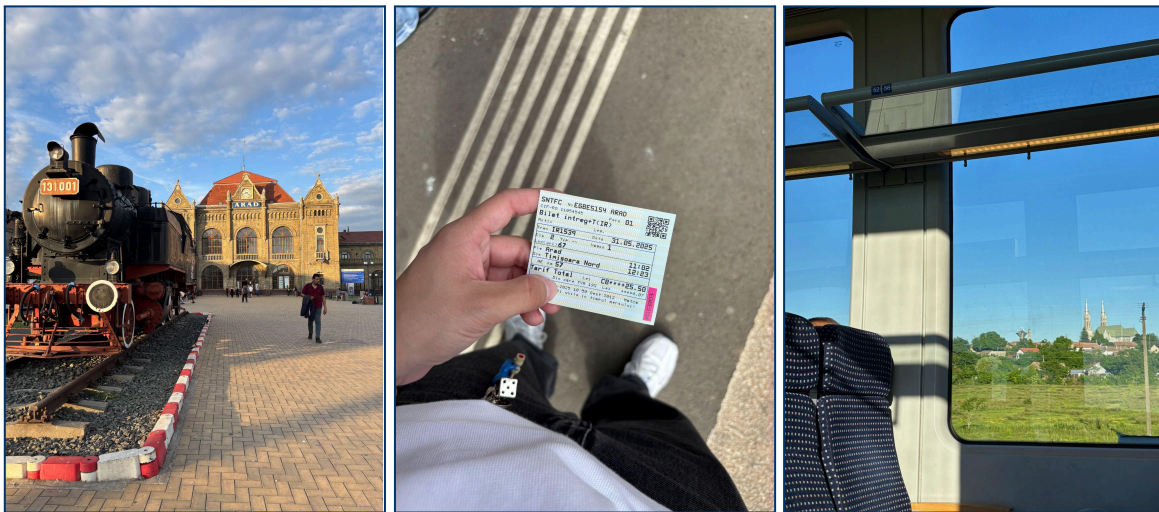
In the end, everything was okay. We hung up our clothes and had dinner. I tried to make some mini hamburgers, but the result was pretty bad. Luckily, Guillem let me use his pepper, which helped a little!



2.6 DAY 6 (MAY 31ST)

We woke up at 9 a.m. to get ready for our trip. At 10 a.m., we headed to Arad station to catch a train to Timișoara. We went with the two Portuguese guys and the guy from Mallorca, so there were seven of us in total.

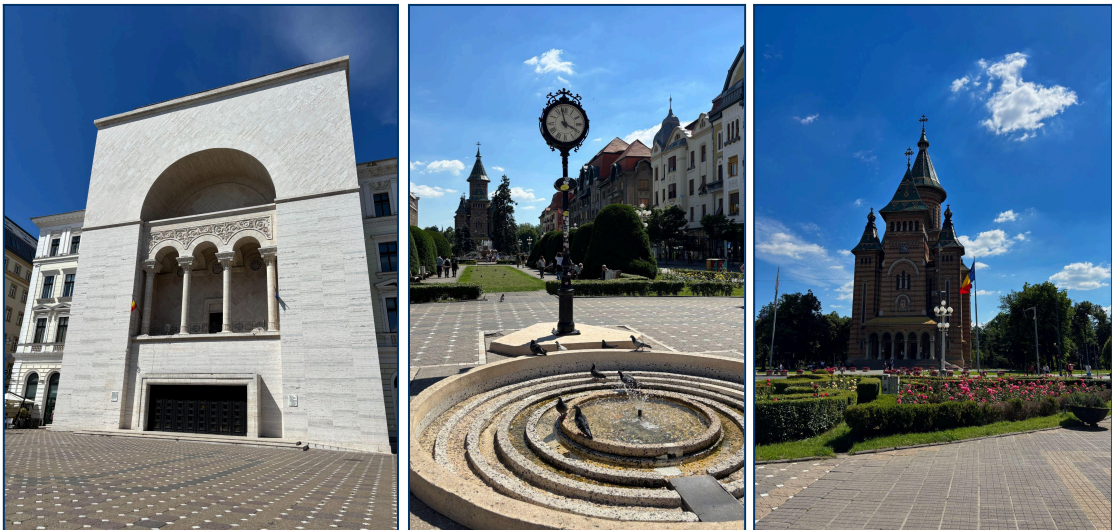
The train left at 11 a.m., but it was very slow, and we didn't understand why. After about an hour and a half, we finally arrived.



Once there, we decided to go to a shopping mall to have something to eat. I didn't want to take any risks, so I ordered pasta Bolognese, which was very tasty, by the way.



After lunch, we went to the centre of Timișoara, where we had a soft drink. Then, we visited one of the most famous squares: Piața Victoriei.



We arrived at the train station, and we thought we had bought a return ticket, but it turned out we hadn't, so we had to buy a new one. If the train going there was slow, the return train was even slower! On top of that, it wasn't direct and stopped at every station.

Despite that, the trip was worth it. Timișoara is a beautiful and charming city, and we had a great time.

2.7 DAY 7 (JUNE 1ST)

I woke up early to go to the gym. After my workout, I took a walk around the city and then returned to the residence.

In the afternoon, we planned to go bowling with the usual group. But something else happened. Our tutor, Delia, came to the dormitory to talk with us about the week. We told her that we were a little disappointed because we spend a lot of time travelling. Also, at the company, we do tasks that are not related to our studies and were not in the agreement. She said that was just our opinion, and maybe we got those tasks because we were not qualified for other work. After this, we felt she was not respectful, so we told our coordinator about it. By the way, our coordinator is Ferran. He manages all the high school's Erasmus mobility programs.

When we finally arrived at the place, something unexpected happened when we arrived: we went inside, but everything was dark. The place was open, but it surprised us.

We decided to call the phone number on the entrance of the bowling alley. After several attempts, someone answered. It was a very kind man who told us to wait there and that he would come soon.

We played for about an hour, and it only cost 2 euros per person. It was hilarious because none of us are professionals, and we made quite a few silly mistakes.





Later that night, new roommates arrived. They were all Spanish, specifically Catalan, like us. It was funny to find so many people from our region here, especially since we thought we would meet people from all over the world. We introduced ourselves and then went to rest.

Afterwards, I went back to the residence to rest. I felt very angry and disappointed with our tutor because she is supposed to help us, but she really didn't. She treated us badly and made us feel like fools.

2.8 WEEKLY REFLECTION

I have felt a bit bad about the tasks I have had to do during this experience. I don't feel like I am learning anything new, and I am not improving my skills. The tutor, who is supposed to help us with everything, doesn't seem to be very helpful. Sometimes, I feel frustrated because of the bad communication and the way she treats us.

Even so, I am still motivated and I don't lose hope. I want to make the most of this opportunity and learn as much as I can.

3. THE SECOND WEEK (02/06-08/06)

3.1 DAYS 8 TO 11 (JUNE 2ND TO JUNE 5TH)

In this week I'm not going to explain my day per day because all the weekdays were the same and I don't want to have a boring diary. I'm going to try to summarize what I've done these days, specifically from June 2nd to the 5th, that is, the days I've worked.

Unfortunately, or fortunately, the trams are being repaired because there were problems with derailments. Now, we take the bus, which surprisingly is faster and more effective for us. So we don't meet with our tutor any more because we think it's a waste of time to go all the way to Micalaca.



Our tasks have improved a bit. Besides restocking products, we also organize the new products that arrive every morning and arrange pallets. It's not as boring as before, but I still wonder if this work is really related to what I study.

Also, after several months without pain, my wisdom toothache came back, which made some days harder.

Anyway, they have reduced our working hours a little because of the time we used to spend on transportation. This week went by quite fast, one day more, one day less.

3.2 DAY 12 (JUNE 6TH)

Today, we didn't go to work because there was a planned trip. We went with the new Spanish students, the Portuguese guys, the guy from Mallorca, and us. We travelled with a colleague from our tutor's company, a very kind young man.

We went to Deva, which is about 3 hours from Arad. We travelled in two different vans. I went with the people I liked best and with the driver I already knew, Samuel.

When we arrived, we visited Corvin Castle, a very beautiful place. The castle is famous and very old, built in the 15th century. It is one of the biggest and most impressive castles in Eastern Europe. However, it was full of children, and there were very long lines to enter the rooms inside the castle. We spent about one hour visiting it.



After that, we had a free time, and we decided to have lunch because we were a little bit tired and hungry. Before leaving the castle, we visited the torture museum inside the castle grounds. I didn't like it and it was too small.



Next, we decided to go to Deva Fortress. There were many stairs to climb, and most of our group decided not to go up because there were also many snakes. But it was worth it! I liked the fortress more than the castle because the views were beautiful, and the place was full of nature.



On the way back, our driver was very fast. For him, it must be normal to drive with one hand while writing notes with the other and wearing headphones, but it made me feel a little unsafe. Despite the difficult trip back, the day was amazing. We had a great time and saw new places in the country.

3.3 DAY 13 AND 14 (JUNE 7TH AND JUNE 8TH)

This weekend was very calm and, honestly, a bit uneventful, but sometimes that's exactly what you need. On Saturday and Sunday, I took the chance to go to the gym, trying to keep healthy and not let all the Romanian pastries win the battle. I also went grocery shopping to stock up for the next few days, so I wouldn't have to worry about food during the week.

I walked around the city centre a few times, even though by now I know almost every corner. It's funny how the same streets can start to feel familiar, but I still enjoy seeing the pretty buildings and lively squares.

But the best part is that I finally made real progress on this Erasmus project. Until now, I only had a draft, but with all this free time, I managed to organize my ideas and write much more. Maybe the routine is a bit boring, but at least I'm using it to be productive!



3.4 WEEKLY REFLECTION

This week, the work has been a little less boring than before, which is good. However, I don't know why, but I have felt a strong desire to go back home to Catalonia. Maybe it's because I have managed my time well and had a lot of free time. Every day, there is one day less until I return home.

Don't get me wrong, I am having a good time with my colleagues, but the routine is starting to feel a bit boring. I also feel frustrated with the tutor because of bad communication and little progress. Still, I want to keep trying and make the best of this experience.

4. THE THIRD WEEK (09/06-15/06)

4.1 DAY 15 (JUNE 9TH)

On Monday, June 9th, it was a holiday in Arad, so we didn't have to go to work, which was even better.

Today, Fawad and I decided to try a croissant from a bakery in the city centre. Spoiler: it was the best croissant we have ever eaten! Maybe eating that croissant is the cure for my wisdom toothache, at least, I like to think so!



We also had a meeting with Valentina, the Uniser representative who manages much of our Erasmus program. We updated her on everything, and she promised to help us as much as possible. She is our salvation, just like our school coordinator.

After this chill afternoon, I went for a walk with my colleague Fawad, we went to the centre, and we took some pictures.

4.2 DAY 16 (JUNE 10TH)

We went to work as usual. Violeta told us she couldn't be with us that day and said we could do whatever we wanted. So, we couldn't do anything very interesting. Actually, we tried to organize all the products in the supermarket perfectly.

When there were 15 minutes left before we finished, she told us to restock a group of products. Luckily, we finished it in 20 minutes.

While waiting for the bus, I started talking with a local lady. We didn't talk much because of the language barrier, but I used a translator to help.

After work, I did the usual: gym and then back to the residence.



4.3 DAY 17 (JUNE 11TH)

Today was quite a strange and funny day. I woke up with a toothache because, as I said days before, my wisdom teeth are starting to come in. I tried to take a painkiller, but it was impossible, even after drinking a whole liter of water, the pill just didn't want to go down! Our roommates also overslept, so we all started the day in a rush. We tried to run to catch the bus, but of course, when we arrived, it had already left. We had to let our tutors know that we were going to be late.

Since we missed the bus, I decided to go to the gym with Fawad. We walked around for a while and then went back to the residence. In the afternoon, I took a long and needed nap because I didn't sleep well last night with all the tooth pain.

Days like this are not perfect, but they are the real memories we will take back to Spain: funny stories, little disasters, and moments that make this Erasmus experience unique. I hope tomorrow will be a better day, but at least today gave us something to laugh about!

4.4 DAY 18 (JUNE 12TH)

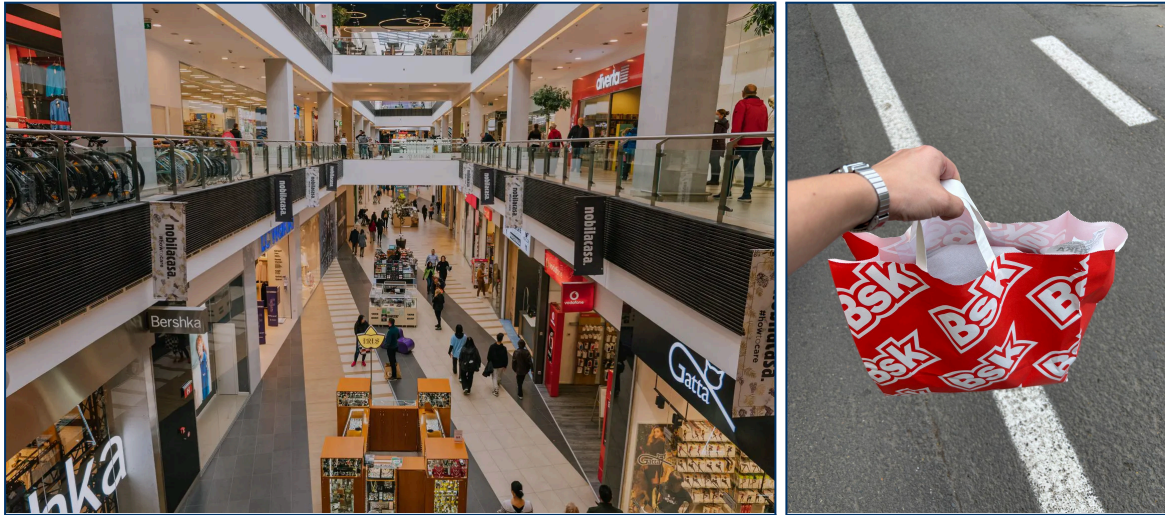
Today, we went to work, but nothing interesting happened. We didn't get any tasks, and every day feels slower than the previous one. Near the end of the shift, they asked us to organize everything by rows because they will soon do an inventory. There was one section that was impossible to organize, so we just ignored it completely.

After work, I went to the gym. Before going back to the residence, I stopped at a supermarket because I wanted to get something quick for lunch. Cooking here is a bit complicated with the kitchen we have. I asked almost all the shop assistants in English, but they didn't understand me. So, I had to use my best friend: the translator app. Finally, they showed me some products, and I chose one.

When I was at the checkout, the cashier asked me if I was Italian. I said no, I'm from Spain. Plot twist: she and two other assistants I had talked to were also Spanish. Just another funny story for this trip.



In the afternoon, I went to the mall with my friend Fawad. We bought some clothes. I got two pairs of shorts and a short-sleeved T-shirt to survive this hot summer. Finally, I bought some food and went back to the residence.



4.5 DAY 19 (JUNE 13TH)

Today we went to work as usual. I only organized products and put new ones on the shelves. While we were waiting for the bus, I helped a lady. Basically, she didn't know if the bus was coming, so I wrote to her that it would arrive in about 5 minutes. To be honest, I wrote what she wanted to know using the translator. Once back in Arad, I went to the gym and then to the residence.

Today, incredibly, we actually had plans for the afternoon and evening! At 5 p.m., we went to the Retro IT Museum in Arad. Fawad, Ruben, Fábio, Nasira, and I went together. We spent almost two hours there. Luckily, the guide explained what everything was and what it was used for, because otherwise we wouldn't have understood anything. He also told us many stories, some of them surprising for us, since our generation was born with the internet. I learned a lot, and that's what I appreciate the most, besides having a great time.



Afterwards, we went back to the residence to rest a bit before dinner. We were determined to have dinner at a restaurant in the centre of Arad, but then we thought: should we make a reservation? And yes, we called and reserved immediately. There wasn't much time to lose because the only available time was at 8:30 p.m. We hurried and ran to the restaurant.

The restaurant was called D'amici Ristorante. We chose it because it had very good reviews, a lot of variety, and it fit our budget. It didn't disappoint! The food was delicious, the waiters were very friendly, and the atmosphere was nice. I didn't finish my dish, which was like a pizza, so I decided to take it back to the residence to eat it later.



After dinner, we decided to walk around the central streets of Arad. We had never walked there at night, and it surprised us because it was really beautiful.



4.6 DAY 20 (JUNE 14TH)

Today we had to wake up very early because at 5 a.m. we were meeting the group to go to the station. I woke up at 4:30, but somehow I fell asleep again. Suddenly, I heard someone knocking on the door. I looked at my phone and saw it was already 5:10! I got dressed very quickly and woke up my roommate too. Everyone was ready except us. We were already late, so walking was not an option, we would have missed the train. We decided to rent electric scooters. I had never driven one before, but I had to take Fawad with me because he didn't feel confident to drive. Luckily, it was worth it, and we arrived just in time to buy the tickets.



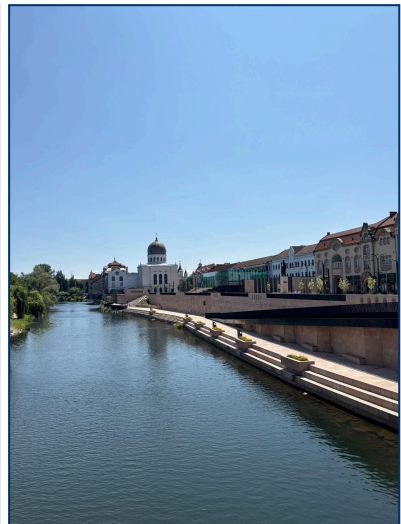
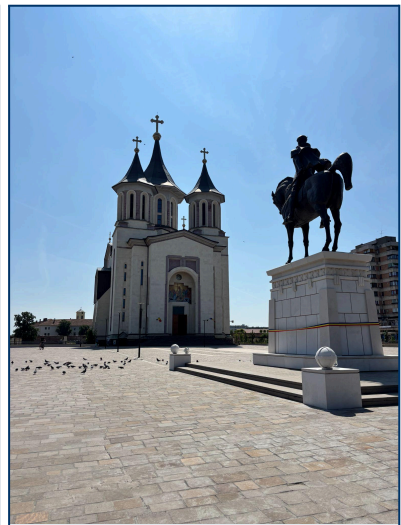
While we were waiting in line at the ticket office, two people cut in front of us. We had already lost a lot of time, so we decided to buy the tickets online. We ran to the platform and the train was just arriving. Now we had three hours on the train until we reached Oradea, a city in the north of Romania. I couldn't sleep or go to the toilet, and I really needed both!



Once in Oradea, we looked for a café to have breakfast and, most importantly, to use the bathroom. I ordered a Nesquik and a chocolate croissant. I didn't expect to have to spread the chocolate myself, but it was actually pretty good.



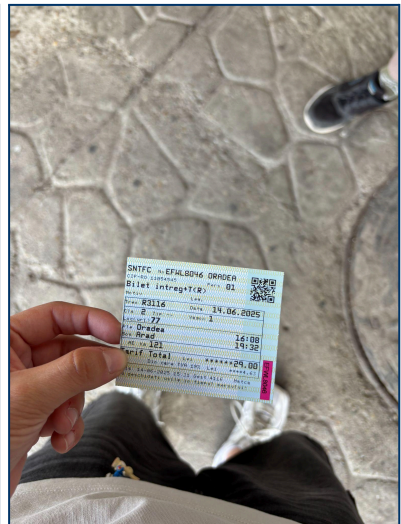
After this break, we started our planned route and walked to the city centre. Oradea is a very beautiful and calm city. I liked it a lot, and I think my friends did too.



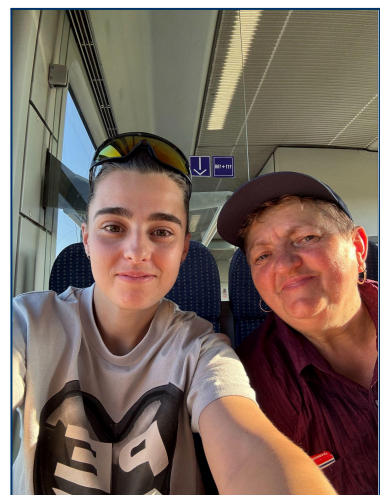
We had lunch at a restaurant that wasn't exactly in the centre, and to get there we had to walk on a road with no pavement or pavements. We waited almost an hour for the food, and we were a bit nervous about missing the train back, especially because we still had to buy the tickets. I ordered macaroni bolognese with orange juice. Luckily, we ate quickly and everything went well.



On the way to the station, we stopped for about ten minutes in a park to rest a bit from the midday sun. At the station, we bought the tickets and waited for the train.



On the train, it was extremely hot, and the sun was shining right on my face. I decided to change seats to feel a bit better for the last two hours of the journey. I was finally relaxed in my new seat when suddenly a lady sat next to me. She kept talking to me in Romanian, and I barely understood anything. Sometimes I used the translator to communicate. She was very kind, but honestly, I was very tired and annoyed by the heat.





After about three hours, we were back in Arad. We stopped at Lidl and then returned to the residence. It was a great day, we had a lot of fun!

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Index?

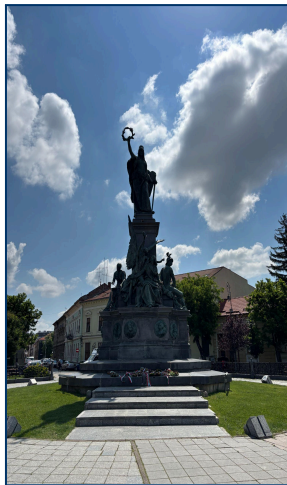
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6. Last Days (Days 29–30)
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 - **Final reflections**
 - **Overall learning and experience**
 - **Future plans related to international trade**

Fotos

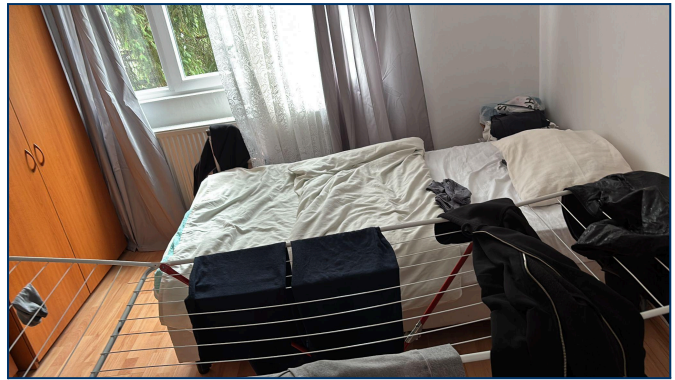
The Blue Mission

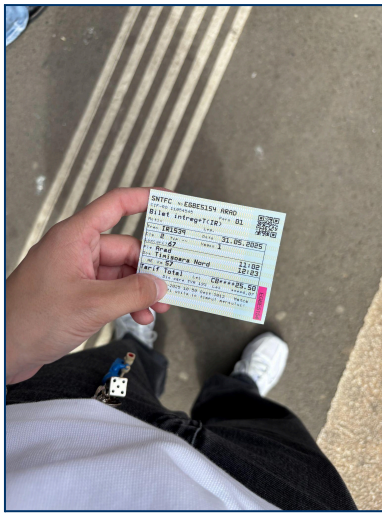
1. Have a picture with the statues from Romanian-Hungarian Reconciliation Park. Discover the stories behind them.
2. Make a list of 10 things worth to be seen in Arad city from the talk with at least 5 local persons. Have a photo with each of these persons, find out who they are, what are they doing (work) here.
3. Make a map of the central area of Arad - drawn on the piece of paper: please do not print google maps :)
4. Discover the most popular 5 persons from Arad city and the most popular persons from Romania talking with local people.
5. Try to meet 5 people who cycle to work, as sport or for fun in Arad city.
6. Have a picture in front of the entrance of The "Ioan Slavici" State Theatre, find the details about it
7. Have a picture in front of the entrance of Cenad Palace, find the details about it.
8. Have a picture in the middle of (at the pavement) "Decebal" Bridge and find the details about it.
9. Have a picture in front of the entrance of Arad County Council find the details about it.
10. Have a picture with these buildings below and discover the name and recent history of them.

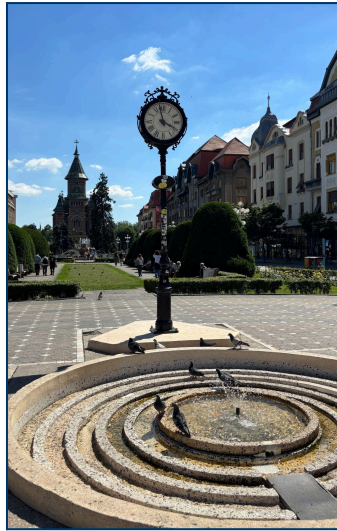



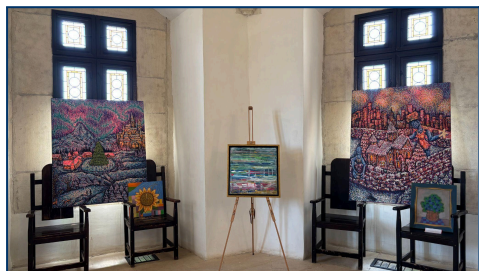
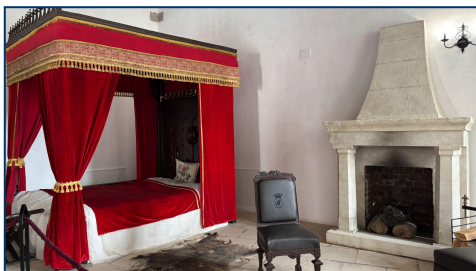


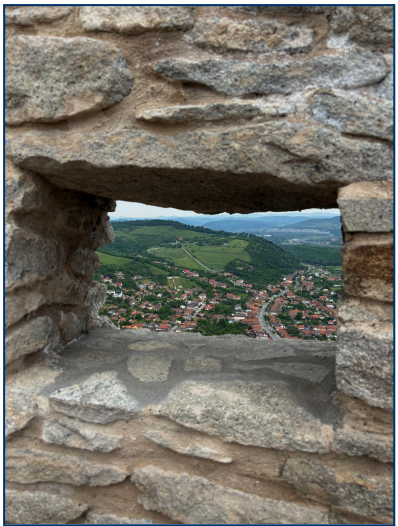
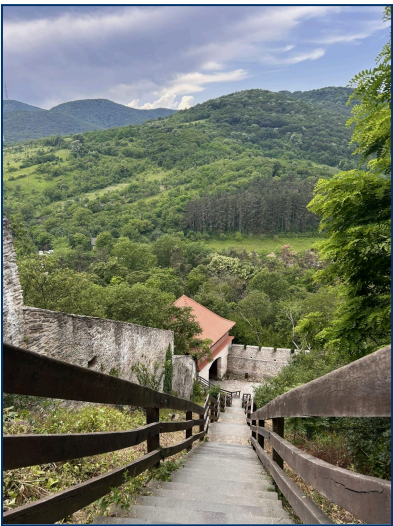
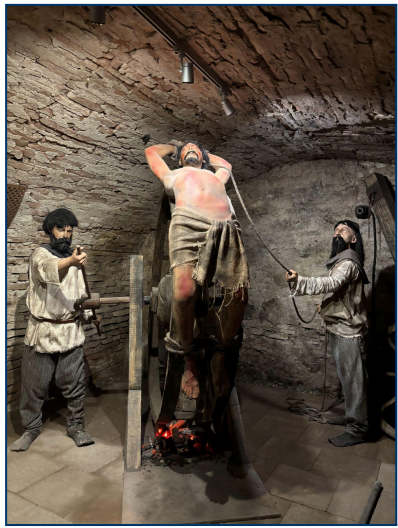














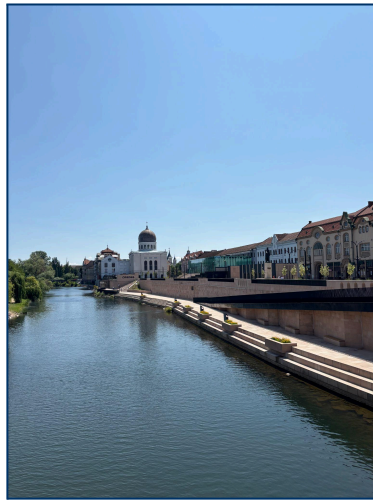






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brut

4.7 DAY 21 (JUNE 15TH)

gym, croissant,

WEEKLY REFLECTION

Emocionada perquè ja queda molt poc per a tornar a Espanya. Contenta perquè amb la tonteria ens hem saltat dos dies de feina. Setmana dolorosa pels meus queixals. Tasques terribles a la feina, vull tornar a les pràctiques d'Espanya. A la feina no estic aprenent res. Aprenc més durant els dies lliures quan fem excursions que no pas allà. A més, quan ens hem d'espavilar nosaltres sols per la ciutat també estem millorant el nostre anglès, cosa que no passa a la feina, ja que com a molt diem 4 frases contades en un dia.