My name is Santa Zeidaka, I was an Erasmus student at the University of Bremen. Originally I am from Latvia. I study at Riga Graduate School of Law, majoring in law and business.

On the first year of my studies I heard about possibility to apply for Erasmus Mobility program. Applying for ERASMUS seemed to me as a very appealing opportunity due to the invaluable experience one can gain by changing the environment around oneself. I find it of a great value to experience different cultures and living in an international atmosphere.

After the first year of my studies I started to work and missed my first real opportunity to apply for Erasmus studies. But then another call for student applications was made by my Erasmus coordinator and I was offered a place at the University of Bremen.

The first weeks I had German intensive course and nearly every evening Erasmus initiative had organized some activity for us to get to know each other. Erasmus initiative did a great job at UNI Bremen so people can meet as many people from different countries as possible. Starting from a city rally to Karaoke nights, and Movie nights and so much more.
For me, getting used to the University of Bremen was hard, because it was really different from mine. Riga Graduate School of law is a private university and there are only 300 bachelor students. It is really different, everybody knows each other and are really close. And the university itself is much smaller. But it offers only two programs as well - law and business / law and diplomacy.

The university in Bremen was completely different for me. I was surprised for sport activities they offer, for language learning center (it is such a great idea). And semester ticket - you don’t have to pay for transport, even to nearest big cities! These are things that were new for me, but not for German students.

Semester started on April, so I had to choose the courses I want to participate. All the lecturers were really open to Erasmus students. You can go and check the course and then decide if you want to take it or not. But for me there were only some courses I could take because, I am not that strong in German. I could choose only from English courses and there were not too many there. But I did a good job, as exchange students could take courses from as many faculties as they wanted.

In my opinion, the biggest advantage of Erasmus is meeting people from all over the world and travelling. So Bremen is a very good option, because it is very easy to reach Bremen airport and Ryanair goes from there. So it opens opportunities to travel to places like Rome, Barcelona, Milan, London .... very cheap. And, of course, there are big and beautiful cities in Germany which you should sightsee. And you can find very cheap ways to go there.
As well, a great opportunity that Erasmus opens is, while living in a different city it is much easier to learn another language. In the conclusion, I could say it was nothing like I expected. It is different for everyone, of course. For me, this was the first time away from home, and living on my own. It wasn’t that easy always. But I know that I gained a lot from this. It is true - when you are so far from home alone - you learn a lot about yourself.

Mostly I think that my life in Germany was a little bit like a dream, from which I had to wake up in August when I had to go back to my country. This is Erasmus. Nothing is real here. Everything has a different value here. Time is limited, friendships are formed within a few minutes and they are of great importance because we all share a similar experience. I advise everyone who has an opportunity like this, to take it.