



Participant details	
First name	Patrick
Last name	Mifsud
Erasmus+ Mobility details	
Mobility dates	19 th – 30 th March 2018
Place of Mobility	The Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management – The Netherlands

Testimonial

Please provide a description of your Erasmus+ experience; please write in the first person. Testimonial will be used for dissemination purposes on the EUPA's website, social media and/or other means of communications.

Describe your Erasmus+ experience

My Erasmus experience in The Hague was very positive and fruitful. My placement was at the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management which is responsible, amongst other, for Maritime Spatial Planning and at the Rijkswaterstaat which is the agency responsible for water management in the Netherlands. During the time I spent there the Ministry was working on the North Sea Strategy 2030. I attended a number of meetings with representatives from various other Ministries who are directly involved in the drafting of the Plan, as well as agencies, including a number of departments at the Rijkswaterstaat and other stakeholders, including the North Sea and the Oceans Core Team, the North Sea Management Coastguard, telecom cable owners; who have a direct interest in the North Sea and the Plan.

I have also attended a one day course about water allocation at the UNESCO Institute of Hydraulic and Environmental Engineering.

This experience helped me in becoming aware of the challenges which arise due to the conflicting uses that are occurring in the North Sea both at a national level as well as with the neighboring countries that share the same seas.

How did you feel before going on Erasmus+? Why did you choose to go?

My background is urban planning and thus I wanted to be exposed to other aspects of planning. When the opportunity of a placement related to marine spatial planning presented itself, it seemed the right opportunity to learn about a subject which so far I had little knowledge of.

What were the best and worst moments of this experience? How do you feel they helped you?

Most of the meetings were quite challenging for the chairperson charring the meeting as it is not an easy task to bring people from different backgrounds and conflicting interests to sit around a table and work around a solution that is feasible for all. The tact used by the chairperson in keeping the stake holders focused on the subject at hand was something to admire.

The highlight of the placement was when we visited an institute in Breda where an interactive version of the Maritime Spatial Plan Challenge game (referred to smart gaming) is being developed. Here I had an explanation of the use of gaming in spatial planning as well as given a firsthand experience of virtual reality and augmented reality.

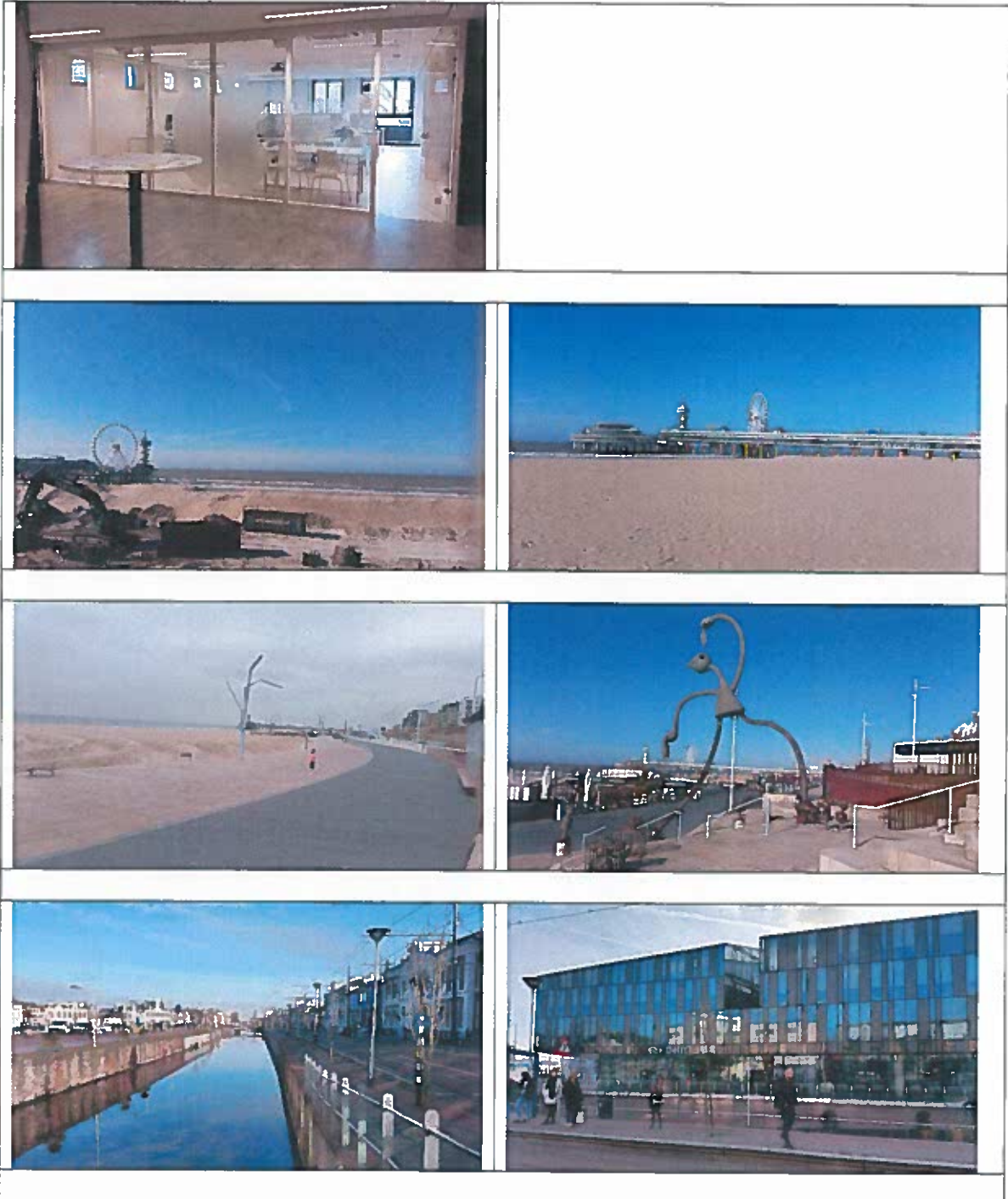
Luckily there were no instances that tainted this experience.

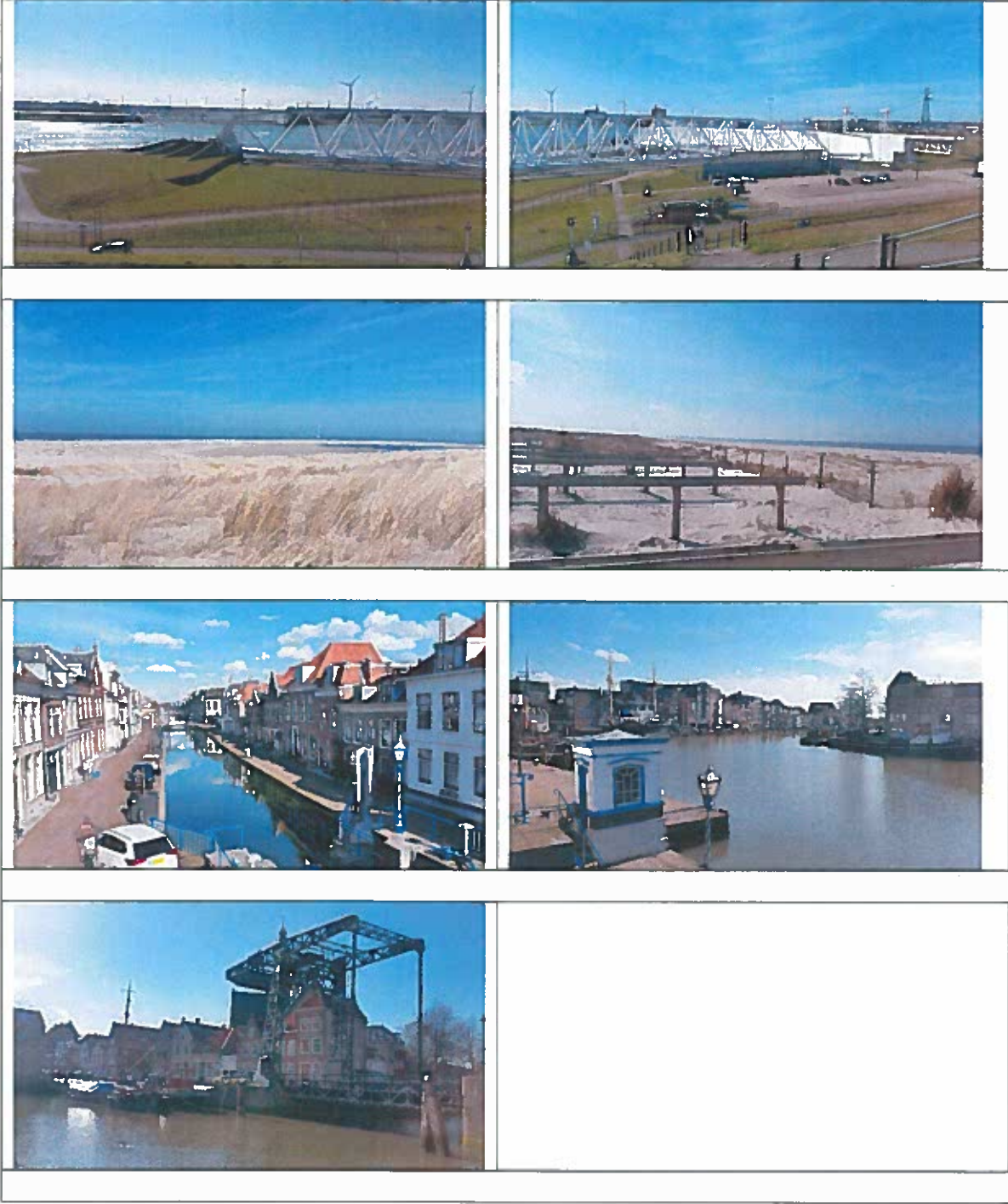
What would you say to someone who is thinking about going on an Erasmus+ experience?

Go for it. An Erasmus placement is an experience of sharing of knowledge and different work practices which will be beneficial both for oneself as well as the organisation one work for. It also helps to build networks with foreign expertise.

Insert any pictures that showcase your experience.









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