



Participant details	
First name	Robert
Last name	Galea
Erasmus+ Mobility details	
Mobility dates	9 th April 2018 - 20 th April 2018
Place of Mobility	Calvia, Mallorca, Spain

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 was positive from the start: I was selected to go following an interview; on acceptance, there was plenty of support for the administrative side, such as contact with the host organization, travel arrangements, dates, tasks etc. The preparatory work itself was also good experience, in terms of organization, coordination etc.

With regard to the placement itself, I was very well-received by the hosts; the hosts were also very helpful whilst I was there, both on a professional level (in terms of the work I was assigned to carry out) as well as on a social level (social activities, local information etc.).

Mallorca is a Mediterranean island as Malta is, so it was very interesting to compare and contrast the two islands, in terms of operations and management of planning and the environment.

My specific task was to identify and study a suitable route for a pilot project utilizing electric bicycles. This was a great experience as I did not know the island at all, so it was all back to first principles and applying my knowledge and experience to a totally new environment. So, apart from desk-top studies, I also went on a number of site visits, to check whether the identified route was feasible in practice; I also managed to obtain an electric bicycle in order to try out the route under real conditions, thus creating a real exercise rather than solely an academic exercise.

Apart from the work-based aspect of the placement, I also made the most of my time by visiting historical and cultural attractions on the island and visiting as many different places as possible, as well as discovering local cultures and traditions.

I also enjoyed various discussions with my colleagues on a day-to-day basis, whether it was about the work being done, comparisons between the two islands, suggestions for places to visit etc. As I was interested in the host organization, the hosts were also interested to hear about Malta.

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

I was very excited beforehand, as it is always good to travel and to have a change from the norm. Before travel, I read up on our designated locations, in my case Calvia, Mallorca, so as to have prior knowledge of the place and to know what to look out for, areas of interest etc. There was some initial trepidation with regard to the preliminary administrative work but this was soon sorted out. Such matters are also good experiences in themselves; similarly, finding suitable accommodation and sorting out travel arrangements and connections.

I chose to go on this placement as a chance to gain new experiences, visit places I might not have previously considered visiting, to have a change from the usual routine, to compare and contrast working practices in other locations, to learn by seeing and experiencing similar organizations in action, to apply my skills to new/different projects and to meet different people, sharing knowledge, experiences etc.

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

The best part was experiencing being abroad and discovering a new country, this being from a work/professional point-of-view as opposed to a holiday. It was also good working with professionals on the same level, but with a different outlook, thus we were able to compare and contrast our thoughts, ideas and work practices. Working conditions were also very good, so I was able to make good use of my time, both in terms of work input as well as personal discovery.

The worst aspect I found was the lack of public transport, which meant I either had to walk everywhere (not a bad thing in itself but problematic when significant distances are involved) or use a taxi, which was a rather expensive option of personal travel on Mallorca.

Another somewhat disappointing aspect was the weather: it was fine during the week but tended to pour with rain over the weekend (!) thus inhibiting my personal travel to discover new places and learn about the island. Having said that, it did not stop me from making the most of my time there.

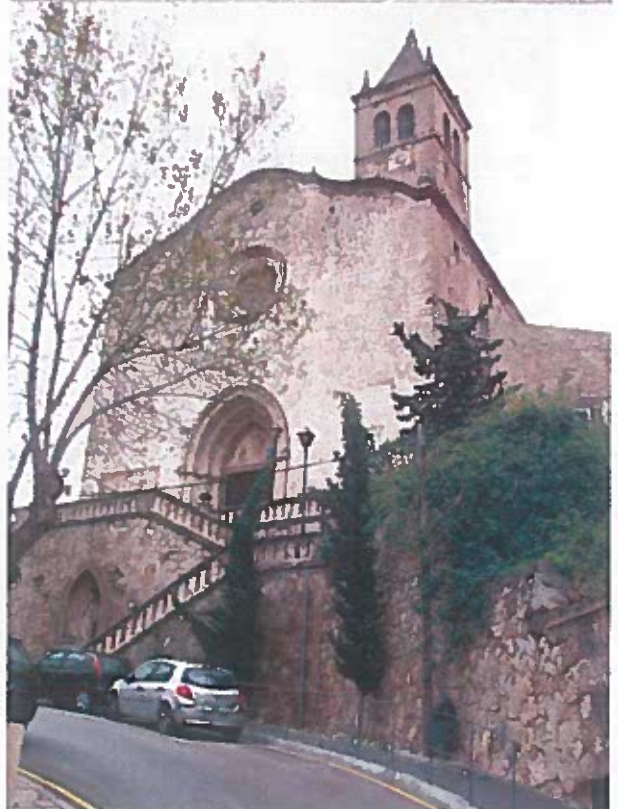
Being abroad helped open my eyes to other ways of doing things and broadened my mind and opened it up to new ideas. The negative aspects (lack of public transport and the weather) only showed that whatever situation I may find myself in, I try and make the most of it and not let opportunities pass me by.

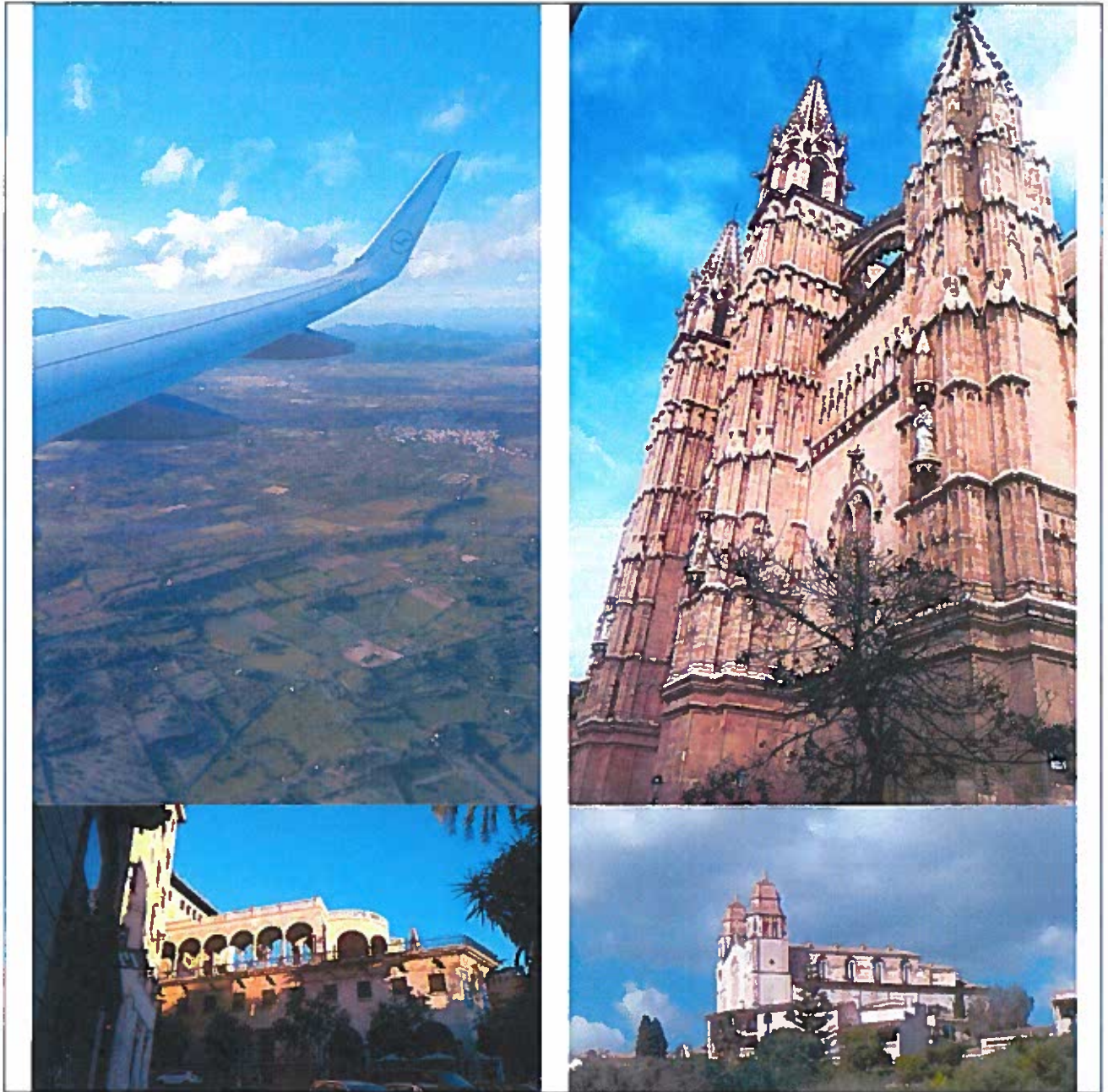
What would you say to someone who is thinking about going on an Erasmus+ experience?

Travel abroad and visiting new places is always a good experience and a good life learning tool; therefore I would encourage anyone to make the most of opportunities to travel abroad and experience the world; this is especially important for people from a small island like Malta as it provides an opportunity to broaden the mind. Erasmus+ is a great way to undertake such an experience, as it is work-related and for a length of time; therefore, one can experience similar work in different

environments and the 2-week visit gives one a chance to really experience the placement and get a feel for life elsewhere.

Insert any pictures that showcase your experience.





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