

## The Journey Begins

*My name is Tanyaradzwa Patrick Mapani, and I invite you to join me on my 5-month Erasmus adventure. I decided to spend my semester abroad in a city called Tilburg located in The Netherlands. I've been studying in Budapest for about 2 years now, and I felt it was time for me to explore more of the world. The Netherlands appeared to be one of the best opportunities to do so. I'll be studying the Advanced Courses for Creative Industries at Fontys University of Applied Sciences. I believe this will give me the chance to gain some knowledge in various subject areas which are not included in my current BA program at METU.*



*Firstly, I'd like to talk about the preparation phase as well as the hassles you may face on your departure day. This can be a very frustrating point in time, well at least for me it was. First of all, I underestimated the process of packing my luggage, this involved a lot of jumping and sitting on my bags just to get them closed, and to add onto that I still needed to make sure that I didn't exceed my baggage allowance. After debating with myself whether I was going to have to leave some stuff behind, I followed my instincts, got a taxi and went to the airport where I managed to check-in stress free.*

*The first impression I had of the Netherlands was from the plane. I could see a lot of canals and farms which looked very beautiful. At this point I was already excited, but I couldn't stop thinking about my heavy bags because the war wasn't over yet, I still needed to carry them around with me. When I arrived in The Netherlands, I had to catch a train from Eindhoven to Tilburg which was stressful due to my luggage.*



*Unfortunately for me my flight was an early morning one and once I arrived to Tilburg I needed to find my way to the housing agency to collect my house keys, but they only opened at 1pm so I decided to grab my bags and sat inside a Café for about 2 hours, not the best experience. Once it was time I made my way to the housing agency and this was most probably the most difficult part of the entire trip because I had two large suitcases and I had to carry them around with me in a city that I was barely familiar with, but at the end of the day I managed to get my keys and found a taxi home. For the record, the university does help you find accommodation through some agencies and it's very advisable to rent a place with them because there is a high shortage of housing here so if you decide to do it alone you may end up homeless!*

