

Social life as an Erasmus Student

Written by Krisztina Varga

Even though I couldn't spend enough time living a social life during my Erasmus because of the quarantine, I did use every opportunity I got.

Here in Bilbao there are two organizations for Erasmus Students. One of them is Erasmus Student Network (ESN), the other one is Happy Erasmus.

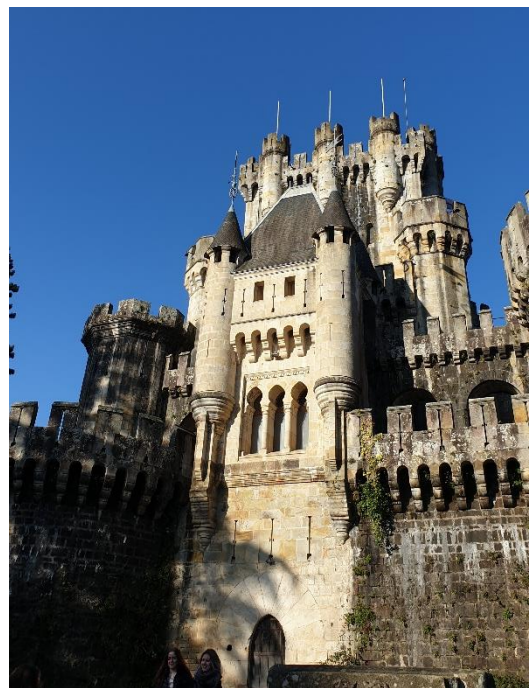
I personally prefer ESN, because it is non-profit and is controlled by volunteers and previous Erasmus students. This means that they perfectly understand our situation and what it's like to be an Erasmus student, and also, they are doing this willingly and for fun, not for money.



Gaztelugatxe (Dragonstone)

Apart from the trips, they also organize events almost every day, like city tours, game nights in bars, paella nights, international dinners, hikes, and so many more. Each one of their events felt like a big friend group having fun together, everyone smiling and even the organizers were one of us.

I joined many of their trips, to cities and places in the Basque Country. I went to see Gaztelugatxe (Dragonstone, famous for that iconic scene in Game of Thrones) and Castillo de Butrón, Gernika, Santillana del Mar, San Sebastian and Santander. I unfortunately didn't have time to join more, but they usually have trips all around Spain, and even to countries nearby.



Castillo de Butrón



Santander

The other organization, Happy Erasmus also had all these trips and events in bars. With them I went to Vitoria-Gasteiz, Salto del Nervión and Bordeaux. This organization I did not like that much however. The way they organized the trips was not very fluent, looking back, they were kind of overpriced and also, the organizers were very out of the group and not volunteers, but workers. Their trips compared to the ones held by ESN were too formal and not that liberate.



Salto del Nervión



Bordeaux, France

As time went on, every person had their own group of friends, but on these events I always met new people who I could join and talk to. The students were all very friendly and down for everything, and these trips and events made it very easy to always have fun.

As the example shows, there are millions of options to have fun and get around in Bilbao, and the opinion about the two organizations is my personal preference, it is not the case for everyone.