

GOING INTERNATIONAL

Naples elective - experience report

by Marie-Sophie Kaltenbrunner.



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Some time ago I had the fantastic opportunity to spend three months in beautiful Italy. During my 5th year of medical school I decided to visit a great city in the south of Italy called Naples. I completed three months elective in the subjects Gynaecology, Ophthalmology/ENT and Neurology at Medical University of Naples - [Università degli Studi della Campania "Luigi Vanvitelli"](#).

Organisation of my elective

Completing an elective outside of Austria gives you a great opportunity to see different cultures and beautiful places all over the world and especially getting an insight into different medical environments. I practised speaking the Italian language, which I learned some time ago in school and tried to be as interactive as possible. I heard about the differences between the Italian and Austrian health care systems and I was curious about getting a deeper insight into working at a hospital in Italy.

I applied online via Erasmus at the Medical University of Vienna and after the assignation I arranged an appointment with Dr. Human Salemi (Contact: exchange-outgoings@meduniwien.ac.at) who gave me detailed information about the next important steps for getting a place as a medical student in Naples. He can give you the information needed about the program, eligibility, fees and the application process and has an answer to all of your questions.

The application includes an online document about your personal details, which hospital and subject you are applying for and a confirmation of your student enrolment, your medical school transcripts and medical insurance (which I received from the ÖH of the medical university of Vienna). After I sent all needed documents to the University of Naples, the application process still lasted several months more.

Accommodation and living in Naples

Together with a good friend of mine called Vera I decided to rent an Airbnb flat in Naples. Because it was really close to the hospital and reachable by foot it was the most comfortable solution for us. Erasmus offers several student dorms as well, but we really liked our big flat with the fantastic terrace and decided to stay there for three months although it was not the safest area to live in Italy to be honest. In Italy the mafia still exists, though it is not always clear to see. We had a few experiences while spending three months in Naples. A short story should be mentioned here: Once while driving with the bus we thought to be controlled by the police. A local told us that the mafia is carrying out

checks to gain money illegally. We do not know if it is true, but fortunately we had a ticket and did not have to pay any fine. Anyway, it is important to be careful to not get into any difficulties.

Living in Naples is a lot cheaper than living in Vienna and we really enjoyed the great food and especially the fresh things (fish, mussels, fruits, vegetables) which you can buy at the market after working in the hospital. We cooked almost every day and enjoyed our self-cooked food with a great view from our terrace. There are also many options for eating at great restaurants (famous Pizza Napoletana see video “La pizza napoletana di Gino Sorbillo by [Gino Sorbillo](#)) that were really adorable.

The POLICLINICO Hospital in Naples

The hospital in Naples is a big clinic in the South of Italy where you can see a variety of patients. The hospital is not really modern and well equipped, but you can get a great insight of how the medical system in Italy works. The biggest difference is the hygiene in the hospital and furthermore the equipment is not up to date. But it is a great experience to deal with that because it is not usual in Vienna that you must work with old equipment in every room of the hospital, especially in the operation room. It was also a great experience to talk about different diseases in another language.

Vera, a good friend who studies medicine in Vienna as well, and I had the opportunity to see three different subjects we have chosen before (Gynaecology, Ophthalmology and ENT, Neurology) and went to lectures and conferences with different attendings, where we presented and discussed different patients. I liked the time at the Department of Gynaecology, where we saw a lot of births and investigations of pregnant women. I loved talking to the families of pregnant women after the sonography of the abdomen and I loved seeing their happy faces. At the ENT Department, the equipment was really modern compared to the other two Departments, but it was not my favourite subject, so I liked the other two months more. Especially Neurology was very interesting, and we discussed a lot of different neurological diseases like Multiple Sclerosis, Parkinson Disease or Epilepsy with all those present. Sometimes it was a little bit difficult to understand everything because people in Italy do not speak English as fluently as we are used to speak English in Austria and our Italian was at level B2.

Usually we arrived at the hospital around 9 am and mostly finished by 2 pm. We were very satisfied with our elective and the house staff including the attendings, residents and nurses. The physicians there were really helpful and open to all of our questions during our stay in Italy. We had a lot of invitations for dinner from medical students and they were welcoming and eager to meet us.

All in all, it is a little bit difficult to work in a hospital in southern Italy because the people there do not speak English very often. But after a while I managed talking about different diseases in Italian and I learned a lot during my time in the hospital. To profit from your stay in Italy it is important to learn the Italian language a little bit in advance of your stay.

My off-times

Outside of the hospital we had a lot of time to enjoy Naples and the beautiful Amalfi coast. We took a lot of great trips to Capri, Positano, Amalfi and also Sorrent. Before spending three months in Italy I had no idea how beautiful the south of this country is. We spent a lot of time at the sea and had fabulous evenings with the other Erasmus-students.

Almost every night the Erasmus organisation offered events and on weekends they organized trips for students from all over the world spending their elective in Naples. Therefore it was really easy making new friends and having a great time with the other students.

All together I had an amazing time getting to know a different culture and practicing the Italian language and also working at a hospital in Italy which is as I mentioned before really different to the hospitals here in Vienna and would definitely recommend it to anyone who has the chance to go.

Costs for 3 months in Naples

Flight (return flight):	350 €
Accommodation (per person/ per month):	300 €
Food and drink (per month):	200 €
Transport (per month):	50 €
Activities (museums, sightseeing,etc. in total):	Ca. 300 €

Interesting Websites

- [Università degli Studi della Campania "Luigi Vanvitelli"](#): Medical University of Naples
- [Babbel](#): Here you can practise the Italian language before doing an elective in Italy
- [Pizza Napoletana](#): famous Pizza at Gino Sorbillo
- [Tourimus-Guide Naples](#): helpful website about tourism in Naples

Contact

If you have any questions about Marie-Sophie Kaltenbrunners elective, or if you have any questions to Marie-Sophie Kaltenbrunner personally, please contact the GI-Team. Write an e-mail to media@goinginternational.org – we would be pleased to help you.

Do you have questions regarding the topics working & postgraduate training or finding jobs & career, write an e-mail to Mag. Seitz: office@goinginternational.org

Pictures



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Vesuvio © Marie Sophie Kaltenbrunner



Positano © Marie Sophie Kaltenbrunner

Contact

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