

INTERNATIONAL
STUDENT'S
SURVIVAL GUIDE

2017/2018



UNIVERSITAT
ROVIRA I VIRGILI

CONTENTS

WELCOME—BENVINGUTS! (p.4)

I GETTING STARTED AT THE URV (p.6)

Important documents (p.6)

Modification of period of stay (p.7)

End of the stay (p.7)

Main academic services (p.8)

Libraries (CRAI) (p.11)

II STUDIES (p.12)

Academic calendar (p.12)

Schedules(p.12)

III SERVICES (p.14)

Language Service (p.14)

Student Services Centre (SACU) (p.14)

University Canteen(p.15)

URV shop (p.15)

**IV INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND STUDENT CLUBS
(p.16)**

ISIC Student card (p.16)

Living at the URV (p.16)

V HEALTH CARE (p.18)

European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) (p.18)

Medical services in Tarragona (p.18)

VI MOVING TO SPAIN (p.19)

Registration of stay and NIE (p.19)

VII ACCOMMODATION (p.20)

How can I find accommodation? (p.20)

Sant Jordi Residence (p.20)

Private accommodation (p.20)

VIII DAILY LIFE (p.21)

Banks and currency (p.21)

Cost of living (p.21)

Local buses (p.22)

Intercity Buses (p.22)

Barcelona Airport to Tarragona (p.22)

Alternatives Transports (p.23)

Shopping and sightseeing (p.23)

Recycling in Spain (p.24)

IX BEFORE GOING HOME (p.25)

What Should I do....(documents, bank account and acomodation) (p.25)

X UNDERSTANDING CATALONIA (p.26)

XI SURVIVAL CATALAN (p.29)

XII CULTURE SHOCK (p.32)

How to survive (p.33)

Congratulations!

You are about to
have one of the most
awesome experiences
of your life!

JOIN US AND FIND FRIENDS AT:



[Official URV Exchange students](#)



[@icenterURV](#)

I. GETTING STARTED AT THE URV

What should I do...

...before arriving?

- 1. Remember to take a copy of your Learning agreement and the certificate of arrival from your home university.*
- 2. Don't forget your passport/ID card and the health card!*
- 3. Sign up in Doodle for an URV welcome meeting .*

...once I have arrived?

- 1. Come to the URV Welcome meeting you previously joined.*
- 2. Give us the certificate of arrival and we will sign and send it by mail to your university.*
- 3. Arrange a meeting with your URV academic coordinator.*
- 4. Be open-minded, make friends and enjoy your mobility experience!*

... before leaving?

- 1. Talk to your academic coordinator about your transcript of records.*
- 2. The last week you are in the URV visit the International Center to pick your attendance certificate up and say bye!*

IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

Arrival certificate and Attendance certificate

This certificates show the dates when you have arrived and when you end your mobility period in the URV.

At your arrival or in the welcome meetings, DELIVER IT TO THE INTERNATIONAL CENTER or we will provide you a similar model in order to state that you have joined the URV.

The International Center will sign and stamp it, and send it back to your home university by email. The International Center will keep the original document until your departure.

Remember to pick up the original document 2-3 days before your departure! You need to submit it at your home university in order to complete your mobility period.

Learning agreement

This document regulates:

- ◆ The conditions of the parties involved in the period of stay
- ◆ The subjects studied during the mobility period
- ◆ The number of ECTS credits
- ◆ Academic recognition
- ◆ Possible modifications

The learning agreement must be signed by all parties in order to complete your registration in the URV.

You have to contact your [URV academic coordinator](#) and make an appointment to check and sign the original learning agreement. Then you have to bring it to the International Centre and we will sign it and send it to your home university by e-mail.

The academic coordinator will also inform you the schedules and classrooms where classes for each subject included in the learning agreement.

If you have to modify your learning agreement later after, once it has been signed by all parties, you can use the section *During the mobility (Changes to the learning agreement)*.

Enrolment

When you will get your Learning agreement signed by all parties your URV academic coordinator will submit it in the secretary to enroll the subjects you have chosen. Then **you will get an enrolment sheet**, which is the official registration at the URV. It is very important to have this document, because it shows that you are actually enrolled in the subjects you have chosen.

MODIFICATION OF PERIOD OF STAY

If you wish to extend or shorten your stay at the URV, you need to get authorization from the coordinators both at your home university and at the URV. Once you have this, please complete this form, request the suitable signatures and submit the document in the International Center.

END OF THE STAY

Remember to collect your **Certificate of Attendance** from the International Center **before you leave back home**. When you come back home, you need to present it at your home university in order to complete your mobility period.

Visit your mobility coordinator to get your **Transcript of Records** which will show your courses, grades and ECTS credits. Otherwise it will be sent directly to your home university.

If you need other certificates or documents, remember to ask for them in advance so that they can be prepared before your departure.

MAIN ACADEMIC SERVICES



URV Access codes

You can find your username and password in the document given to you in the **welcome meeting**. These credentials will give you access to the URV's online services, such as your URV email account, Moodle and WIFI.

Here you are an explanation of how the access codes use to be:

- ◆ **Username:** the number of the ID document which you gave us in the registration form.
- ◆ **Password:** your date of birth: DD-MMM-YY
DD: day of birth
MMM: first three letters of the month of birth in Catalan
YY: year of birth

*Example: If your date of birth is the 3rd of January 1990,
your password is 03-GEN-90*



Moodle

[Moodle](#) is the URV's virtual platform which enables professors and students to communicate online regarding the subjects. It is an useful tool to download subjects' content, upload activities and assignments and communicate with professors and other students.

You can enter Moodle 24 hours a day through any internet connection. You can login with your username and password.



There is a free WIFI named **Eduroam** on all the URV's campuses. Log in with your username and password.

@ URV email account

You will have a [personal email account](#) at URV. Please note that all information regarding the courses, activities etc. will be sent to your URV email account, so remember to check it frequently. The account user is always your name dot surname followed by @estudiants.urv.cat (e.g. james.smith@estudiants.urv.cat)

URV Student card

The URV student card gives you access to the services provided by the URV's libraries (named CRAIs in the URV). This card gives you access to the libraries, to borrow materials and can also be used as a bank card, although you specifically request it in the Santander Bank. It will be given to you during the welcome meeting.



LIBRARIES (CRAI)

The [CRAI \(Learning and Research Resources Center\)](#) provides all the university services that support learning, teaching and research. The CRAI offers library loans, electronic publications, photocopiers, and lots of other useful services. You need your student card in order to access the CRAI and use its services. If your URV student card is not ready yet you can enter the CRAI by showing your admission letter.

In each campus of the whole university you will find a [library](#) that you can always access.

For each faculty or School you can check [its own calendar](#).

LIBRARY (CRAI CENTER)	Monday to Friday	Saturdays	Sundays and bank holidays
CRAI Campus Bellissens	8-21 h	CLOSED	
CRAI Campus Catalunya	8-21 h	9-21 h	
CRAI Campus Sescelades	8-21 h	CLOSED	
CRAI Campus Terres de l'Ebre	8-21 h	CLOSED	
CRAI Campus Vila-seca	8:30-20 h	CLOSED	
CRAI Medicina i Ciències de la Salut	8-21 h	9-21 h	CLOSED
Biblioteca de la Unitat Docent de l'Hospital Universitari Sant Joan de Reus	8-15 h	CLOSED	
Unitat Docent Joan XXIII (Biblioteca Hospital Universitari Joan XXIII de Tarragona)	8- 21 h	CLOSED	
Unitat Docent Pere Mata (Biblioteca Hospital Universitari Institut Pere Mata de Reus)*	<i>Monday, Wednesday and Friday</i> 8-15 h <i>Tuesdays and Thursdays</i> 8-17:30 h	CLOSED	
CRAI Seu Baix Penedès	<i>Mondays to Thursdays</i> 9-19 h <i>Fridays</i> 9-15 h	CLOSED	

II. STUDIES

ACADEMIC CALENDAR

1st semester: 06th of September 2017 - 4th of February 2018

2nd semester: 5th of February 2018 - 22th of June 2018

No teaching on:

- ◆ Christmas (23/12/2016 - 07 /01/2017)
- ◆ Easter (24/03 - 02/04/2017 both included)
- ◆ Public holidays

SCHEDULES

Classes at the URV take place between 8AM and 9PM. Lunch break is between 1PM and 3PM.

**Quart d'hora academic (academic quarter of an hour)* means that lectures don't generally start on time, but between 5-15 minutes late enabling people to get from one place to another.

For checking out your courses' schedules you can check:

- [EVIA](#): you can see properly your schedules, teaching rooms and final exams dates.
- The [Educational Guide \(Guia Docent\)](#) where you can find as well the courses summary.

Note that your mobility coordinator will show you as well all this information, so don't worry if you cannot manage the platforms before contacting him/her.

III. SERVICES



The URV's Language Service (*Servei Lingüístic*) is located in Campus Catalunya, entering on the left building, 3rd floor.



Opening hours

Monday to Friday: 10AM-1PM (also Tuesdays afternoon between 4.30PM-6PM).

International students can attend Catalan courses free of charge and Spanish courses at a special reduced price (from 88€). The language service offers language courses also in English, Italian, French and Chinese. The registration fees for these courses are the same for local and international students: http://www.llengues.urv.cat/mobilitat/arrivals/en_index/

Language Exchange

If you would rather prefer to arrange meetings with other students that may speak the language you want to learn you can always join the language exchange for free: <http://www.urv.cat/en/campus-life/services/crai/que-us-oferim/espai-aprenentatge-llengues/intercanvis-linguistics/>

Contact information:

llengues@urv.cat · Tel. 977 558 359

Can I get ECTS credits from a language course offered in the URV Language Service?

You do not automatically get credits for the language courses because these courses do not belong to an academic plan. So you mustn't include any language course in your learning agreement. After successfully completing a language course, the Language Service will provide you a certificate. You have to submit this certificate in your home university and request them to get the recognition of the course in your academic profile.

There will not appear any language course result in your transcript of records, so you will have to go to the Language Service to pick the language course marks and certificates.

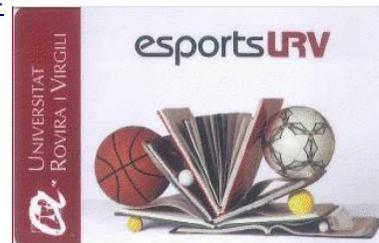
STUDENT SERVICES CENTER (SACU)

The SACU is the Care Service for the University Community (*Servei d'Atenció a la Comunitat Universitària*) provides students with information and services in various areas of the university life, such as sports, careers guidance, and psychological support. The SACU is situated on Campus Catalunya (behind the Library on the left side stairs) and most of its information is available online as well:

<http://www.urv.cat/en/campus-life/services/>

Sports

Esports URV aims to promote students' physical activity and wellbeing by paying the member fee you have access to various courses. Check out online which would be the one for you. <http://www.urv.cat/en/campus-life/university-extension/physical-activity/sport/>



Campus Catalunya. Avda.Catalunya, 35, 43002 Tarragona Office
hours: Monday to Friday from 09:30 h. to 13:30 h. -
977 558 833 - Fax: 977 558 636
esports@urv.cat

Other activities

There are plenty of activities to choose from at the URV, such as theatre and arts groups, the university choir, hiking or voluntary activities. More information is available online: <http://www.urv.cat/en/campus-life/university-extension/cultural-societies/>

UNIVERSITY CANTEEN

Each campus has a cafeteria/canteen which offers a warm meal on week-days between 1PM - 3PM. The price of the meal is between €1.50-€7.80. But if you want to take your food from home is useful to know that there is always free microwaves in each canteen available for everyone who wants to heat up their food.

URV SHOP

Would you like some URV souvenirs? Visit www.botigaurv.cat and choose yours! You can buy online or directly in the International Center and in all the CRAIs.

IV. INTERNATIONAL STUDENT CARD AND ASSOCIATIONS

ISIC STUDENT CARD



The International Student Identity Card (ISIC) is the only internationally accepted proof of student status. It also gives you access to thousands of student benefits and discounts all over the world. You can apply for your [ISIC card](#)

[online](#).



+INFO: hosting@urv.cat with the subject "ISIC INFO+NAME"

LIVING AT THE URV

URV mentors is a group of URV local students who have had a previous international experience and voluntarily help new incoming students get integrated into university life. They also give further advices on administrative procedures and provide useful tips on leisure activities, among other things.

Would you like to have a **MENTOR**?

Mentors are here for you, don't hesitate to ask them anything that you need!

Ask at the **International Center** and they will find one for you.

Mentors are here for you, don't hesitate to ask them anything that you need!

[AEGEE Tarragona](#)

AEGEE is one of the biggest interdisciplinary student organizations in Eu-



rope. You can contact them by email: aegee.tarragona@urv.cat

For more information, visit AEGEE web <http://www.aegee-tarragona.org/>

*There are lots of
at the URV!*



different student clubs

Check all them online:

<http://www.urv.cat/es/vida-campus/asociacionismo-participacion/>

V. HEALTH CARE

EUROPEAN HEALTH INSURANCE CARD

Students from other EU countries should obtain their European Health Insurance Card from their home country before coming to the URV. The EHIC gives you access to public health services in all EU countries including Switzerland, Norway, Lichtenstein, and Iceland. Make sure your EHIC will be valid for your entire mobility period!



Primary Attention Centres (CAP) offer medical services during fixed open-

MEDICAL SERVICES IN TARRAGONA

ing hours (some also offer a 24-hour service). If you need to see a doctor for a non-urgent matter, contact the closest CAP (we will provide you of a list of CAPs in the welcome meeting).

In case of emergency, go to the closest hospital!

Remember! When using the medical services, bring your EHIC and your URV acceptance letter with you to demonstrate that you are currently living in Spain. If you are a non EU citizen, you must show your URV acceptance letter and a private health insurance document.

Can I get any private insurance in the URV?

The URV offers an insurance that will cover your entire stay at the URV, including accidents, medical assistance and repatriation. More information at hosting@urv.cat.

How can I find accommodation?

The SACU (Servei d'Atenció a la Comunitat Universitària-SACU) is at your service in order to help you find suitable accommodation. Use the password *bhoo* to enter in its [database of available apartments/rooms](#).

VI. REGISTRATION IN SPAIN

REGISTRATION OF YOUR STAY: NIE

The procedure for registering in Spain depends on the length of your stay and whether you are a citizen of an EU country.

You need to register and obtain the NIE (foreigner resident's ID card) whether you are:

- # an EU student staying in Spain more than 3 months
- # a Non-EU student staying in Spain less than 180 days
- # a Non-EU student staying in Spain more than 180 days

In all these cases the **International Center** will help you with the procedure that you have to follow.



In case you need the NIE, please note that you can [watch our youtube tutorials](#) to know which steps you will be asked to take.

Or contact hosting@urv.cat with the subject "NIE request + NAME" and we will reply back solving your doubts.

VII. ACCOMMODATION

We recommend that you start looking for accommodation already before your arrival. If you prefer to see the options in person, we recommend you to book accommodation in a hotel / hostel / residence for the first few nights.

How to find accommodation?

The Student Attention Center (OOU) is at your service to help you find suitable accommodation. There is a [housing database](#) where you can see flats / rooms available. To access the housing bag URV, enter the password **bhoou**.

For more information:

http://www.urv.cat/serveis_universitaris/borsa_habitatge/en_index.html

Sant Jordi Residence

This student's residence is located in Tarragona city center, between Campus Catalunya and Campus Sescelades. It opens all year round excepting in the URV vacation periods (Christmas and Easter).

For more information visit <http://www.resa.es/eng/Residences/Sant-Jordi>

Private accommodation

You can find accommodation on several websites also in real states.

We recommend that you check the flat/apartment/room personally before signing any agreement or making any payment. Make sure you understand the terms and conditions of the agreement in order to avoid any problems. Remember to ask if the electricity, water and /or Internet are included in the rent. If you have problems understanding the landlord or the contract terms, ask your URV mentor for help.

Note that a passport or ID national Card, the university proof of enrolment and a Spanish bank account may be required in order to rent you some property.

VIII. DAILY LIFE

BANKS AND CURRENCY

Here you are some websites where you can search for shared flats:

<http://www.pisocompartido.com>

<http://www.easypiso.com>

COST OF LIVING

The currency in Spain is the euro (€).

Banks are open on weekdays between 8.30AM and 2PM. Some of them may also open once a week in the afternoon or on Saturday mornings.

If you wish to open a bank account, you may be asked to bring the NIE (see part VI), passport, enrolment proof or/and the URV student card.

Remember that banks usually charge a commission for the international banking services, like international transfers.

Whether food, clothes, accommodation and other things are cheap or expensive depends on what you are used to. A daily lunch menu in a restaurant costs between 8€ and 12€. In the evenings and on weekends prices are usually higher. Coffee in a cafeteria is around 2€.

A student spends approximately **€550 on monthly expenses** including accommodation, meals and transports.

LOCAL BUSES



INTERCITY OR LONG DISTANCE BUSES

EMT is the public transport company in Tarragona.



A single ticket costs €1.50. If you need to use the buses daily, you can buy a rechargeable bus card. There are several fares depending on how many journeys you would like to take in a certain period of time. There is also a reduced fare for under 25-year-old persons which costs 19,50€ and includes 100 journeys carried out in 30 days. More information on the bus routes, timetables, tickets and fares at

BARCELONA AIRPORT TO TARRAGONA

<http://emtanemambtu.cat/about/tarifes-i-abonaments-a-partir-de-l1-de-gener-del-2013/>.

If you have your accommodation in a different city from your campus (e.g. flat in Tarragona and campus in Reus) or you simply wish to visit neighbouring towns around Tarragona region by bus, we recommend you to pay a single ticket (e.g. Reus- Tarragona which costs 2,05€) or you can buy a bonus as well depending on how many journeys you would like to do in a certain period of time. You can check the webpage from [ATM transports](#) and look for the bonus that will be more useful depending on your necessities and the [schedules](#)

TRASPORT ALTERNATIVES

To get Tarragona from BCN airport you can easily book a transfer through [PLANA BUS company](#) that departures from Terminal 1.



You can also take a train in BCN airport from Terminal 2 and travel to Barcelona and stop in Barcelona-Sants or Barcelona -Paseo de Gracia or Barcelona- Estación de Francia (all three are in the city center) and then change to another train to Tarragona or Reus direction.

There are alternative ways of traveling that can be even more sustainable and more committed with the environment, as well as affordable.



-The [“Charity Bike” programme](#) or [Bicicleta solidària](#).

SHOPPING AND SIGHTSEEING

-[“FES_EDIT” APP](#) for sharing a car.

RECYCLING IN SPAIN

More information with the subject or

Shops and super-open from Monday days and on holi-closed. There sev-where you can shoes or jewellery taurants, cinemas

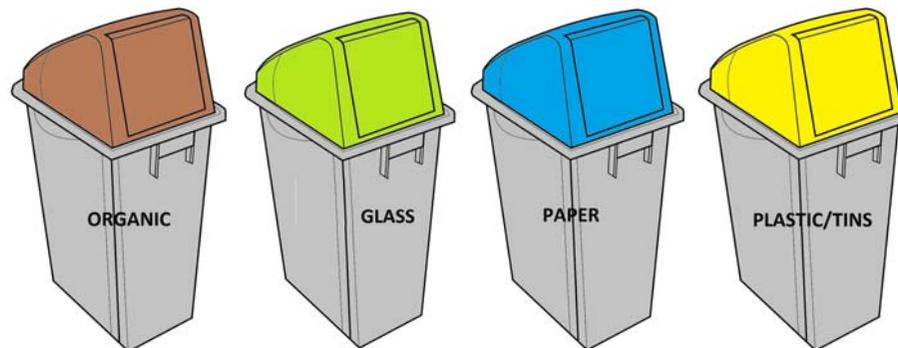
Recycle



at hosting@urv.cat
"Charity Bike+NAME"
"FESEDIT+NAME".

markets are usually to Saturday. On Sun-days they tend to be eral shopping malls find many clothing, shops as well as res-and supermarkets.

In the old town you can find retail shops that sell souvenirs, handicrafts, traditional Catalan products like wines or oils, among other things. The old town is also home to many restaurants and bars.



Bear in mind that when you have to throw the rubbish away it is important to deposit it in the correct bin. As long as we all contribute to maintain the environment we will enjoy life in a better way.

If you are not familiar with the culture of the Mediterranean countries, you might find several habits surprising. We have summarised some of the things you should know so that you can avoid shocking or unpleasant situations.

X. UNDERSTANDING CATALONIA



People in Catalonia make gestures and use their body a lot when they speak and they touch each other more (for example by putting a hand on the shoulder). In informal situations people greet each other by two kisses on cheeks - particularly if the persons have just been introduced.

A conversation between a group of Catalan friends is usually lively (and loud). It's common for everybody to talk at the same time, so don't be surprised if another person starts a new conversation before you have finished what you were saying.

Perception of time depends strongly where you come from. In Catalonia, people tend to be punctual in formal situations such as lessons, public events etc. but are more flexible regarding informal situations. It's also common for that people to change their plans at the last minute. The Cata-



lan expression "a quarts de" is used to give an approximate time.

As a part of the siesta culture (*migdiada*), shops and banks tend to be closed during the afternoon (between 1PM and 5PM). However, not all of them open again and not all of them close again, so always check the opening hours!

Eating habits can also be a little bit of a surprise. Lunch is eaten around 2PM and dinner between 9-10PM, and even later at weekends and in the summer. You will notice that some restaurants are closed between lunch and dinner time. Also meals themselves might be different from what you are used to: instead of a full breakfast at home people might have something small before going to work and then have a sandwich or cake around 10AM. Lunch can be a three-course meal with wine or beer. Eating is often related to social occasions, which is why friends and families tend to gather together for a meal.

If you wish to explore Catalan gastronomy you can start with tapas, paella and crema catalana. However, in order to get a deeper insight into our delicacies it's worth trying a lunchtime menu



in a local restaurant or even travelling out of town to find other traditional dishes. Fruits and vegetables are fresh and easily available in fruterias, so enjoy them!

Late night schedules apply not only to dinnertime but also to going out. People start gathering in pubs and bars around midnight and move on to the nightclubs from 2AM onwards.

There are several local festivals and lots of folk activities in Catalonia. In general festivals take place outside in the streets, on the beaches etc.

For Sant Jordi (Saint George's day), on 23 April, the man gives the woman a rose, and the woman gives the man a book. On 23 June, people celebrate the summer solstice with organized fireworks. The most important festival in Tarragona is Santa Tecla in September.



On Sant Joan, people celebrate the solstice with fireworks shows. One of the most important festivals is Santa Tecla in

Catalonia has two official languages, Catalan and Spanish (Castellano). Catalan is the native language and is widely used in conversation, the public administration, the media, education, and in everyday official contexts like in traffic signs, advertisements, etc. Although almost everyone speaks Spanish and many people can also speak English, it is useful to know at least some basic words and expressions in order to make your daily life easier.

XI. SURVIVAL CATALAN

COMMON PHRASES	
Good morning / afternoon!	Bon dia! / Bona tarda!
Hello! / Goodbye!	Hola! / Adéu!
See you!	Fins aviat! / A reveure!
How are you? / Fine, thanks!	Com estàs? / Estic bé!
What's your name?	Com et dius?
What time is it?	Quina hora és?
Sorry, I don't speak Catalan.	Ho sento, no parlo català.
Do you speak English?	Parles l'anglès?
I don't understand.	No l'entenc.
Could you repeat, please?	Podries repetir, si us plau?
Thank you (very much)!	(Moltes) gràcies!
Excuse me...	Perdoni / Disculpi...
I'm sorry!	Ho sento!
Help!	Ajuda!
Cheers!	Salut!

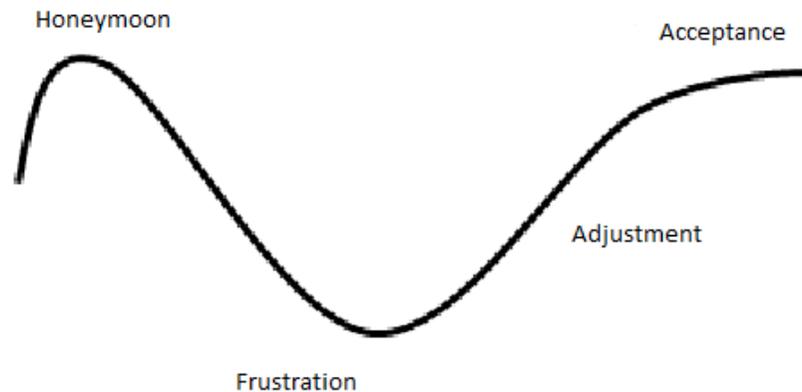
WEEKDAYS AND MONTHS	
Monday	Dilluns (dl)
Tuesday	Dimarts (dt)
Wednesday	Dimecres (dc)
Thursday	Dijous (dj)
Friday	Divendres (dv)
Saturday	Dissabte (ds)
Sunday	Diumenge (dg)
January	Gener
February	Febrer
March	Març
April	Abril
May	Maig
June	Juny
July	Juliol
August	Agost
September	Setembre
October	Octubre
November	Novembre
December	Desembre
Weekdays	Feiners
Holidays	Festius
Year	Any

EVERYDAY VOCABULARY	
ATM	Caixer automàtic
Bread / Butter	Pa / Mantega
Bus stop	Parada d'autobús
Cash / Credit card	Efectiu / Targeta de crèdit
Email	Correu electrònic
Envelope / Postcard	Sobre / Postal
Fish / Meat / Fruits	Peix / Carn / Fruites
Food Store / Supermarket	Supermercat
Lecture hall	Sala de lectura
Milk / Coffee / Water	Llet / Cafè / Aigua
Open—Closed	Obert—Tancat
Pen / Pencil	Bolígraf / Llapis
Prepaid SIM-card	Targeta SIM pre-pagament
Pharmacy	Farmàcia
Police station	Estació de policia
Post office	Oficina de correus
Railway / Bus station	Estació de tren/d'autobusos
Residence permit	Permís de residència
Sugar / Salt / Pepper	Sucre / Sal / Pebre
Tenancy agreement (for a flat)	Contracte d'arrendament (d'un pis)
Ticket (one way/return)	Bitllet (anada/anada i tornada)
Timetable	Horari
Toilet	Lavabo

XII. CULTURE SHOCK

Anyone who has ever lived abroad has gone through an emotional roller-coaster caused by their new environment with new people, different kinds of food, different language, and unfamiliar social norms and habits, among other things. For many mobility students it's also their first experience away from family and friends.

This phenomenon is known as **CULTURE SHOCK**, and can be described as a cycle of reactions that one normally goes through after moving to a new country. Culture shock is not only about negative feelings. In general it can be divided into five phases but it's always a personal experience. Not everyone undergoes all the phases, or they experience different phases at the same time.





Being aware beforehand of culture shock and its emotional physical symptoms will help you. The following offers some advice how to survive the confusion caused by culture shock:

Remember that what you are going through is normal and everyone will go through the same thing in one way or another. *Share your feelings with other foreigners or with locals who have also been abroad!*

Participate in activities to make friends with other international students (if you prefer to spend time with locals, ever better).

Do things that you like (sports, volunteer work, music etc.). This is also an opportunity to try new things and step outside your comfort zone and therefore learn about the new culture. *Try something you never thought you would do!*

Don't complain all the time about everything that the country doesn't have or that is worse than at home. With a negative attitude you will have a negative experience and you will lose the opportunity to experience something different. *Keep your mind open!*

Be patient instead of afraid. Allow yourself time to get used to the new surroundings. It's normal to walk with a map, get lost on your way to the university or not to know how to use the printer in the computer class. *Ask when you don't know!*

Learn to laugh at yourself. When you communicate in a foreign language, you can't express yourself the same way you can in your mother tongue.

Don't worry about the misunderstandings or the funny mistakes that might cause uncomfortable situations. After all, those are best ways to learn the language!

Accept the differences. You can't change the society to which you have moved. Once you accept the differences everything will be easier and you can even laugh about the things that you don't understand. *Keep in mind that different doesn't mean worse!*

To summarize, keep in mind that most people suffer from culture shock in one way or another. Don't regard it as be a sign that you have taken the wrong decision or that you are not strong enough to deal with situations like this. The symptoms of culture shock will disappear gradually, and once they do, you will value the experience as an opportunity for personal growth.

Remember...

Abroad you represent your country and its culture. You are an ambassador for your country!

People are usually interested in different cultures, so don't be surprised about having to answer questions about your home country's customs and traditions.





**WE WISH YOU
A SUCCESSFUL,
PLEASANT AND
REWARDING STAY AT THE
URV!**

INTERNATIONAL CENTER

Avinguda Països Catalans, 17-19
43007 Tarragona

Tel.: (+34) 977 25 6569 / (+34) 977 55 8129

mobility.in@urv.cat
hosting@urv.cat

<http://www.urv.cat/international/>