

Final report

Period of study summer semester 2016/2017

Faculty of Civil Engineering

1. Introduction

I studied my summer semester 2016/2017 abroad at the Bialystok University of Technology, Poland, under the program Erasmus+. The dates of the summer semester were from February 17 till June 23. I would like to share my experience and impressions.

2. Contact with coordinator, preparation and journey

Before arriving in Bialystok, I was in touch with the coordinator from the IRO office, Katarzyna Kochaniak. I would assess my contact as very good. E-mails were replied very quickly and I received well guidance on questions that I had. All issues related to the documents were well discussed.

3. Residence abroad

❖ Arrangements visa

Polish law states that foreigners need a national visa if you will stay in the country for a longer period than 90 days. I applied and got visa very fast right before arrival.

❖ Accommodation

I stayed in a student dormitory "Delta" with other Erasmus students from around the world. I had my own room in box of two rooms. I had 2 neighbours in the next room. We had shared bathroom for our box. The kitchens were shared on entire floor. It was big and had all necessary equipment. Also, our floor had laundry with drying room, which was definitely very comfortable.

My room was furnished and came with a bed, closet, bookshelf, desk and chair, cupboard, refrigerator and 2 drawers.

The dorm was very clean and cozy. Every working day on the floor was carried out a general cleaning.

❖ Reception and introduction

All exchange students had the opportunity to participate in an introduction week, where everything about Bialystok was explained. It was a helpful week and also just nice to see all the other exchange students for the coming semester.

The reception of students by the IRO office and ESN office was also very good. First one helped a lot with all documents which were necessary. And ESN office helped settle in the city, introduced all the activities, and entertained students in all possible ways.

❖ Student life, culture and leisure

I would say that even though Bialystok is not the big city with many 'leisure activities', it is a very interesting place to stay. The student life is very active. The Erasmus Student Network (ESN) is very active in the city and schedules many parties. There are some very nice clubs, and especially life with the other exchange students is just fantastic.

❖ Language

The Polish language is very similar to my native language, so it was not difficult for me to understand people. Unfortunately, only a small part of the Poles know English and sometimes it was giving some problems, but overall it was not a great disadvantage.

4. Grant

Poland is cheaper than my native land to live in. Erasmus amount, which is €750,- per month is pretty enough for living and even traveling. Travelling in Poland and Europe is quite easy. Within Europe there's the Ecolines buses, which has routes through almost all Europe. The only thing that I would recommend to change is the way of granting the scholarship. Very uncomfortable is that most of it comes out right away. It would be much more convenient to receive a scholarship once a month. It is also quite inconvenient to receive the last part of the scholarship on the last day because of the departure time, because some people leave in the morning. At the moment this is the biggest disadvantage of my Erasmus+ staying in Poland, but I hope that maximum efforts will be made to fix this in the future.

5. Study (general)

Studying at the Bialystok University of Technology is a lot easier than at the Moscow State University of Civil Engineering. I experienced more free time, less homework, easier tests. The teachers are willing to help with every question you have. I was pleasantly impressed, the studying was held with great pleasure.

The schedule was very convenient, no classes intersected. The only drawback was that the faculty coordinator responded to messages very long, and at the beginning of the studying it was very difficult to figure out the schedule of some subjects, but otherwise everything was fine.

As earlier indicated, the complexity of education was remarkably lower than at my university in Moscow. But it did not affect the quality of the studying. I can mark that it was noticeably higher.

Student facilities are very modern and nice. There are many computers and another modern equipment available. The buildings are very nice, clean and modern.

The International Office at the University is also easily reachable. They are always willing to help.

6. Summary impression of the study period abroad

I think the University offers very interesting courses for exchange students. The city itself is small and very cozy with a stunning transport system and a bike rental system that allows you to get to any place. I'm really impressed by the beauty and purity of this city, its life, the professionalism of the teachers, and the organization of the university and would definitely recommend this place for future Erasmus students. This is an excellent experience that you will never forget.