

**THE IMPACT OF THE ERASMUS+ GENERATION
OF MEDICAL UNIVERSITY – SOFIA
(SUCCESS STORIES)**

SOFIA 2019



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Dear Students and Colleagues,

I am glad to present you the latest Medical University – Sofia collection of success Erasmus+ stories – *“Impact of Erasmus+ Generation of Medical University – Sofia”*. Erasmus+ is one of the most remarkable European Union programmes that gives to people the chance to study, train, volunteer or gain professional experience abroad. It promotes the international mobility of students and lecturers as equips them with enhanced learning opportunities, recognition of diplomas, strengthened language learning skills, it gives an opportunity to find jobs in the country and across the continent.

Medical University – Sofia provides top standard education for its learners who are given an opportunity to benefit from international studies and traineeships, allowing them to enrich their knowledge and practical skills in European and global dimension. We strictly respect all principles of the Erasmus+ Charter for Higher Education in our international study programmes, traineeships and professional development schemes. All activities

of the University undertaken with Erasmus+ Programme are in the terms of credits (ECTS) and are administered by our Erasmus+ Office. Our data collection and follow-up assessment are the last step of a dynamic and unforgettable process of sharing experiences and strong positive feelings. The results of the Erasmus+ Mobility are of diverse nature and consist of both concrete (tangible) results, as well as, of skills and personal experiences that both project organizers and participants to the activities have acquired (intangible results). The personal experiences are highly valuable not only because one can hear the real facts, but because everyone can learn about the context and emotions involved in the situations. The incoming and outgoing learners, as well as, the incoming and outgoing lecturers have **an amazing Erasmus+ story** which provides an opportunity for You, the potential future participant, to learn useful information at first hand.

We kindly asked the participants to tell their authentic stories and their different points of view added value of our collective book in which the authors are the learners and the lecturers themselves. A total number of **308 learners** and **168 staff** have benefited from mobilities for studies, training courses or teaching positions only for the last two years. The impact of mobility on learners implies development of individual potential (learning abilities and employability) and acquisition of professional skills. The impact of mobility on lecturers reveals further understanding of foreign systems and acquisition of professional and linguistic skills. Sharing success stories, lessons learned and outcomes involve spreading the word about education in Medical University – Sofia as part of the Erasmus+ Programme. The publication of the success stories can help to maximize the effect of these activities in the course of the coming years. Let the stories inspire and encourage you to becoming your best self, taking cues from them and becoming the next Erasmus+ Generation!

PROF. DR. VICTOR ZLATKOV, MD
RECTOR OF MEDICAL UNIVERSITY – SOFIA

From Medical University – Sofia to the Erasmus+ Generation

A general overview of the Impact of Erasmus+

The impact of an Erasmus+ study period abroad for mobile students and teaching assignments of Erasmus+ lecturers on professional development is the focus of this Book. Student and staff mobility has been growing in scale and significance alongside the developments in the Bologna Process and the integration of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) over the last years. Impact assessment is the process of examining the effect of Erasmus+ activity on individuals, organizations and society. The effects could be positive or negative, intentional or accidental, short or long-term. The last document for the European Commission “*Study on the impact of Erasmus+ Higher Education Strategic Partnerships and Knowledge Alliances at local, national and European levels on key Higher Education policy priorities*” was published on 17.05.2019 year and summarizes the key findings on the impact of Erasmus+ Programme. Mentioned above key findings on systemic level impacts includes:

- an increase in the quality, relevance, innovativeness and accessibility of European higher education;
- the Higher Education Strategic Partnerships were found to be highly relevant in addressing the objectives defined in the EU Higher Education Modernization Agenda and the Communication on Opening Up Education, paving the way in implementing the European Education Area;
- the study has identified that Higher Education Strategic Partnerships strongly contribute to realizing the European Education Area goals and enable more active knowledge and innovation transfer, especially among project partners;
- more than 90% of HEIs have indicated that Strategic Partnerships improve quality and relevance of higher education curricula/learning and teaching;
- four in five HEIs feel better equipped to tackle skills mismatches in the labor market by fostering interdisciplinary, facilitating better ICT integration, as well as strongly supporting development and application of innovative pedagogies;
- over 40% of projects develop tools and approaches for innovative teaching, which, combined with better ICT integration, contributes to an improved workforce in higher education institutions, higher numbers of university graduates with improved digital competences, better higher education accessibility to students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, etc¹.

The motivation of universities to engage in Higher Education Strategic Partnerships was found to be similar and driven by proven positive outcomes of these transnational cooperation projects, i.e. strengthened university profiles and recognition in their fields; reputation improvement resulting from the increased employability of students, strengthened professional profiles of teaching staff and increased institutional capacity for innovation. On the individual level, the Higher Education Strategic Partnerships strongly contribute to the improvement of skills and competences of students, teaching staff involved in project activities:

- according to 82% of HEIs, students involved in Higher Education Strategic Partnership projects improved their social, civic and intercultural competences, and also enhanced their transversal skills, such as digital and entrepreneurial skills, creativity and teamwork;

¹ EU publications, Study on the impact of Erasmus+ higher education partnerships and knowledge alliances at local, national and European levels on key higher education policy priorities, Final report - Study, file:///C:/Users/MKasnakova/Downloads/NC0219324ENN.en.pdf

- a third of projects of Higher Education Strategic Partnerships, at least to some extent, led to the creation of spin-offs and start-ups, directly contributing to the emergence of entrepreneurs;
- in more than 60% of projects, the teaching staff involved in Higher Education Strategic Partnerships advanced their pedagogical skills and competences through increased participation in innovative blended mobility formats, by learning about new and innovative ICT-facilitated teaching methods, being exposed to the benefits of working in international teams, etc.
- knowledge Alliances had a high impact on the development of skills needed for better labor market outcomes, such as transversal, innovation, and entrepreneurial skills.
- soft/transversal skills development in Knowledge Alliances are perceived to make graduates and staff more successful on the labor market, as well as to contribute to their increased ‘resilience’, by equipping them with skills applicable across professions and future fields.

The temporary study abroad has a positive impact on personal and academic development, but also is conducive to transition to employment and career development. Though the impact has been declining, study abroad remains an important experience for the professional career. Erasmus+ teaching assignments often do not last longer than a few days. Nevertheless, mobile teachers report a positive impact on their career.

Since its launch in 1987, the Programme has had a huge impact on European higher education. The Erasmus+ Programme was introduced as the European Unions’ flagship education and training programme and the Erasmus+ is celebrated as an important motor for European integration for which the Erasmus+ generation is named as synonym. It is an overall conclusion that Erasmus+ is a well-known, successful EU brand that generates many forms of European added value which go beyond the legal requirements. Erasmus+ plays a key role in building up learning mobility abroad and has a positive effect on participants’ attitudes towards the EU at all.

Erasmus+ certainly is seen as a European success story! ‘The Programme is a cornerstone of the construction of the new European awareness and identity. Every time someone goes on an Erasmus+ to discover another culture, integrate into another culture, learn a language and form new relationships with the people around directly, and also indirectly.

Let’s Go Further ☺



The multiple objectives of the Erasmus+ Programme

The Erasmus+ Programme is designed to support Programme Countries' efforts to efficiently use the potential of Europe's talent and social assets in a lifelong learning perspective, linking support to formal, non-formal and informal learning throughout the education, training and youth fields. The Programme also enhances the opportunities for cooperation and mobility with Partner Countries, notably in the fields of higher education and youth². The Erasmus+ Programme Key action 1 – "Mobility of individuals" supports mobility of learners and staff, including opportunities for students, trainees and young people, as well as for professors, teachers, trainers, youth workers, staff of education institutions and civil society organizations to undertake a learning and/or professional experience in another country.

Erasmus+ supports EU transparency and recognition tools for skills and qualifications – in particular Europass, Youthpass, the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET), the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework (EQAVET), the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR), the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) – as well as EU-wide networks in the field of education and training supporting these tools, in particular the National Academic Recognition Information Centre (NARIC), Euroguidance networks, the National Europass Centers and the EQF National Coordination Points. A common purpose of these tools is to ensure that **skills and qualifications can be more easily recognized** and are better understood, within and across national borders, in all sub-systems of education and training as well as in the labour market, no matter whether these were acquired through formal education and training or through other learning experiences (e.g. work experience; volunteering, online learning).

Dissemination and exploitation of results (such as the personal success stories) are crucial areas of the Erasmus+ project lifecycle. They give participating organizations the opportunity to communicate and share outcomes and deliverables, thus extending the impact of their projects, improving their sustainability and justifying the European added value of Erasmus+. In order to successfully disseminate and exploit project results, the Medical University - Sofia publishes this Impact book ensuring that others can easily access what has been developed and produced. We strongly believe that the open access to the Erasmus+ project outputs could support learning, teaching, training, and youth work. This document is freely available for the public under an open license. The materials should be easily accessible and retrievable without cost or limitations, and the open license must allow the public to use, reuse, adapt and share the resource.

The participants in the Erasmus+ projects of the Medical university - Sofia have shared their experience and uploaded photos presenting their results in an informal and dynamic way as their success stories will be of benefit to all of you!

² Erasmus+ Programme Guide Version 2 (2019): 15/01/2019, https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/documents/erasmus-programme-guide-2019_en

Effects of mobility on the skills and employability of students and the internationalization of the Medical University – Sofia

The mobility of students and lectures under the Erasmus+ Programme bring positive and long-lasting effects on the Medical University – Sofia, as well as on the departments in which such activities are framed.

As regards students, trainees, apprentices and young people, the mobility activities produce the following outcomes:

- improved learning performance;
- enhanced employability and improved career prospects;
- increased sense of initiative and entrepreneurship;
- increased self-empowerment and self-esteem;
- improved foreign language competences;
- enhanced intercultural awareness;
- more active participation in society;
- better awareness of the European project and the EU values;
- increased motivation for taking part in future (formal/non-formal) education or training after the mobility period abroad.

As regards staff, youth workers and professionals involved in education, training and youth, the mobility activities produce the following outcomes:

- improved competences, linked to their professional profiles (teaching, training, youth work, etc.);
- broader understanding of practices, policies and systems in education, training or youth work across countries;
- increased capacity to trigger changes in terms of modernization and international opening within their educational organizations;
- greater understanding of interconnections between formal and non-formal education, vocational training and the labour market respectively;
- better quality of their work and activities in favor of students, trainees, apprentices, pupils, adult learners, young people and volunteers;
- greater understanding and responsiveness to social, linguistic and cultural diversity;
- increased ability to address the needs of the disadvantaged;
- increased support for and promotion of mobility activities for learners;
- increased opportunities for professional and career development;
- improved foreign language competences;
- increased motivation and satisfaction in their daily work.

The Erasmus+ mobility has a strong impact on the modernization and internationalization of the Medical University – Sofia, as it fosters quality improvements, innovation excellence and internationalization at the level of education and training.

An unforgettable experience in another country – Your Success stories!



This Impact Book presents the expectations, perceptions and experiences of students and lecturers involved in Erasmus+ Programmes. Results showed that becoming more independent, gaining another perspective on the way things are at home, and interacting with people from different origins were important factors for the learners. Studying abroad is an enriching learning experience because of the active engagement of learners with other people in the new environment. Experience abroad can also be challenging to students, particularly when it comes to dealing with new situations in the host culture. Nearly everyone who has taken a part in some Erasmus+ programme says that their experience has encouraged them to be more open-minded and open to different countries and cultures.

Moving abroad for Erasmus+ is meant to be a challenge, but a fun challenge. Challenge yourself to visit a million cliché landmarks, meet tons of people, and successfully find your way home in your new city after a night of partying. So we've compiled X success stories from our Erasmus+ students and lecturers so that everyone can maximize the good times and minimize any "doh!" moments in his/her future experience.

Numerous Medical University - Sofia's students and lecturers each year use the benefits of the University's participation in the EU Erasmus+ Programme for international mobility – to study one semester at a number of European higher education institutions or to teaching in successful universities beyond the frame of the European Union where they gain professional experience and have fun. **New generation has to build bridges between the nations of Europe!**

We show you some of their impressions!



Prof. Irena Kostova, PhD, DSc.
Faculty of Pharmacy
Department of Chemistry
Outgoing Lecturer

PROF. IRENA KOSTOVA, PhD, DSc.:

“THE COLLABORATION WITH THE EUROPEAN UNIVERSITIES SHOULD BE EXTENDED IN ORDER TO DISSEMINATE AND EXPLOIT FURTHER EXPERIENCE/ RESULTS OF THE TEACHING”

Erasmus+ Period: 27/05/2019 – 31/05/2019

Prof. Irena Kostova, PhD, DSc, maintains intensive fruitful collaboration with reputed scientists and many research groups from Romania, Slovakia, Italy, Austria, Spain and etc. She has promoted and organized signing of bilateral agreements of MU – Sofia under the egis of Erasmus+ Programme with the following European Universities: Sapienza-University of Rome, Italy; P. J. Safarik University, Kosice, Slovak Republic; Medizinische Universität Wien, Austria; Università degli Studi di Firenze, Italy; University of Medicine and Pharmacy „Gr.T.Popa“ Iasi, Romania; Complutense University of Madrid, Spain, where she has delivered lectures during the last years. The lectures were presented to students, specializing post-graduate fellows and teachers and were followed up by exhaustive discussions. Beyond the formal agenda some additional meetings and contacts were accomplished with researchers from different departments and faculties. Apart from the teaching program the lectures were also focused upon various projects supported by Grants from the National Science Fund which attracted much interest and the successive discussions conditioned some possibilities for future academic and research bilateral projects.

Many joint scientific papers in high ranking journals have been published under the collaboration and the mutual research work with the above universities. The research interests of the scientific group of Prof. Saso from Sapienza University of Rome, ITALY are in the field of antioxidant activity, joint papers [Martin J, Mladěnka P, Saso L, Kostova I. Redox Rep 2016;21(2):84-9.; Valcheva-Traykova M, Saso L, Kostova I. Curr Top Med Chem 2014;14(22):2508-19.; Kostova I, Saso L. Curr Med Chem 2013;20(36):4609-32.; Kostova I, Bhatia S, Grigorov P, Balkansky S, Parmar VS, Prasad AK, Saso L. Curr Med Chem 2011;18(25):3929-51.].

The research group of Prof. Mojzis from P. J. Safarik University, Kosice, Slovakia investigates antitumor activity, joint papers [Mojzis J., L. Varinska, G. Mojziso, I. Kostova, L. Mirossay. Pharmacol. Res., 57(4), 259-265, 2008.; Kostova I., J. Mojzis. Fut. HIV Ther., 1(3), 315-329, 2007.; Kostova I., S. Balkansky, J. Mojzis. Int. J. Curr. Chem., 1(4), 271-280, 2010.; Kostova I., P. Grigorov, J. Mojzis. Int. J. Curr. Chem., 1(4), 291-298, 2010.]. Irena Kostova was a Member of Jury in PhD Students' Works of the 1st International Student Medical Congress (ISMCK'09) Košice, Slovakia.

The scientific group of Prof. Palafox from Complutense University of Madrid, Spain is very strong in the field of theoretical ab initio and DFT investigations, including geometry optimization, conformational and vibrational analysis etc., joint papers [Palafox MA, Rastogi VK, Kumar H, Kostova I, Vats JK. Spectrosc Lett 2011;44(4):300-6.; Kumar V, Panikar Y, Palafox MA, Vats JK, Kostova I, Lang K, Rastogi VK. Indian J Pure Appl Phys 2010;48(2):85-94.; Rastogi VK, Alcolea Palafox M, Guerrero-Martínez A, Tardajos G, Vats JK, Kostova I, Schlucker S, Kiefer W. J Mol Struct THEOCHEM 2010;940(1-3):29-44.; Rastogi VK, Singhal S, Kumar AP, Rao GR, Palafox MA, Kostova I. Indian J Pure Appl Phys 2009;47(12):844-51.]

The collaboration with the above mentioned European Universities should be extended in order to disseminate and exploit further the experience/results of the teaching and scientific work and to share the experience and knowledge, which is important for the future mutual contacts and bilateral projects.



With over 700 years of history, over 112,000 students, 4000 teachers and 2000 employees, technicians and librarians, in addition to 2000 administrative staff in university hospitals, Sapienza is the first university in Europe. The University mission is to contribute to the development of a knowledge society through research, excellence, quality education and international cooperation.

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Faculty of Medicine
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ASSOC. PROF. NINA BELOVA, MD, PHD:

“THE ERASMUS+ MOBILITY GIVES US THE CHANCE TO KEEP AND UPGRADE OUR RELATIONS WITH VARIOUS EUROPEAN UNIVERSITIES, TO TEST AND IMPROVE OUR TEACHING CAPACITY, TO EXCHANGE IDEAS CONCERNING EDUCATION, TO BENEFIT FROM THE DIFFERENT EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES, AND LAST BUT NOT LEAST TO ENCOUNTER DIVERSE CULTURES AND MAKE FRIENDS.”

Erasmus+ Period: 18/04/2018 – 20/04/2018

Erasmus+ Programme, starting 2014, currently combines all the EU's outlines for education and training, youth and sport. The Erasmus+ Programme has a 30-year-old history at the Medical University of Sofia. A large number of student as well as staff mobility has been carried out during this period.

I would like to share my personal experience as **I sincerely think this Programme provides excellent options not only for the students but also for the University staff.** The Erasmus+ mobility gives us the chance to keep and upgrade our relations with various European universities, to test and improve our teaching capacity, to exchange ideas concerning education, to benefit from the different educational programs, and last but not least to encounter diverse cultures and make friends. Naturally, these contacts help our research contacts as well and are a basis for future scientific cooperation.

I had a mobility for teaching in Slovakia in 2018. I visited the Medical Faculty of the Bratislava Comenius University located in Martin. I would like to point out that although Martin is a comparatively small town it played a significant role in Slovak history. The Matica Slovenska (an analogue of our Academy of Sciences) was established in Martin. Currently here is based the Slovak National Library.

The Medical Faculty at Martin has a perfect infrastructure, it comprises a Centre of Excellence built with European funding. Martin is preferred site for study not only by Slovak students but also by numerous International students mostly from Scandinavian countries. I had previous long-term scientific contacts with the colleagues from the Physiology Department. This made my visit easy, I gave lectures in front of the Medical International students and I had a presentation for the seminar with the colleagues from the Physiology Department. I had both professional and personal contacts with the former head of the Department Prof. Dr. Kamil Javorla, the current Head Prof. Dr. A. Chalkovska and many other colleagues. I visited the student and the scientific laboratories and I was impressed by the scientific equipment. In addition to the professional benefit this mobility broadened my views and knowledge of the culture and history of Slovakia.



Comenius University in Bratislava is a modern European university which in 2019 is celebrating its 100th anniversary. It is the only Slovak university to be regularly ranked in the international rankings of the best universities in the world. With thirteen faculties, it offers the widest selection of study programmes (over 800) at three levels, and several of these study programmes are the only ones of their kind offered in Slovakia. There is a wide range of areas of human knowledge to choose from when studying, be it in medicine, the humanities and social sciences, the natural sciences, mathematics, theology, and much more.

Comenius University is a research institution that runs hundreds of domestic and international research projects. As a result, many of the students engage in important research during their studies and can actively participate in projects, grants, and professional internships (including abroad).

Every year Comenius University sends the highest number of students abroad out of all Slovak universities, and it receives the most international students, including from such places as Germany, Norway, Greece, Iran, Austria, and Iceland.

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Comenius University in Bratislava

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D-r. Nadejda Kostova –Kamburova
Medical College, MU – Sofia
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D-R. NADEJDA KOSTOVA-KAMBUROVA:

“THE 5TH ERASMUS+ JOINT INTERNATIONAL WEEK IN TALLINN WAS INTENSIVE AND FILLED WITH A NUMBER OF LECTURERS, PRESENTATIONS, SIMULATIONS AND WITH MANY VISITS TO NUMEROUS STUDY LABORATORIES!”

Erasmus+ International Week Meeting Period:
05/11/2018 – 09/11/2018

I participated in the Fifth Joint International Week of TTK UAS, Estonian Academy of Security Sciences and Tallinn Health Care College, in Tallinn, Estonia, with lecturers and administrative staff from educational institutions from the following countries: Poland, Lithuania, Czech Republic, Turkey, Slovakia, Germany, Greece, Ukraine, Russia, Spain, Herzegovina, Romania, Hungary, Latvia, Sweden, Bulgaria and Pakistan.

The Fifth Erasmus+ Joint International Week in Tallinn was intensive and filled with a number of lectures, presentations, simulations and introductory visits to numerous study laboratories and study rooms at most faculties, departments and / or specialties of the host institutions: TTK University of Applied Sciences, TTK University of Applied Sciences Tallinn Health Care College and the Estonian Academy of Secure Sciences. The Programme has provided multiple opportunities for internationalization, exchange of information and contacts between all actors and deepening current or creating potential future partnerships.

I have participated in detailed tours and simulation presentations in the laboratories of Robotics, Rail Construction, Architectural Engineering, Civil and Environmental Engineering, Industrial Engineering and Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering. The teaching laboratories at the Tallinn University of Applied Sciences were equipped with state-of-the-art apparatus, machinery and equipment in accordance with the latest scientific and technological progress. Of particular interest was the Building Informational Modeling (BIM) software. After a spontaneously breaking ice break game by Roisin Russ in order to get to know the delegates, we visited the E-Estonia Showroom, where we were presented in detail the national electronic administrative system of Estonia, as well as the benefits of e-citizenship in the Republic of Estonia. The day ended with a formal dinner and a cultural program.



Our participation in The Fifth Erasmus+ Joint International Week with the theme “Prevention, Risk, Responsibility” enriched our experience in the field of student and teaching mobility, student motivation to participate in the Erasmus+ Programme and we acquired new skills in working with international students and lecturers. What we saw motivates us to participate actively in future projects of the Medical University - Sofia, to implement some of the observed approaches in the teaching methodology of our students, gave us the confidence to include in our teaching arsenal some of the methods and means we have not used so far and to actively we assist in the introduction of innovative work and teaching techniques.



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**Fifth Joint International Week of TTK UAS,
Estonian Academy of Security Sciences
and Tallinn Health Care College**

Period: 05 – 09 November 2018

The theme of the week is “Prevention. Risks.
Responsibility”

<https://www.ttkk.ee/en/event/international-week-2018>



D-r. Cvetelina Georgieva
Faculty of Dental Medicine
Department of Conservative
Dental Medicine
Outgoing lecturer

D-R. CVETELINA GEORGIEVA:

“I ENJOYED A LOT MY STAY IN NIJMEGEN AND DEFINITELY I WOULD VISIT IT AGAIN!”

Erasmus+ Period: **06/05/2019 – 10/05/2019**



My journey in Nijmegen started at 5th of May.

Nijmegen is the oldest city in Netherlands, close to the German border. To get there I took a train from the airport and after one hour and half I found myself in this charming town. My first impression of the people was that they are very kind and responsive. I was staying in a cozy little hotel - Rozenhof, 30 minutes walk away from the University. Most people in Nijmegen prefer to ride a bike, most likely because of the small distances in the city or for some other reason, but this contributed to the relatively clean air in the city.

During my stay in Radboud University, I accompanied Damyanov DMD and Plashokova DMD who are assistants prosthetic dental medicine and periodontology, respectively, during their practical exercises with students from pre-clinical and clinical courses. I attended two pre-clinical student exams also. I gave two lectures about Lasers in Endodontics and Photoactivated disinfection in Endodontics, in front of students and teachers. I was also able to exchange experience with colleagues from my and other specialties. Damyanov DMD and Plashokova DMD showed me the city center and some of the sights in it. City full of cozy little streets, restaurants and shops. Everywhere you can feel the atmosphere and history of the town. It was the season of asparagus at this time of year and so we enjoyed these delicious vegetables prepared in different ways. One thing I didn't know about the city was that during World War II, much of the city was destroyed by the bombing of Allied aircraft by mistake because of its proximity to Germany. The destroyed buildings have not been restored to their previous style, and so there are new buildings among the old buildings, that remind of that moment.

I enjoyed a lot my stay in Nijmegen and I would visit it again definitely!



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SAVENA BORISOVA, PhD:

“ERASMUS+ IS MY PROFESSIONAL HAPPINESS SINCE 1999 YEAR. IT HAS OPENED LOTS OF OPPORTUNITY FOR MY CAREER DEVELOPMENT AS A PROJECT MANAGER AND TEACHING STAFF”

Erasmus+ Period: 23/06/2019 – 27/06/2019

Erasmus+ Programme has impacted my life the last twenty years.

Erasmus+ is my professional happiness since 1999. It has opened lots of opportunities for my career development as a project manager and teaching staff.

The synergy between Erasmus+ and the other educational programmes lead me to the Salzburg Seminar in 2001, where we discussed the Museums in 21st century in a working group with the Directors of British museum and Cairo National museum, Chief editor of New York Times, the President of Getty Grant Foundation, USA, Directors of Uffizi Museum and Palace Vecchio in Florence. The participation in this event inspired me for the development of my PhD theses.

According successful Erasmus+ project, since 2004, I am a National Correspondent at the European Museum Forum under the auspice of the Queen of Belgium, on a voluntary base. During one of the yearly meetings of the National Correspondents, we attended a dinner at the Mirror Hall of the King' Palace in Brussels.

Erasmus sent me to the People Network -Soul for Europe, initiative of the European Union, Berlin, 2008 and became a member of the Cultural Diplomacy Community.

Due to Erasmus+ I was a coordinator of the National Bologna Projects for 4 years; a National Contact Point for TEMPUS and ERASMUS MUNDUS Programs and the International Credit Mobility; participated in lots of projects and being an External Project Evaluator.

As an Erasmus+ teaching staff, I gave lectures at the Universities of Florence & Bologna; Darting college of Arts, UK; Braganza, Portugal; Ioannina, Greece and recently at Just University, Jordan.

All the gained knowledge, experience and skills I applied at Medical University-Sofia, thus the personnel impact transferred into institutional one. With the support of the Head of IRO – Prof. Dr. R. Girchev and the Rector – Prof. V. Zlatkov and Faculty Coordinators, we succeed to increase the Erasmus+ mobility from 21 p/y to 100 p/y. The first Erasmus+ mobility projects with partner countries were introduced with Japan, South Africa, Jordan, Morocco; Guides and info brochures were issued; rules for accreditation and administration were developed.

I keep alive all the Erasmus+ friendships made throughout Europe and outside and feel lucky, my experience is always recognized & appreciated nationally and internationally.



Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST) is a comprehensive, state-supported university located on the outskirts of Irbid, in northern Jordan, 70km north Amman, the capital city of Jordan. JUST was established in 1986 as an autonomous national institute of higher education with the main objective of producing outstanding professionals in specializations that match the needs of Jordan and the region.

Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST) is a distinguished academic and research institution, dedicated to providing students with an engaging learning environment and a supportive campus culture.

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D-R. YORDAN YORDANOV:

“THE TRUST, RESPONSIBILITY AND OPEN-MINDNESS OF THE PROFESSORS INSPIRED MY CREATIVITY AND SCIENTIFIC CURIOSITY”

Erasmus+ Period: 16/01/2017 – 28/09/2017



Through the prism of the most diverse and bright memories from my Erasmus+ periods, one certain impression crystallizes: it strongly influenced my way of thinking and I am content.

At the moment of my arrival in Siena in 2014 year, I was already thinking over my student experience, preparing for my upcoming graduation and looking for the new goals that would give me sense after I graduate. So, in any qualitatively new experience I saw a promise for advantageous insights. Although my expectation for a familiar mindset with Italians, who are a southern people like us, the accumulation of small, nuanced differences in their behavior gave me an unfamiliar feeling. Furthermore, the international student environment allowed mostly universal values to be shared and I looked towards some of my thinking patterns through a different lens. Such insights bring about a feeling of liberty, consolidate one's personality and reject prejudice though that's hardly ever painless. Although a modern city, Siena is small and very traditional. It allowed me to immerse in its atmosphere, I even started communicating predominantly in Italian. My experience in the university labs was great. I was autonomous in executing my experiments for the first time. The trust, responsibility and open-mindedness of the professors inspired my creativity and scientific curiosity. The friendly spirit of mutual help between thesis, PhD and post-doc researchers made me cozy and confident. Some of my new friends suggested trying for PhD. It was the first time I considered this option seriously, although I made my decision a while later. After three years, as a PhD student, I did an Erasmus+ traineeship. It was again in Siena due to the perfect relationships with the team in the receiving institution and the uninterrupted exchange of ideas between them and my mentor and advisor since I was a pharmacy student – prof. Virginia Tzankova.

My second time in Siena was different. I managed to feel part of the city. I perfected my language skills and had amazing conversations with plenty of people, among whom I found good friends. The campus's canteens or "mensa" was the most social place in the campus – a place, where you understand the Italian culture of enjoying good food and living in the present. I understood the differences between the cultures and mindsets of many Italian regions. My roommates from India, China and Togo also gave me an insight in their so different and distant cultures. And last, but not least - in the university, under the guidance of prof. Valoti and prof. Frosini I managed to form a new and better perception on experimental work. I understood the sometimes counter-intuitive dynamics of the scientific process which took away much of the stress, typical for it.

In conclusion, I gained a broader personal and professional perspective and became one of the millions of participants in the Erasmus+ Programme for the past three decades!



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ANNA VALERIEVA, MD, PhD:

“THE TRAINEESHIP IN THE UNIVERSITY OF MILANO PLAYED AN OUTSTANDING ROLE IN MY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT”

Erasmus+ Period: **01/09/2017 – 01/07/2019**

As a young specialist and researcher the ultimate career goal to achieve for me is to make a difference in the lives of the patients suffering allergies, angioedema and hyper permeability disorders. This is why I wanted to be a PhD student in Allergy and Immunopathology and have the chance to better investigate the mechanisms of paroxysmal permeability and allergic reactions in different diseases. I am certainly positive that the Erasmus+ Programme plays a crucial role in the scientific exchange, opportunities, and education of young specialists and researchers in Europe.

Personally, in my case **the Erasmus+ Programme gave me the precious chance to be part of a multicultural environment, study and work on different exciting research projects, and establish a wide international working network for both present and future scientific collaboration.**

As a young researcher I truly believe that the traineeship **at the University of Milano** played an outstanding role in my professional development. Working as a member of an excellent team gave me valuable ideas as to complete my PhD project, and successfully defend my PhD thesis. The ongoing projects and future research ideas will help to further develop common research ideas and enrich international collaboration of our Department.

As a personal experience, living and working in Italy gave me precious lessons for life, taught me how to establish new friendships, challenged me, and enlightened my curiosity for a different culture.

I do believe that my excellent experience as being part of the Erasmus+ Programme helps me in my current work with patients, students, and my colleagues. I highly recommend other PhD students to take this opportunity and become part of the big European Erasmus+ family!



The University of Milan is one of Italy's younger university institutions. It was founded in 1924 thanks to the tenacious efforts of doctor and gynaecologist Luigi Mangiagalli, who in creating La Statale, realised his long-held dream of building a university for Lombardy's regional capital. Indeed, up until that point, it was the University of Pavia, founded in the fourteenth century and the main education centre in northern Italy, that housed the traditional university faculties. Over the centuries, however, the numerous educational institutions and schools of excellence which sprang up in Milan would later be incorporated under the University of Milan.

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ALBENA TEOFILOVA:

“I WANT ONLY TO THANK THE ORGANIZERS OF ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME – THEY MAKE MY DREAMS COME TRUE – I AM LEARNING AND I AM TEACHING AND I AM INSPIRED BY THIS TRAVEL!”

Erasmus+ Period: 01/07/2019 – 25/09/2019

Zdravo, kako si?

Before I started my big adventure in North Macedonia because of Erasmus+ Programme. I used to associate Macedonian doctors with Milcho Manchevski's movie "Shadows" – it is about a physician, who is the son of a famous and influential doctor. He survived a death situation, because he has to fulfill his mission on the earth - to bury the bones of several people, which his mother had used as a student to take the anatomy midterm. She used the bones, because they belonged to people buried outside the cemetery – aliens and suicidals. The movie was filled with mysteries, but the main message was clear - everyone has to fulfill his own mission.

This idea I have seen embodied in Strumica. In Eli Medica, in the office of my mentor - Dr. Georgi Yanev, a physician - specialist in the field of occupational medicine. It is the first time I have worked with such a warm and concerned people.

Zdravo, kako si? ("How are you?") are the first words, which you hear when you enter the clinic. Then they offer you coffee, water, drinks. The atmosphere is extremely good – you have only to sing and work. I have visited with Dr. Georgi Yanev some enterprises where we implement some prophylactic medical examinations to employees: EKG, blood pressure, audiometric testing, spirometry and auscultation.

At the Adient Strumica Company, for example, we explained and trained workers how to react in an emergency when a colleague is injured and they have to help him before the emergency team arrives. We showed them how to use the materials available in the emergency bag. These skills are required not only in the workplace but also at school, on the road.... "It's not what happens to you, but how you react to it that matters". After the field training we returned to Eli Medica, where I filled out the documents from the preventive examinations, I wrote one set for the worker, one for the company and one for the records of Eli Medica. The Eli Medica's archive should be very organized – you have to find everything quickly and easily. It is no coincidence that Eli Medica has earned the trust of patients and has units in Shtip, Gevgelija and Skopje. Eli Medica takes care not only of the patients, but also of its staff - at 8 o'clock is coffee time, and at 9.30 everyone pre-orders lunch. In my spare time I had to visit a dentist and have to admit that I was delighted with his attitude, attention and concern. I had also the opportunity to visit Dojran Lake - a place where I have seen all the Macedonians – I am just joking... maybe the Dojran Lake is not the most beautiful lake in the world - but is a cure for joint diseases.

The Macedonians – they do care about their health - they are not frivolous and are very responsible - they know that they are living, fulfilling a mission. Possibly I have been also influenced by

their attitudes, and now I am reporting on my Erasmus+ mission - I assisted and helped during the preventive examinations, I filled out workers' documents. I checked any information three times. So next year I am invited too. Of course, **this makes me very happy and I have only to thank the organizers of Erasmus+ Programme – they make my dreams come true – I am learning and I am teaching and I am inspired by this travel.** I am looking forward to coming back to Bulgaria and to asking – “Zdravo, kako si?” - let us teach you what to do when a colleague of yours has been in an accident and you need to help him. Instantly, without a moment's delay. Even before the ambulance arrived.



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BLAGOSLAVA GEORGIEVA:

“I WOULD LIKE TO THANK FOR THIS LIFE- ALTERING EXPERIENCE I RECEIVED THROUGH ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME”

Erasmus+ Period: 04/04/2017 – 28/07/2017

First I want to thank for the opportunity I received through the Erasmus+ Programme to change my life!

My name is Blagoslava Georgieva and I was part of the Erasmus+ Programme in Heidelberg from the 4 April – to 30 July 2017. I studied pharmacy at the Medical University Sofia in Bulgaria and my exchange university was located in Germany at the University Heidelberg.

I have loved being a part of the DKFZ – team (German Cancer Research Center). My supervisor was professor Martin Berger. In the lab, I was able to learn a lot from the specialists in their area of expertise. I had the possibility to see interesting analyzes, new techniques and learn about the future techniques in science. I was trained by Shariq Ansari, Doaa Ali, Marineta Kovacheva and other people which was part of the team. Every time when I need help and support they was next to me and teach me how to do. They became not only my teachers, I'm happy to say that this people was like a family for me and now we have a strong friendship. During this time, we made a lot of activities after work like picnics/barbeque next to the river and bicycle trips to other close cities.

I had a lot of impressions in Germany and I'm now open-minded for a new things and possibilities in my life. It was also a good possibility to discover new cultures and find out similarities between me and other people from whole world.

The Erasmus+ student organization organized events during the whole program time where all students can find immediately new friends.

In Heidelberg my colleague Maria Nikolova was always next to me. We became close friends very quickly and discover Europe together in many trips to Switzerland and France and around Germany. During these four months we joined a language course in German which was really useful for us to integrate more easily with Germans and on events. In the Erasmus+ Programme I have improved not only my medical skills furthermore also my language and communication skills in English and German. I had often the opportunity to show my Bulgarian culture and to tell about our traditions on a special European culture event and in the normal life, because the people was really interested about and ask me often topics about Bulgaria.

I get many impressions which I will never forget and I can speak only for myself, but everybody should take the chance to learn more about other countries and cultures, because this will change you in a positive way for your whole life.



Heidelberg College was founded in 1850 by members of the German Reformed Church who named it after the Heidelberg Catechism of 1563. Heidelberg University is a community of learning that promotes and nurtures intellectual, personal and professional development, leading to a life of purpose with distinction. The University will be a welcoming, student-centered institution where in-class and out-of-class learning is seamless and continuous. Both the undergraduate and graduate curriculums will effectively integrate liberal arts and professional preparation across disciplines to prepare the students to be global citizens who think critically, communicate effectively, and serve thoughtfully.

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VALYA ILIEVA:

“ITALIAN MEDICAL STAFF IS A BIG POSITIVE EXAMPLE FOR THE WORLD!!!”

Erasmus+ Period: **01/07/2019 – 02/09/2019**

I am Valya Ilieva, a Bulgarian student studying Midwifery. I have been in Italy for 2 months in a hospital for further training as part of the Erasmus+ student mobility Programme. This Programme helps to expand the training program in the fields of “Maternity” and “Pregnancy”.

Italian medical professionals are well-trained theoretically and practically, with close relations between patients and hospital staff. They all work together as a very well-functioning machine. Patient for Italian medics is something sacred! The patient is greeted with a smile, he is thoroughly listened to and the patient’s attitude is objective, regardless of race, religion or social status. Midwives, professors, doctors, students, assistant staff - all are ready to help a patient in need. Patients and their relatives respond to this humanity and, as a result, there is genuine joy in staff eyes.

As a first-time student coming to an unfamiliar and new environment, in a foreign country with a different spoken language than my native Bulgarian, and with no Italian known, I was greeted with warm and kind feelings that gave me the confidence that I could be Good professional. I could always count on their professional explanation for things I didn’t know or saw for the first time. My employees showed me different practices, after which I was able to practice the new learned methodology in a relaxed environment without any anxiety. I was aided in learning without the feeling that my ignorance engages someone and leads to someone’s loss of personal time. My colleagues were happy that they could do something useful for me.

At the end of my studies in Italy, I really feel completely satisfied because I realize that I have significantly improved my theoretical and practical training. This result is a reality thanks to the skill and availability of these medical and midwifery staff, and I owe all my gratitude to them.

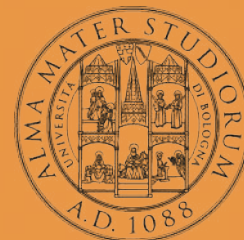
Italian medical staff is a BIG positive example for the world!!!



The University of Bologna is a research university in Bologna, Italy. Founded in 1088 by an organised guild of students (hence studiorum), it is the oldest university in the world, as well as one of the leading academic institutions in Italy and Europe. It is one of the most prestigious Italian universities, commonly ranking in the first places of national rankings.

The university's emblem carries the motto Alma mater studiorum ("nourishing mother of studies") and the date A.D. 1088, and it has about 86,500 students in its 11 departments. It has campuses in Ravenna, Forlì, Cesena and Rimini and a branch center abroad in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

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VALYA ILIEVA:

“ITALIAN MEDICAL STAFF IS A BIG POSITIVE EXAMPLE FOR THE WORLD!!!”

Erasmus+ Period: **01/07/2019 – 02/09/2019**



From my point of view, Erasmus+ mobility is a major step forward in my personal and professional development. The Erasmus+ challenge provoked me to step out of my comfortable comfort zone, this experience made me to be more independent person, to be bolder, to touch other amazing cultures. My life in Tallinn, Estonia, was filled with many different emotions, new pleasant acquaintances, many interesting adventures, and overall I was able to enrich my knowledge a lot.

I was practically in one of the best laboratories in the country Estonia. The lab was equipped with new advanced techniques that I learned to handle, and the personnel showed me new methods of work. I refined my knowledge from what I had already learned and this was a very useful experience.

My local colleagues were very kind, very patient, tried to explain everything to me, and I could always use their help when needed. Some of them took me around

the city and the surrounding area so that I could touch their culture.

I made friends with many of the other Erasmus+ students in Tallinn. We traveled with them, saw many places, created unforgettable memories!

Erasmus+ Programme is a great adventure from which you return with a rich professional experience, with positive emotions, valuable experiences and true lifelong friendships.



Cluj School of Public Health (C-SPH) is an innovative research focused program with full English educational track in public health – BA, MPH, PhD in Cluj, Romania. This is the only Public Health program taught completely in English in the entire Central and Eastern Europe.

Cluj School of Public Health is formed from the Department of Public Health (educational wing) and the Center for Health Policy and Public Health (research wing), within the College of Political, Administrative and Communication Sciences of Babes-Bolyai University – the biggest and highest ranked university from Romania.



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GERGANA DIKOVA:

“LIFE ABROAD CHANGED ME AND NOW I’M AN OPEN-MINDED PERSON, INDEPENDENT AND CONFIDENT!”

Erasmus+ Period: **23/07/2018 – 29/09/2018**



Joining the Erasmus+ Programme was one of the best decisions of my life. Life abroad changed me, I am now more open, independent and confident.

I have always been fascinated by the French culture, language, environment, food and people’s behavior.

At first, I was extremely skeptical about going to Angers-France, but I have to admit that going there has been the best decision I have ever made.

Angers is a medium-sized French city which is the capital of the “Maine-et-Loire département” in the northwestern region of Pays de la Loire. It offers a mixture of historically rich street-scapes and typical French night-life.

The Faculty of Medicine of Angers started its educational activities in 1433 and it is one of the oldest in France. The medical programme at University of Angers offers a range of teaching approaches, from traditional theoretical classes to innovative and hands-on experience. At University Hospital of Angers, leading experts, professionally selected specialized team and medical apparatuses of the newest generation guarantee high quality of education for the medical students.

My advice for future Erasmus+ participants is to make sure you are readier than ever to study in French because it requires a very high level of language ability, especially for medical traineeship.

Erasmus+ Programme gives you, new perspective, loads of enthusiasm and willpower!



The University of Angers is an institution of higher education in the town of Angers in western France. It began as the School of Angers in the 11th century and became a university in 1337. In 1432, the Faculties of Medicine, Arts, and Theology were added to the Faculty of Law. The university was closed in 1793 during the French Revolution, and in 1971 a predecessor was established with little ties to the past institutions.

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GERGANA BOGDANOVA:

“I LEARNED WHAT CANNOT BE LEARNED IF YOU JUST STAY IN YOUR COMFORT ZONE AT HOME”

Erasmus+ Period: **05/02/2019 – 05/04/2019**

“Colourful” - this is the word most people use to describe Naples. It is a city of contrasts. At one moment you walk down a street with untended buildings and at the next you are left stunned by a spectacular view of the sea, embraced by the gentle violet arms of Vesuvius. The city is so full of remarkable buildings, large museums and cultural heritage and at the same time so vivacious, you could feel its pulsing life, running through the narrow streets. And Naples will surprise you at every corner.

Before going on my Erasmus+ traineeship I had a lot of doubts if I would enjoy it, if it would be a contribution to my education, if I could get along with the people there, if I would survive on my own. I never expected it to be so easy, natural and satisfactory to deal with all that through the communication with people so positive and hospital like only Neapolitans can be. Almost everybody I met was more than nice and helped me with everything they could. That made struggling with everyday issues effortless. Even in the academic environment of the university all the professors and students were very friendly and eager to help me get the most of each day I spent there. Their warm, Mediterranean temper can always bring the smile to your face and even if you are expecting it they can always surprise you with another charming gesture. I am profoundly grateful to the professors and the dean of the university for letting me explore different approaches and especially for adjusting the program to my interests and skills. And of course, I am thankful for teaching me the most important lesson - your day cannot go right without a nice, strong Italian coffee in “Napoli, where coffee is a cult”.

But it wasn't just the locals who made my stay unforgettable. I met with students from many other countries with different experiences. This is one of the best features of the Erasmus+ Programme. The thing in common between everyone I met was that they were very positive and curious to find out as much as possible about other cultures. It is good to know there are organizations, taking care for events where you can spend a wonderful time, getting to know both other Erasmus+ students and the most attractive sites nearby. But for me the greatest pleasure was unraveling the city's most beautiful corners unexpectedly. Feeling the magic of the morning sun, sitting on the stairs of “Piazza Bellini” under the sound of jazz music from the Conservatory or walking by the sea under the stars, watching the hundred lights gathered around the coast... Dancing next to Castell dell'Ovo or eating ice cream on via Toledo, you will not be left without a pocket, full of amazing memories. And the pizza! I may need a whole paragraph to describe what cannot be described - the Neapolitan Margherita. You simply cannot go wrong wherever you buy it from, especially if it is shared with a friend.

“What did you learn?” is the question everybody is asking me. **I learned what cannot be learned if you just stay in your comfort zone at home. I learned the importance of communication with people and having a positive attitude towards new ideas, places and approaches. Having a different perspective is one of the most precious opportunities the Erasmus+ Programme can offer to you!** It could literally give your life a new direction and clarity of what you want and how you can achieve it. For me it was a great inspiration both for my professional and personal development. Most importantly it is a wonderful reminder that “Non scholae, sed vitae discimus.”.



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DIANA DIMITROVA:

“IT IS SAID THAT HOME IS NOT THE PLACE THAT YOU ARE LIVING IN, BUT THE PLACE WHERE YOUR HEART IS, SO FOR ME PAMPLONA IS MY SECOND HOME!”

Erasmus+ Period: 04/03/2019 - 03/06/2019

People have said to me that the Erasmus+ Programme is amazing adventure and worthy of living experience! If you want to know about mine, continue reading.

How everything started, I was wondering if going abroad for 3 months to do my diploma thesis will be a good idea, and mostly I didn't know the main language of the country that I wanted to visit. Probably, now is the moment to share with you which destination was the one that I have chosen, it was – Spain, Pamplona. However, I decided to take the chance and to test myself if I am able to survive abroad, completely alone.

I had never heard anything about Pamplona that's why I was not sure what to expect from this city. Surprisingly, when the plane landed, the only people that were at the airport were the ones from my plane, imagine how small was the city that I was going to (at least it seemed to be for me), therefore the first thought that crossed my mind was that maybe the only thing that I will do there is to work and travel a little bit, but guess what, it was not only that.

The first new thing that I had to cope with was the university and all the new stuff that I had to handle there. I won't lie to you, in the beginning it was hard for me to understand the Spanish-English accent that all the people had and sometimes I was only smiling if I didn't get the idea that they were trying to explain to me. The second thing that I had to get used to was the new equipment and the way of teaching, which was pretty different from Bulgarian's one. One of the first things that I learned there was that I have to do everything alone, to cope with the problems of my project, to think more and to solve the problems by myself. The truth is that it was scary but worthy, because now I can say that working in a lab is not easy, but it is really interesting, focusing, mind-taking and also super fun and exciting.

After my first days with not pretty clear understanding of Spanish-English (which I adored afterwards) I got used to it and this problem disappeared on its own. As you can see from the photos I met some new friends, I didn't know it then, but they were going to become my friends for lifetime. Of course, we were not only working, we were going out almost every night, after the day in the lab, to enjoy Pamplona and to discover it. One of the first things that we had the chance to find out was the really famous jueves night (every Thursday) when you can buy the world famous “pinchos”, what is that, see the picture below.

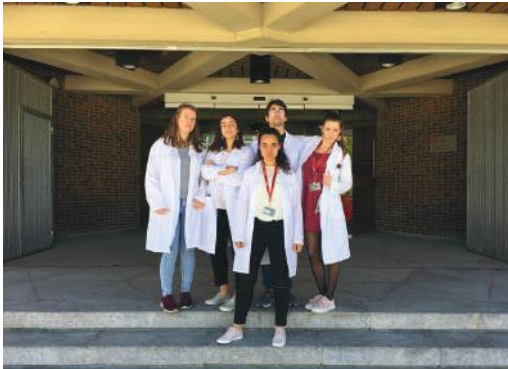
Soon after the beginning of my Erasmus+ I met other friends from all over the world, mostly Italians but also Hungarian, Egyptians and German people. As a typical exchange student we were travelling almost every weekend so we visited amazing places for example: Las Bardenas (the desert), mountain San Cristobal, Costa Vasca and many cities like San Sebastian, Barcelona, Vitoria and believe me all of them were magical.

As I said in the beginning, it was not only working and travelling it was a way bigger picture. Who knows why, maybe because of that all of us were foreign students or because we just liked each other a lot or because all of us were a little bit crazy and strange (in a good way), but we became true friends and we shared everything from the homemade food to the happy and sometimes hard moments that all of us had experienced there. So I found not only new people, but I found simple, crazy, goodhearted, intelligent and amazing friends.

It is said that home is not the place that you are leaving in, but the place where your heart is, for me Pamplona was my second home.

I don't know how convincing I am now for going abroad and studying there, but if you are still not sure, if it is not enough for you, I hope that the following sentence will be "Nothing ventured, nothing gained". Do something new, be brave and follow your heart.

P.S. With love to my Erasmus+ kindergarten family!



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Maria Maneva
Faculty of Public Health
Outgoing Student

MARIA MANEVA:

“WE EXCHANGED RESEARCH IDEAS WITH MANY OF THE LEADING SEREARCHS IN THE HIROSHINA UNIVERSITY”

Erasmus+ Period: 27/06/2017 - 28/08/2017

I'm very satisfied with my Erasmus+ mobility Programme. **I was able to enrich my professional experience, practice physiotherapy in wonderful conditions, guided by caring professionals who we were eager to show me new techniques and build my confidence in the working field!**

I was able to visit great places in the receiving country, meet many new people and get in touch with different cultures. I had the opportunity to practice my English speaking skills and improve my rhetoric.

The Szpitalstaszow places great emphasis on the professional development of its staff, raising qualifications, and expanding the panel of services provided. Persons wishing to start a specialization (it provides an attractive addition to residency) and sub-specialization have to take additional courses. It has a multimedia training room, with the possibility of lectures, presentations, training sessions, etc.

As an accredited hospital, which has been at the forefront of the CMJ ranking for years, the Szpitalstaszow involved in many projects such as drug conciliation projects, project for Safe Hospital, project for Safe Patient, and in any Adverse Events. The hospital encourage their employees to engage in future projects.

The construction of the new hospital building begun in mid-1971 and it was completed. The hospital building was commissioned in April 1975 year. In April 1995, the 20th anniversary of the operation of the district hospital was solemnly celebrated. On this occasion, the hospital was named after Stefan Niewirowicz. The hospital has been an independent unit since 1998 and operates under the name Independent public health care departments in Staszow.



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Maria Nikolova
Faculty of Pharmacy
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MARIA NIKOLOVA:

“ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME IS NOT ONLY ABOUT STUDING AND WORKING, IT GIVES YOU THE CHANCE TO MEET NEW PEOPLE AND CREATE A LOT OF CONTACTS IN EUROPE AND OUTSIDE EUROPE!”

Erasmus+ Period: 01/09/2017 – 01/07/2019

My name is Maria Nikolova and I was studying Pharmacy at the Medical University - Sofia, Bulgaria. I would like to share my Erasmus+ story, which definitely changed my point of view about the world around me.

I had the honor to live four months in Heidelberg, Germany and work together with specialists in DKFZ. The supervisor of my internship was Prof. Martin Berger, who was always supporting my work, by giving me good advices and helping with every student issue I had. Furthermore, I had the opportunity to be trained by Shariq Ansari and Doaa Ali, who is a big professional at toxicology and pharmacology science.

I spent my Erasmus+ Programme together with my colleague and good friend Blagoslava Georgieva. We had the chance to see from the inside how people are creating science and we realized how hard is this job and how much dedication is necessary for every project to be done. DKFZ is a good example, how different nations are combining their knowledge and successfully work together for one main mission. It was surprising for me, to see supportive and I definitely felt like being a part of a big family.

Erasmus+ Programme is not only about studying and working, it gives you the chance to meet new people and create a lot of contacts in Europe and outside Europe. It helped me develop my language and social skills. Now, I feel more confident in every initiative, which I start in my life!

Erasmus+ is a model of international cooperation and good example how people are working together successfully. This experience made me think about how important I am as a European citizen and how I can match the big European family. I would say, that I definitely feel like being a part of this colorful puzzle and I wish to develop myself in this environment. It's inspiring for me to share my traditions and realize that people everywhere are the same, despite the language barriers or the difference of religions. Every travel and every new friend gave me a new point of view about the surrounding world and motivated me to be also inspirational to other people.

I am happy to say that during this experience I found one of my best friends – Blagoslava. We were together in every adventure during our stay in Heidelberg. We found our friendship abroad and created deep connection between us later on. Because of that, I want to share with you one of my favorite photo with Blagoslava and say thank you to every lovely person whom I met during this journey.



Heidelberg is a student-centered university in Tiffin, Ohio. Since their founding in 1850, they've remained a welcoming, enthusiastic community dedicated to helping their students live rich and fulfilling lives, personally and professionally. The University effectively integrate liberal arts and professional preparation across disciplines to prepare our students to be global citizens who communicate effectively, think critically and serve thoughtfully.

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Nadya Kostova
Medical College, MU – Sofia
Outgoing Student

NADYA KOSTOVA:

“DURING MY INTERNSHIP AT THE DENTAL LAB, I FEEL GREAT! THE PEOPLE ARE VERY FRIENDLY AND HELPFUL!”

Erasmus+ Period: 05/07/2019 – 06/09/2019

Spain is famous around the world for Flamenco music and dance, bullfights, fantastic beaches, and lots of sunshine. But what people sometimes forget is that Spain has been one of the cultural centers of Europe for thousands of years. Passionate, sophisticated and devoted to living the good life, Spain is both a stereotype come to life and a country more diverse than you ever imagined.

And some interesting facts about Spain:

- Fiestas and Traditions. Best known among Spain's folkloristic traditions are certainly Flamenco and bullfights. You will find bullfights indeed throughout the country, the most popular event perhaps being the “Running of Bulls” during the Sanfermines in Pamplona. But bullfights are part and parcel of any Fiesta;
- Paella. Originating in Valencia, paella is a rice dish prepared with seafood. Of all the foods in Spain, this is the most popular. In this dish, savory yellow rice is combined with tomatoes, onions, peas, shellfish, squid, clams;
- The national animal of the Spain is Bull;
- Having Pomegranate as an official flower, the national flower of Spain is the Red carnation, which is not only beautiful and long lasting flower, but also sends a message i.e. when you receive a Red Carnation Bouquet, it means, my heart aches for you and when you receive White Carnations, the sender is saying I am still available;
- Plus, ultra (English: Further beyond) is a Latin phrase and the national motto of Spain. It is taken from the personal motto of Charles V (24 February 1500 – 21 September 1558), Holy Roman Emperor and King of Spain (as Charles I), and is a reversal of the original phrase Non terrae plus ultra (“No land further beyond”).

I would also like to do something like a short description (guide) of Madrid, which I hope is useful for those who want to visit this wonderful city. Madrid is a city that's predominantly sunny. The weather is rather dry so it can get quite fresh in the winter and extremely hot in the summer. You will eat the best „tapas“ of your life. Spain is all about food, and where else than the capital will you find some of the best „tapas“?! A tapa (Spanish pronunciation: [ˈtapa]) is an appetizer or snack in Spanish cuisine and translates to small portion of any kind of Spanish cuisine. Tapa may be cold (such as mixed olives and cheese) or hot (such as chopitos, which are battered, fried baby squid). Madrid is very fashionable and trendy, so you will find it hard to resist going shopping as there are so many options for everyone's taste. Plaza Mayor: in the historic heart of the city, a huge square with a uniquely Spanish style of architecture. An interesting fact: the square has been the setting for bullfights and for coronations.

Puerta del Sol: the square that most symbolizes life in Madrid. It marks kilometre zero, the point all Spain's road distances are measured from, as it was once the starting point for all roads to the provinces. There 's also the statue of the Bear and the Strawberry Tree - This statue is the symbol of the capital of Spain. Originally Madrid was called Ursa, a Latin bear translation, and the reason for this was that in the past the area was inhabited by many bears that inhabited nearby forests. In the forest at that time there were many madrone trees bearing fruit resembling strawberries, therefore, gathering information it can be concluded that the name of the tree used as a symbol of Madrid actually derives from the Madron tree.

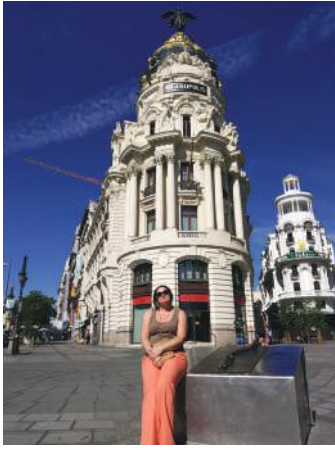
Royal Palace: see how the Kings and Queens of Spain lived until quite recently. This may be the royal palace with the largest and best preserved collection in Europe, with its original furniture, decoration and other treasures in over 3,000 rooms. In my opinion, the Royal Palace of Madrid is the most impressive monument of the capital. It's so majestic from the outside and the inside is even more beautiful with its stunning frescoes and luxurious decor. You can also walk around the lovely Sabatini Gardens which used to be where the royal stables were.

El Retiro Park: one of the largest and nicest city parks in Europe. A place to relax and enjoy the beauty. At the weekends it's a great place to go with kids and enjoy musicians, mimes, puppet theatres, or boating on its central lake. Retiro Park is the main park of the city where everyone goes for a picnic on the hot summer days. It's a lovely park to walk around in. And it is also home to the beautiful Palacio de Cristal, which is open for exhibitions. The Puerta de Alcalá entrance is one of the prettiest ones.

Three unmissable art galleries: even if you're not an art fan, the Prado is one of the most important museums in the world and well worth a visit. If you prefer modern and contemporary art, you should visit the Reina Sofia. And of course, the one of the world's most famous private collections.

In general, I find that things are a lot cheaper in Madrid than other European cities. Travel, accommodation, restaurants and bars are all more affordable than let's say Paris or London. If you're looking for an affordable, budget destination then Madrid is perfect!





I loved the time I spent in this wonderful and lovely city, and I tend to go back regularly to visit my friends and to enjoy the places I used to go to. It always brings back lovely memories of the good time! The Spaniards are friendly, kind and active, ¡really active! Especially if compared to the majority of Europeans. They like to live with friends to drink, enjoy the good weather, good food and parties. The Spaniards like to go out to dancing, but not all dance flamenco. Spaniards like the traditional Spanish food, but they don't eat paella every day. They are cheerful, hospitable and very funny. And of course, my most important impression and the reason I'm here is the dental laboratory.

During my internship at the dental lab, I feel great. The people are very friendly and helpful. They have accepted me very well and help me learn many new things.

The laboratory is very large with many modern and new devices and machines, so I can see the construction of various prosthetic structures.

Certainly, these two months of practice are extremely rewarding, time spent in the work environment and a good opportunity to expand skills.

Gaining experience that would be beneficial for each participant in the Erasmus+ Programme. And ... yes, that's right - Erasmus+ experience is one of those adventures, which can't be forgotten! Highly recommend to anyone!

Best regards from Madrid 😊😊😊



Korfu Dental is a laboratory established at the beginning of the year 1995, and these almost 20 years of professional experience in Spain, Madrid. The laboratory provides services to leading professionals nationally and internationally. Their facilities are equipped with the latest CAD-CAM technology devices: DENTSPLY DEGUSA CERCON, STRAUMANN, Itero, PHIBO, 3SHAPE, DENTAL WINGS, EXOCAD, SUM 3D, ARCHIMEDES.

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Polina Georgieva
Faculty of Public Health
Outgoing student

POLINA GEORGIEVA:

“THANKS TO THE ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME I AM EXPERIENCING A LOT OF PRICELESS MOMENTS, SUCH AS HELPING MY PATIENT TO TURN HER BAD HABITS INTO POSITIVE ONES BY TEACHING MY TIP FOR A SELF-DISCIPLINE!”

Erasmus+ Period: 01/07/2019 – 20/08/2019

My name is Polina Georgieva, I finished my third year as a nursing student in the Medical University of Sofia and I was looking forward doing my traineeship with Erasmus + Programme in Romania, Cluj-Napoca this summer.

I would like to share some tip during my work in the Chirurgie Clinic, Intensive Care Unit which I find important for the medical specialists, who will read about my success story. I am up to my ears in my work. I was taking care for a 70 years old patient, Cosmina, who has Depression; Imbalance Diabetes, type 2; Hypertension; Cardiopathy; HCV; Gastritis, Gastric polyps; Anemia. Because of her Depression, she used to eat haotic, unbalanced diet, which caused her gastric problems. On a regular basis she used to eat lots of unhealthy meals and when she came for threatment in the Intensive care unit, her blood sugar level was enormously high.

The beginning of eating problems can be linked to a stressful event or trauma. Eating problems can begin because you experience a mental health problem such as depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder or body dysmorphic disorder. They can be linked to feelings of low self-esteem, worthlessness or powerlessness. As a medical nursing student I would suggest to my patient Cosmina and to those people with physical diseases, caused by mental health problems to be self-disciplined. Self-discipline can help protect the health in many ways. If it is absent, there is lack of self-control, lack of the ability to set limits, and the inability to control harmful habits. However, when present, it protects the health, and helps avoid doing things that could harm the health. Smoking, overeating, eating junk and unhealthy food, laziness, procrastination and other negative habits harm your health. However, you can overcome these habits, and build positive habits, when you possess the skill of self- discipline. People with high self-discipline are happier than those without. Self-discipline can be your key to happiness.

So, if you are seeking ways to become happier, and if you are open to improving just about every aspect of your life in the process, it appears that there is no faster way to do both, than through the practise of self- discipline. Success starts with self- discipline.

Thanks to the Erasmus+ Programme I am experiencing a lot of priceless moments, such as helping my patient to turn her bad habits into positive ones by teaching my tip for a self-discipline!

My name is Rositsa Markova and I am fourth year student in Public Health and Health management in the Faculty of Public Health, Medical University – Sofia. This year I had the opportunity to make a summer internship in the Cluj School of Public Health throughout the Erasmus+ Programme.

The city of Cluj–Napoca is located in the north-west part of Romania and it was under Hungarian influence for a long time. This influence is visible throughout the beautiful architecture of the



The Cluj School of Public Health is an innovative research focused program with a full English educational track in public health (all public health courses are delivered in English). The Cluj School of Public Health, at Babes Bolyai University (Romania's leading and largest university), is based in the city of Cluj-Napoca, Romania, a multicultural environment with a long-standing tradition as a leading academic center.

The Cluj School of Public Health offers twelve-week summer internship opportunities annually for students from the various partner Schools of Public Health, including the University at Albany School of Public Health. Participating students gain valuable professional experience that allows them to apply knowledge and theory learned in the classroom to key global health challenges while living and working abroad. Cluj School of Public Health Global Health Interns work closely with dedicated and supportive advisers who have extensive experience in developing and implementing research projects.

The Cluj School of Public Health Internship Program placements are designed to support the School's ongoing research/implementation projects. Internship placements focus on a broad range of topics/concentration areas, including Health Policy and Management, Social and Behavioral Health, Environmental Health, Maternal and Child Health, and Violence and Injury Prevention. There are also opportunities for Summer Interns to work with Cluj School of Public Health faculty and researchers to develop a customized placement that matches their academic background and interests.

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Cluj School of Public Health
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Rositsa Markova
Faculty of Public Health
Outgoing student

ROSITSA MARKOVA:

“I WOULD RECOMMEND TO EVERY STUDENT TO TAKE THE CHANCE AND PARTICIPATE IN THE ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME, BECAUSE THERE IS A HUGE WORLD OUT THERE TO BE DISCOVERED!”

Erasmus+ Period: 04/06/2019 – 06/06/2019

My name is Rositsa Markova and I am fourth year student in Public Health and Health management in the Faculty of Public Health, Medical University – Sofia. This year I had the opportunity to make a summer internship in the Cluj School of Public Health throughout the Erasmus+ Programme.


The city of Cluj–Napoca is located in the north-west part of Romania and it was under Hungarian influence for a long time. This influence is visible throughout the beautiful architecture of the town, the many museums and mixed population. Also, Cluj is a city which hosts a lot of musical and food festivals and events. I lived in the Student’s city which reminded me a lot of the one in Sofia, so I didn’t experience a culture shock during my stay there. Fortunately, I made a lot of friends with who had time to travel every weekend to discover beautiful cities in Romania such as Sibiu, Brasov, Alba Iulia and etc.

Regarding my job, I was working 4 hours a day at the Cluj School of Public Health and I had different tasks to do. I could say that the school is working under an innovative and modern American-like model of education. There were also a lot of students who were working on different projects. I find it very interesting that they give them the opportunity to work before graduating their bachelor degrees. My main task was an European project, funded by the Erasmus+ Programme under the title “DIYPES – Do it yourself physical education and sport!”. It was my first time working with an European project and it was really interesting. This project was about motivating high school students to participate in their physical education and sport hours at high school, because of the high obesity levels in Europe. So I developed special video and presentation to encourage them and I created guidelines for the teachers and project participants. It was a great experience for me and with the help of my mentor to whom I am very grateful, I learned many things which I will use one day in my future career.

I would recommend to every student to take the chance and participate in the Erasmus+ Programme, because there is a huge world out there to be discovered!



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Stefka Stoichkova
Faculty of Medicine
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STEFKA STOICHKOVA:

“I ADVISE ALL OF YOU WHO ARE WONDERING WHAT IT’S LIKE, NOT TO HESITATE BUT TO GO HEAD ON INTO THIS ADVENTURE!”

Erasmus+ Period: 27/09/2018 – 02/02/2018

Hello, my name is Stefka, I’m 23-years-old and recently I personally took part in the process of taking a history from a patient, examined patients’ physical statuses, diagnosed and planned the proper treatment for 3 patients. At first glance, all these actions may not seem complicated, but I had the opportunity to do them in Spanish. I could barely say my favorite color in Spanish a year ago, and now on my locker you can find Manual de Protocolos en Urgencias Pediátricas. Oh, and let’s not forget that I also participated in a PCR simulation, saw a broken femur and made 4 successful lumbar punctures (ok, that last one was on a dummy but everybody has to start from somewhere). At the moment I’m spending the last two summer’s months doing an internship in the paediatric department of Hospital Gregorio Marañón in Madrid. Nobody offered me or made me do it, I chose it and, although, I have to wake up every morning at 6.15 am through all 5 working days every week, it’s a decision I would make again. If you’re expecting a story about lots of parties and drinking or of some movie-like adventure, you could skip my story definitely. This is the story of how important role the Erasmus+ Programme has played in my growth and development into the person Stefka which I am today.

The first time I went on an Erasmus+ exchange Programme was in my 4th year when I spent the winter semester in Ljubljana, Slovenia. I was the only candidate for this location, but it was the perfect place – a beautiful capital with a large university full of young people. Immediately I regretted that I didn’t sign up for the whole year. You see, Slovenia has such a great social system – public bikes, sport facilities, big libraries with all the books you need that you can carry home, THE BONI (a system that provides students with free meals in 500 locations around the city. It might seem a bit overrated but believe me there’s nothing that helps more with socializing with other students). But I forget about how beautiful Slovenia is (inexplicably!) and the whole personnel in the University how attentive were toward me. This Programme gave me, for the first time in my life, the opportunity to be myself! You learn how to make friends from all kinds of places; how to do shopping with a limited budget; how to communicate with personal and patients with a different socio-cultural background; how to rent a car and drive it through the narrowest and most beautiful mountain road; how not to burn the house down while cooking; how to apply for documents for residency; how to turn yourself into the perfect machine for scanning the best deals for bus and plane tickets around Europe; how to do a one-week-long trip around Italy, visiting the oldest anatomical theatre and trying the best gelato; how to make and respect schedules for the bathroom and the washing machine and don’t be mad about it; how to celebrate your birthday and Christmas with the people you just met 2 months ago; how to overgrow your social awkwardness by going to all kinds of events (yoga in the park, vegan night with shared food, Portuguese classes, board game night, beer pong, swing dance classes, debate

club, mountain hiking, music jams); how to hitchhike with that girl you met just yesterday from Ljubljana to Zagreb having the craziest trip together and form a lasting friendship; how to start a love relationship; how to end a love relationship. You shouldn't focus on the artificial photos of people with perfect teeth from different nationalities having fun in the park or getting crazy at a party. Don't get me wrong, you definitely have those moments too, but the beauty of Erasmus+ is that it puts you in a totally new and different, sometimes even uncomfortable environment and it really changes you and gives you a greater perspective on life!

Currently, I'm doing a second Erasmus+ interchange. This time it's an internship in a hospital, I'm part of the team and I have a responsibility toward them. I decided to go on this adventure because as I'm approaching the end of my medical studies it's time to make the BIG DECISION – what do I want to specialize and where? First question is easy – paediatrics (it magically made its way into my heart). The second question is the hard part. Spain has been last years on the top of the best medical practices in Europe. I chose the opportunity to be in a Spanish hospital with 5 centuries of tradition and experience, from which I learn about the functioning of the healthcare system, about individual work and professionalism, gaining medical knowledge and research knowhow. I'm still not definitely decided whether I want to stay in Bulgaria or want to move to Spain, but I know that I want to develop lessons learned so far and I will not stop to develop myself as a doctor and person. I think this is a good end to my story. Not so much of a story, but a confession. Needn't to say I advise all of you who are wondering what it's like, not to hesitate but to go head on into this adventure no matter if it's in a metropolitan capital or a city smaller than your original one, it's worth it.

P.S. Finally, I would just like to mention one last thing that Erasmus+ Programme gave me – it helped me bring back my trust in the Bulgarian administrative body. Thank you to the staff at the International Erasmus+ Office of the Medical University - Sofia. You are really very open to help and very positive!



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Silviya Ivanova
Faculty of Public Health
Outgoing Student

SILVIYA IVANOVA:

“WE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO GAIN THIS GREAT EXPERIENCE AND PRACTICE UNDER THE USEFYLL SUPERVISION OF OUR MENTOR”

Erasmus+ Period: 22/02/2019 – 22/05/2019

My name is Silviya Ivanova and I am student in the fourth year in Medical University of Sofia, specialty Health management. **My Erasmus+ internship lasted three amazing months and it was in Medical university of Warsaw, Poland!**

The first assigned task was practice in the Neonatology department of The Autonomous Public Children’s Clinic Hospital of the Medical University of Warsaw. Together with my two colleagues from the University in Valencia who were specializing as nurses, we had the opportunity to gain this great experience and practice under the useful supervision of our mentor Emil. We spent some of our internship in the intense care unit where we prepared the medicine, took care of the patients as feeding, changing, placing feeding tube and marking the accomplished activities in the relevant documents. The rest of the time, we had the possibility to witness how the specialists take blood samples from a head of a newborn, birth with C-section, puncture of the spine of a newborn and a lot more. This practice was not directly connected with my specialty; however, it gave me a very precious overview regarding the Polish healthcare system from the professionals working in the hospital.

The main part of my internship was creating a literature review, using the method of systematic approach on the topic ‘Hepatitis B and C: Seroprevalence, knowledge, practice and associated factors among medicine and health science students’. It was a consistent and continuing work and my mentor was Ms. Joanna Gotlib PhD head of Division of the Faculty of Health Sciences at Medical University of Warsaw.

I devoted few weeks to investigate and collect enough knowledge about the genre ‘literature review’ and I read a couple of researches made on the topic ‘Hepatitis B and C. I picked up this topic having in mind my sphere of friends who are medical or health science students therefore I felt personally engaged and chose this social group. While looking for all the necessary information this work needed, I had the chance to meet some of the PhD students and to spend some time in the administration of the faculty.

In my free time I managed to travel to other polish cities and in Norway, Lithuania and Latvia together with my new international friends, I attended Polish classes and had great fun and experience.

Finally, yet importantly, I wish to thank Medical university of Sofia for providing me with this opportunity and supporting me all the way through and especially my Erasmus+ Coordinator prof. Antoniya Yanakieva, PhD.



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Tanya Suradzhieva
Faculty of Medicine
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TANYA SURADZHIEVA:

“IT WAS SUCH A GOOD LESSON AND ADVENTURE FOR ME! I SAW HOW PEOPLE LIVE, HOW STUDENTS STUDY OUTSIDE MY HOME COUNTRY, MADE A LOT OF FRIENDS AND IMPROVED MY SKILLS!”

Erasmus+ Period: 15/01/2019 – 15/06/2019

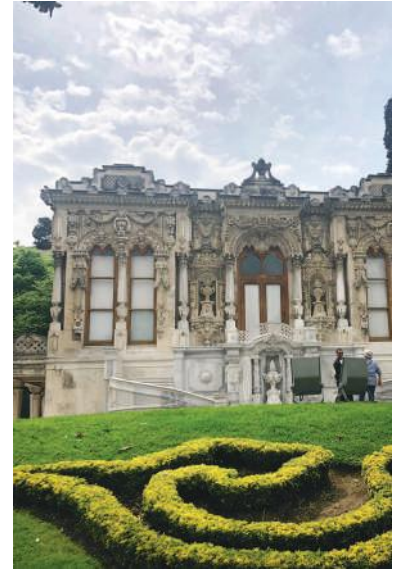


My name is Tanya Suradzhieva and I'm 5th year medical student at Medical University Sofia. During the second semester (spring/summer) I took part in Erasmus+ Project Programme at Acibadem Mehmet Ali Aydinlar University, Istanbul, Turkey. I want to share with you some of my impressions and experiences.

First of all, I'm glad that I had the opportunity. Thank you to all the staff from both universities (MU and ACU), who helped me made it happen. **It was such a good lesson and adventure for me. I saw how people live, how students study outside my home country; made a lot of friends; improved my skills - about medicine, life, languages!**

For ACU can say that is one very good university. Their program is not so different of ours. The campus and the hospitals are modern, new and fancy. All the professors, doctors were very kind to me. There was no moment in which I felt bad or not to the place I belong. The students helped me for everything I asked them. The coordinators also – so kind and polite. I can say only positive things for my Erasmus+ Project. About the city – Istanbul is my favourite city and I recommend to everybody to visit it.

I'm sharing some photos and you will see how amazing is. One more time thanks to everybody!



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Nikolaos Pelagidis
Faculty of Pharmacy
Outgoing Student

NIKOLAOS PELAGIDIS:

“IT EXPANDS YOUR SPIRITUAL HORIZONS AND COMPLETES YOU AS A CHARACTER AND PERSON”

Erasmus+ Period: 05/04/2017 – 14/02/2017

The Medical Faculty of the Heinrich-Heine-University evolved out of the former Academy of Applied Medicine, which was established in 1907. It soon achieved international recognition when leading practitioners pioneeringly integrated basic research and clinical practice. Today, the Faculty of Medicine comprises 31 institutes, 30 clinics, and two central facilities (an animal experiment facility and a biomedical research center). Moreover, the Faculty of Medicine fosters close cooperation with several associate institutes.

The Faculty of Medicine adheres to the integrated approach to teaching and research. Thus, medical students will be introduced to both applied clinical research and current issues of medical practice. Since 1991, the supplementary degree program in Health Sciences and Social Medicine has been complementing the faculty’s traditional course offerings. The faculty’s current and prospective fields of research in the Medical and Natural Science disciplines are: Hepatology, Cardial and Vascular Diseases, Environmental Medicine, Gerontology, Neuro and Behavioral Sciences as well as Infection Biology.

It was an amazing experience everyone should try. It expands your spiritual horizons and completes you as a character, all the people you meet and the connections you make can last forever!



FERNANDO ROSATTI:

“THE ERASMUS+ LIFE IS ALSO A WAY TO APPROACH DIFFERENTLY TO YOUR LIFE, TO BECOME MORE SELF-CONFIDENT AND INDEPENDENT”

Erasmus+ Period: 15/01/2018 – 30/07/2018



Fernando Rosatti
Faculty of Medicine
Incoming student
Universita degli Studi della
Campania/Italy

This year is my last year of university before graduation and I planned to spend this special period of my life in a foreign country. Speaking with a friend , Marco, I finally decide to come here in Bulgaria ,after being convinced about the beauty of the country and the university.

This is not my first experience abroad , but probably it has been one of the most special!

Being here in Bulgaria has been a continuous discovery under every point of view, from the academic to the personal one. The university is very modern and functional and courses are usually well organized, but I really appreciate most of all the availability of professors with whom I spent a lot of nice moments. I also appreciate the idea of having a lot of practical activities ,that I think can complete the preparation of a good medical student.

But living here in Bulgaria also means visiting new places and discovery new habits ,foods ,persons. I met a lot of young doctors and students, not only Erasmus+ students but also Bulgarian students that were really welcoming with us. There is a very well organized program for Erasmus+ students that gives to you the chance to live this experience while you are having fun with other students just like you.

At last , but not least , the Erasmus+ life is also a way to approach differently to your life ,to become more self-confident and independent in your daily life, sharing your spaces and your best moments with your Erasmus+ travel friends!



Marco Piergentili
Faculty of Medicine
Incoming student
Universita degli Studi
della Campania/Italy

MARCO PIERGENTILI:

“WE EXCHANGED RESEARCH IDEAS WITH MANY OF THE LEADING SEREARCHS IN THE HIROSHINA UNIVERSITY”

Erasmus+ Period: 15/09/2016 – 15/02/2017 &
15/09/2017 – 30/01/2018

Erasmus+ is not just a period of time living abroad, out of your own country, but it is much more, it is an amazing world made of people from all Europe, true friends and strong relationships, experiences, travels, emotions, memories, lot of fun and so on. It Is just something that marks your heart forever.

In my life I have been travelling a lot doing different experiences around the world but my Erasmus+ in Sofia at the Medical University meant one of the most formative and intense moments of my life, professionally and personally. Professionally, you can face another system of teaching, in my case the Bulgarian one, doing more practice, challenging yourself and studying in another language. I found in the Medical University of Sofia, a high level of education, with very qualified Professors and a modern and functional University in where most of the departments are located in the same area.

In my experience, feeling at home was easy, **I met a group of friends in the University that literally helped me from every point of view, in understanding the way of study, how the University works and as well in ‘not feeling stranger.** ‘But as well, I found in the Erasmus+ office people always smiling and ready to help me. **From the human point of view, what can I say... I discover a new culture, a new country!** I had the possibility to travel inside and outside Bulgaria: Pernik, Plovdiv, Munich, Madrid, Toledo, London, Amsterdam, Belgrad, Belogradchick, Bansko. I had the chance to meet people from all Europe, interacting with them, making true friendships and discovering new habits and costums; I made really importants friends that are now part of my life and met a very special person who is now my girlfriend.

ROBERTA ONDA:

“ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME HAS GIVEN ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO LIVE OVERSEAS INDEPENDENTLY FOR THE FIRST TIME”

Erasmus+ Period: 15/09/2017 – 30/01/2019



Roberta Onda
Faculty of Medicine
Incoming student
Universita degli Studi della
Campania/Italy“

Erasmus+ has given me the opportunity to live overseas independently for the first time!

The experience of the Erasmus+ is not only a college moment or a moment in which the student begins to assume responsibilities, but also an opportunity to learn to live with different cultures and the most beautiful thing is that it creates a sense of community among students from different countries. I managed to break down conventional barriers that I carried inside myself, because Erasmus+ helps you in this, throw down those stereotypes with which society teaches us to live, opens your mind, teaches you that there is no irreconcilable difference between people of different nationality unless the foreign language obviously; but this latter aspect is good thing, in fact as much as one tries to study, foreign languages are learned on the territory, with daily practice and day after day it becomes easier to express and acquire fluency that books will never give.

Personally this experience has enriched me from two basic points of view:

- Academic: I knew a university system very different from the Italian one and I was immediately set up. In the Medical University of Sofia, they give a lot of importance to practice, in fact each exam consists of both practical and theoretical evidence, and I find it very interesting and very formative because it has allowed me to know what kind of doctor I want to be in the future.
- Personal: I can say that I grew up working on myself and in my relationship with others. About myself I became independent and I understood the value of the little everyday things. I met so many people with whom I compared my way of life, some are passing, others become friends that I'm going to not miss.

In conclusion I'm really happy to have done this experience and I recommend to everyone to do it because after you will face the life with a different spirit and when you recall Erasmus+ you will smile heartily.



D-r. Zehra Gok Metin
Incoming Student
Hacettepe University Turkey

D-R. ZEHRA GOK METIN:

“I HAVE ALSO REINFORCED MY COOPERATION WORK WITH THE PARTNER INSTITUTION AND INCREASED MY SOCIAL, LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL COMPETENCES”

Erasmus+ Period: 16/10/2017 – 20/10/2017



I was invited to the Medical University – Sofia in the eve of the 30th anniversary of Erasmus+ Programme. This was my first experience as a lecturer at academic level, so I have successfully extended my professional network and built up new contacts.

During that week numerous European partners attended the program and made presentations to give more detailed information on their institutions. Thus, I had the opportunity to discuss further projects and possibilities for cooperation.

I have also reinforced my cooperation work with the partner institution and increased my social, linguistic and cultural competences. I have also increased my job satisfaction and improved my foreign language skills. I have also improved my IT competences in the use of information and communication technology tools (e.g. computer, internet, virtual collaboration platforms, software, ICT devices, etc.)

I have enhanced my organizational/management/leadership skills. As a nursing professional, during my hospital visits in Sofia, I observed basic nursing interventions, patient population, inpatient – outpatient clinics and have an insight what was the level of the current healthcare services in Bulgaria.

Moreover, I met nursing and midwifery department staff of the Medical University – Sofia and we shared our experiences on current nursing education and observed their applications during clinical skill laboratory.

There was another organization focusing on ethical issues and good clinical practices, so I could participate to this event and listened to all professional’s talks to gain a perspective on how research/clinical studies are conducted in Sofia and what are the most prominent challenges faced by Bulgarian colleagues.

Beside all these professional gains, I had the chance to discover Sofia’s history, art, lifestyle and traditional cuisine.





Assoc. Prof. Dimitrina Zheleva-Dimitrova, PhD
Department of Pharmacognosy
Pharmaceutical Botany
Faculty of Pharmacy
Outgoing Lecturer

ASSOC. PROF. DIMITRINA ZHELEVA – DIMITROVA:

“SOUTH AFRICANS ARE POLITE, CHARMING, CURIOUS AND HARD-WORKING PEOPLE”

Erasmus+ Period: 19/08/2019 – 23/08/2019



I dreamed of Africa!

My passion on Africa and African medicinal plants started four years ago with an in-dept research on some Sudanese plant species. Then I realized that up to 80 % of the population in Africa still relies on medicinal plants as the principal source of medicines for their health. It was found that plants growing under extreme conditions produce more bioactive substances.

I am Associate Professor in the Department of Pharmacognosy and Pharmaceutical Botany, Faculty of Pharmacy, Medical University-Sofia, and I work on phytochemistry of medicinal plants. Thanks to the Erasmus+ Programme, I had the opportunity to make a dream of mine comes true. I visited Africa and continue with African plants research.

At the end of August, we visited the College of Health Sciences in the University of KwaZulu-Natal, (UKZN) Durban. Durban is the third most populous city in South Africa after Johannesburg and Cape Town, located on the east coast of South Africa, and one of the biggest cities on the Indian Ocean coast of the African continent. The mix of Zulu, Indian and European cultures in the city makes it a unique urban environment in which to live and work. College of Health Sciences is one of the four Colleges that form the UKZN, consist of four Schools and 2400 students. Pharmaceutical science is one of the eight discipline in the School of Health Sciences and was the object of our Erasmus+ Programme. This school has managed to place itself in a leading position in terms of undergraduate and postgraduate students. A great numbers of high-technology equipped laboratories with numerous working young people admired us. South Africans are polite, charming, curious and hard-working people.

Full of amazing and exotic plant species, South Africa is the third most biodiverse country with a great opportunity for bioprospecting of plant compounds for novel pharmaceuticals remains. My dream to work on phytochemistry of this unexplored source of natural compounds and to try to help the African people in their fight against different infectious diseases, starts to fulfill.

Thank to all my new Bulgarian and African friends! I hope this collaboration continue and see my amazing Africa again!



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UNIVERSITY OF
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University of KwaZulu-Natal

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D-r Nikolay Ishkitiev, DDS,
PhD,
Faculty of Medicine
Department of Medical
Chemistry and Biochemistry
Outgoing Lecturer

D-R NICOLAY ISHKITIEV, DDS, PhD:

“WE EXCHANGED RESEARCH IDEAS WITH
MANY OF THE LEADING RESEARCHERS
IN THE HIROSHINA UNIVERSITY”

Erasmus+ Period: **03/07/2017 - 07/07/2017**



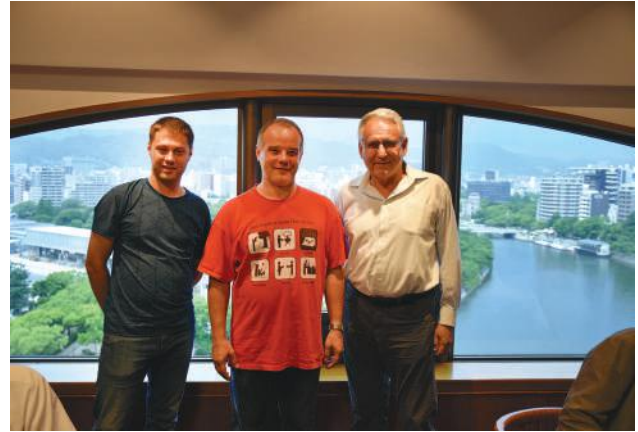
My Erasmus+ experience in Hiroshima gave me exceptional opportunity to see how one of the leading universities in Japan works, as well as a chance to personally experience Japan!

From academic point of view Erasmus+ exchange gave me insight of the Japanese approach towards personal dentistry and medicine – I visited the biomaterials science laboratory, molecular and cellular biology laboratory, metabolic engineering laboratory as well as the hospital complex, including dental hospital, cardiovascular hospital, etc. We exchanged research ideas with many of the leading researchers in the Hiroshima University, like prof. Koichi Kato, prof. Isao Hirata, prof. Katsumi Fujimoto, prof. Chisa Shukunami, etc. We planned on future collaboration. My stay in Japan extended my professional network and reinforced the cooperation between Sofia University – Sofia and Hiroshima University.

From personal point of view, I have increased my job satisfaction and have improved my foreign language skills. Although I have been in Hiroshima before, Ms. Hitomi Ogawa organized our stay perfectly and managed to show us Hiroshima in such a way, that we fell in love with it as we increased our cultural competences. Overall, during our stay in Japan I made new friends, exchanged ideas with some of the leading Japanese scientists in my area of research, experienced Japanese hospitality, Japanese cuisine and Japanese cultural heritage.

From September 2018 to January 2019, as a continuation of Erasmus+ exchange Programme, to our university came three students from Hiroshima University – Hikari Sakamoto, Chika Shigemoto and Nao Yamada. They were attached to our laboratory and with their eagerness to learn and to acquire new knowledge were a valuable addition to our team. They managed to accomplish three scientific projects which they presented back in Hiroshima.

I am sure Erasmus+ Programme helped me increase my career opportunities by giving me a chance to improve my teaching skills, to compare my research methods with leading laboratories in the world, to learn applications of new technologies in my research and to build up new contacts, extending my professional network.



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Dr. Nikolay Apostolov, PhD
Faculty of Dental Medicine
Department of Prosthetic
Dentistry
Outgoing Lecturer

DR. NIKOLAY APOSTOLOV, PhD:

“MY ERASMUS+ EXPERIENCE GAVE ME A GREAT CHANCE TO SEE HOW ONE OF THE BEST MEDICAL UNIVERSITIES IN JAPAN WORKS”

Erasmus+ Period: **01/07/2017 – 08/07/2017**



My Erasmus+ experience gave me a great chance to see how one of the best medical universities at Japan works. I saw the working process in the Departments of Prosthetic dentistry, Orthodontics and Dental Physiology. I also saw the University hospital, the process of treatment and prevention on patients. I had great appointments with the Dean of the University and lots of Medical and Dental medicine teachers. I had a lecture about the dental adhesives, subject of my dissertation. Before my mission in Japan I had an article about the denture adhesives which was the most read publication in Research Gate, Prosthetic dentistry. The lecture was approved by my Japanese colleagues and we had a great discussion after that. After my arrival in Bulgaria I wrote a material about Erasmus+ in the newspaper of FDM-Sofia and an article in Infodent magazine about the denture adhesives.

From personal point of view, it was a great experience to see the historical city of Hiroshima, the Japanese culture and traditions. The meeting between me, my Bulgarian colleagues Prof. Gyrcetchev and d-r Ishkitiev and the association Bulgaria-Hiroshima was another great moment.

I am sure Erasmus+ Programme helped me improve my teaching skills, compare me researches with one of the leading laboratories in Japan, and build up new contacts with great lecturers and colleagues!



Since its establishment, as a higher education institution Hiroshima University has contributed to Japanese education by committing itself to the universal mission to: (1) cultivate talented human resources who can contribute to society, and (2) promote top-class science research which serves the development of humankind.

While witnessing social, political and economic changes, Hiroshima University has always responded to the mandate of the public by committing itself to implement reforms and by showing the direction of its future vision in a timely manner.

The Hiroshima University's long-term vision—10 to 15 Years from Now, as a signpost for Hiroshima University, indicating the process of development as a higher education institution.

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Prof. Norio Sakai
Incoming Lecturer
Department of Molecular and
Pharmacological Neuroscience
Hiroshima University

PROF. NORIO SAKAI:

“I HAVE LEARNED THE ACTUAL SITUATION OF MEDICINE IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES ESPECIALLY IN EUROPE”

Erasmus+ Period: 15/05/2017 – 19/05/2017



In my receiving country Bulgaria, at the receiving Medical University – Sofia, I have reinforced or extended my professional network or built up new contacts. I have reinforced the cooperation with the partner institution/organization, as well, and I have learned from good practices abroad.

My Erasmus+ experience helped me to increase my social, linguistic and/or cultural competences. I have had a good opportunity to present my own research achievement. It was especially important to me to get to know with Bulgarian educational system in foreign countries especially in Europe.

Thanks to the Erasmus+ Programme and staff mobility, I have learned the actual situation of medicine in foreign countries especially in a European country like Bulgaria!

PROF. TAIJIRO SUEDA:

“CONGRATULATION FOR 30th ANNIVERSARY
OF ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME”

Erasmus+ Period: 15/05/2017 – 19/05/2017



Prof. Taijiro Sueda
Department of Cardio
Incoming Lecturer
Cardiovascular Surgery
Hiroshima University



I celebrate the 30th anniversary of Erasmus+ Programme cordially. My relationship between Bulgaria and Japan began from 2008. I received a young Bulgarian cardiac surgeon as a graduate school student supported by the Japanese ministry for education and science. He stayed in Hiroshima University for 4 years and 6 months and performed gene analysis which occurred acute aortic dissection. He got his title of PhD by this work. His name is Dr. Zehcho Naychov and works in the department of cardiovascular surgery in Sofia University now. I belonged to the Hi-

roshima-Bulgarian association from his stay to now.

I have been to Sofia twice. The first visit to Sofia was 2011-year m. May after the Congress of the European Society for Cardiovascular Surgery which was held in Dubrovnik. The second visit to Sophia was from 14 to 20 May 2017 with support of Erasmus+ Programme. Prof. Sakaguchi (virology) and Prof. Sakai (pharmacology) also attended this program. During this stay, we discussed the following plan of the next Erasmus+ Programme between Sophia Medical University and Hiroshima University 15 may 2017. I presented my paper 16 May, entitled “. Surgical therapy for atrial fibrillation “, which included etiology of atrial fibrillation, pharmacological and catheter treatment of atrial fibrillation. I devised a new surgical procedure for atrial fibrillation, which gave a lot of suggestion to resolve the real mechanism of atrial fibrillation. Then, I presented my procedure with basic concept and procedural aspects.

Our visit was successful and continued to send 3 medical students supported by Erasmus+ Programme from October 2017 for 3 months. One Bulgarian student also will come to the Hiroshima University from January 2018, and two from April in the same year. I hope this Erasmus+ program continues in future. Again, congratulation for 30th anniversary of Erasmus+ Programme!



Prof. Takemasa Sakaguchi, M.D.,
Ph.D.,
Incoming Lecturer
Hiroshima University Japan

PROF. TAKEMASA SAKAGUCHI:

“WE HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO TALK
WITH BRILLIANT AND ACTIVE STUDENTS”

Erasmus+ Period: 15/05/2017 – 19/05/2017



Academic exchanges by the Erasmus+ Programme between Medical University – Sofia and Hiroshima University have started in this commemorative year. Three professors of Hiroshima University, Dr. Sueda, Dr. Sakai and I, visited Medical University – Sofia in May 2017 and gave lectures in a long-standing auditorium that had a stone dissecting table in the center. Our lectures were also honored as a part of the lecture series, 2017 International Workshop, for the 100-year celebration of Medical University – Sofia. In this occasion, we visited a pharmacology laboratory and a biochemistry laboratory that were equipped with cutting-edge analytical machines. We also attended a scene of medical student education in one of the university hospitals. We had an opportunity to talk with brilliant and active students.

The medical education system in Medical University - Sofia, which may be common to other EU member states, is different from ours. Students concentrate on one subject for a period of several weeks, and students have lectures and clinical clerkship alternately. The learning unit is called a “cycle”. This system was new for us.

Before being dispatched to Sofia, I must confess that the location of Bulgaria was somewhat obscure for me. However, after staying in Sofia, I was fascinated by Bulgaria. I could experience the European atmosphere and I enjoyed delicious Bulgarian food and wine. I was overwhelmed by the solemnity of Alexander Nevski Memorial Church and Rila Monastery of the Greek Orthodox as well as many other churches and remains. After coming back to Japan, I became member of the Hiroshima-Bulgaria Association, which is a historic private exchange organization, and started to work for friendship between Hiroshima and Bulgaria.

Three staff teachers, Prof. Girchev, Dr. Ishkitiev and Dr. Apostolov, came to Hiroshima from Sofia in July 2017. We have just sent three excellent students from Hiroshima to Sofia who are taking “cycles” at the Medical University – Sofia. One medical student and two dental students from Sofia will be coming to Hiroshima. The medical student will arrive first in January 2018. We are now preparing to accept the student. **These efforts will bring rich fruits to the EU and Japan. I am happy to be involved in the staff and student mobility Programme of the Erasmus+, and I sincerely hope for further development of our mutual relationship!**





D-r. Rasku Tuija
Incoming Lecturer
Nursing and Paramedicine, MHS
Hiroshima University Japan

D-R. RASKU TUIJA:

“I GOT IDEAS TO START SMALL PROJECTS WITH MY STUDENTS AFTER GETTING BACK HOME”

Erasmus+ Period: 09/02/2018 – 15/02/2018

The time in Sofia was a great professional and personal experience!

As a doctoral researcher, this opportunity gave me new aspects and contacts for my future research. I got ideas to start small projects with my students after getting back home. For me, it was crucial to exchange opinions with creative people who bring new approaches from different cultures. As my projects are based on international network this exchange allowed academically valuable discussions.

In addition to this valuable insight for me and my university, I gained new partners to work with and we managed to collaborate at high level. The stakeholders' different backgrounds and experiences make the week and opportunities very colorful. This kind of experience is not a one-way exchange. As a result of this program, our cooperation will continue with the student and teacher motilities, as well as with international project planning. It is always refreshing to hear practices and processes from other universities and what is going on in universities from other cultural environment. At the same time, we learnt that the problems or ideas that we are trying to solve are same almost everywhere. To work together was fun. During the exchange we have already made plans for two new cooperation projects from which one is going to have results next autumn during our international week in Tampere, Finland. As I also work as an international coordinator these short time visits and face-to-face work make the process a bit easier. Every time you come back home you carry some new ideas with good spirits and see your own campus and duties in different colors.

As a personal experience the time I have spent in Sofia gave me new members to my professional network and new opportunities for the future. The cooperation has started one year ago and was reinforced, so we got more practical tools for future development. This along with many other Erasmus + exchanges will have a long-lasting impact on my life and help me understand better the new European identity from the West coast to the Eastern line.

ZLATKO KOSTADINOV:

“THEY TREAT ME SO KINDLY THERE.
I WAS AMAZED WITH THE HOSPITAL
AND THE FACILITIES”

Erasmus+ Period: 17/04/2019 – 17/07/2019



Zlatko Kostadinov
Faculty of Medicine
Outgoing Student



Hello, everybody!

My name is Zlatko Kostadinov. I am 5th grade medical student from Medical University of Sofia, Bulgaria. I had the opportunity to visit Japan on exchange via “Erasmus+ exchange Programme”. I am so glad that I choose Japan because it is a great country and I had once in a lifetime experience there! For Bulgarian people, Japan is famous for being very traditional, cultural and organized country. We think of Japanese people as very hardworking, strict, always following the rules. Most of these came to be true. But they also are amazing people and know how to have fun. In Japan, Bulgaria is very famous for YOGURT. I was surprised how popular is our milk there. They even have a brand for yogurt called “Bulgaria”. The second most popular thing is our famous, and maybe only one Bulgarian sumo wrestler Kotooshu. Usually when I say to some Japanese that I am from Bulgaria, their reaction was “oooo Yogurtoo”.

So let’s focus on my stay in Japan. I arrived in Hiroshima after 20 hours’ flight and changed 3 planes. Actually we are 2 Bulgarians coming to Japan and we were flying together on this day. Our accommodation is International House; it is just next to Hiroshima Station. It is a great place for foreign students and will definitely recommend it. Even on the first day here I came to know that bicycle is very useful here, so after 2 days I already bought one – second hand for only 6 000 yen. And the University Hospital is just 10 minutes by bicycle from my place.

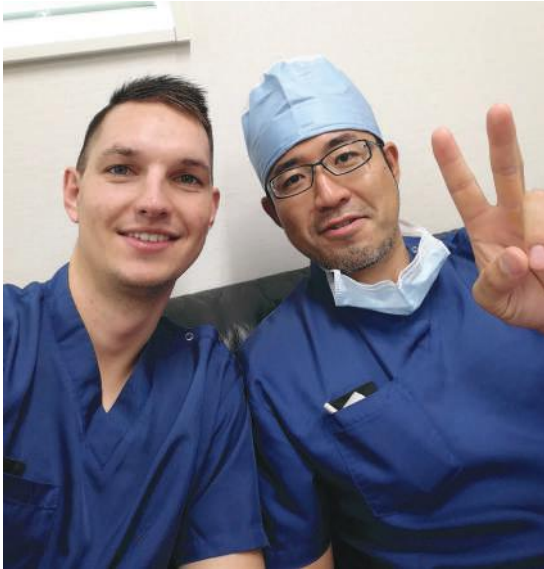
My first department was Hematology. I stayed there for 2 weeks. They treat me so kindly there. I saw many patients with leukemia, lymphomas. I witnessed stem cell transplantation. And as a first department, I was amazed with the hospital and the facilities. I also visited the ICU and SICU early in the first week because this is my main interest. In Bulgaria I am working part-time

as a ICU nurse and I want to compare between my country and here. There are not so many different things apart from the fact that there are many more nurses here, which is great.

Second department was Gastroenterologic and Transplant Surgery. It was a long journey there. I stayed for 1 month. I met many new people. We went out a lot and it was fun. I was able to attend pancreas transplantation, kidney transplantation and other very interesting cases – liver resections, bower resections, gastectomies. As long as this is University Hospital, they don't perform routine procedures such as hernias and appendectomy, so most of the cases are complicated. I also saw robotic surgery used for rectal cancer. Most of the surgeries were laparoscopic. Professor Ohdan is running the department and he is a great professional in his work either as a surgeon and immunologist. After that I was part of Endocrinology department. 2 weeks there. I met very nice and interesting people. Many patients with diabetes, we were discussing treatment options. I also attend Adrenal Vein Sampling, tried to do Thyroid echo. It was good but not so interesting for me though, as I am not so interested in Internal medicine. They brought me to try some traditional Japanese dishes. The time passed very quickly.

On to the next one – Urology. Great people, amazing professional. I was there for 2 weeks and learned a lot about this specialty. Of course I experienced robotic and laparoscopic surgeries as long as many diagnostic procedures such as cystoscopy, MRI fusion prostate biopsy and others. Had a great time there. And finally and maybe most wanted department for me – Anesthesiology (Masuika). I stayed there for 2 weeks, my last 2 weeks in Japan. Even before being officially in this department I had already met some of the stuff there – Dr.Niinai, Dr.Urabe, Dr. Kikuchi and others. I was really interested in their work and what are they doing. I observed many epidural and spinal anesthetics. I watched placing CVP, SGC, arterial line, intubations although I am part of this procedures in my hospital in Bulgaria but still good experience for me. I learned about the drugs and doses and about PCA. I was surprised how many regional blocks they are doing here. It was new for me and I learned a lot. People in this department are GREAT. I was fascinated. I mean they are so kind, friendly, funny, open-minded, and a real professional. Some of them even invited me to meet their families. It was amazing and I even made friends here.





In the end I want to give my special thanks to some of the doctors in Masuika – Dr. Urabe, Dr. Myoshi, Dr. Niinai, Dr. Kikuchi, Dr. Saeki, Dr. Kamiya.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH! I hope I can meet some of you in Bulgaria – You are all invited!

And also I want to thank Professor Takahashi and the whole Cardiovascular department for being so nice and treating me very kindly and friendly!

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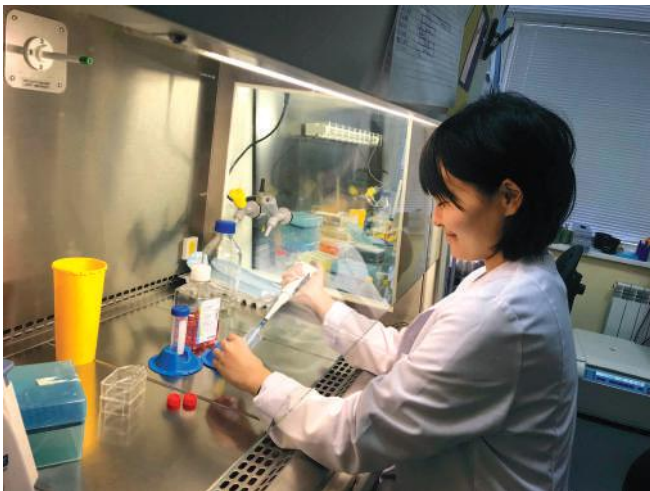


Natsuki Cho
Incoming Student
Faculty of Medicine
Hiroshima University Japan

NATSUKI CHO:

“I HAVE STARTED ACCEPTING MYSELF AS A CITIZEN OF THE WORLD, AND PART OF THE YOUNG SCIENTIST WORLDWIDE”

Erasmus+ Period: 05/10/2017 – 21/01/2018



Academic point of view: First of all, the Programme gives me a lot of opportunities to use Microscopic control of pure Lactobacillus cultures. The English course helped me improve my English skills. Though I couldn't understand exactly what the teachers were saying in English at first, but now I can manage to make out most of their words. This enables me to enjoy interacting with foreigners more than before. In addition, there are various people from different countries, and I'm glad to make friends with them. Moreover, the educational system regarding medical studies in Bulgaria is quite different from that in Japan, which let me broaden my horizon. In Japan we have clinical training from our 5th year of studies while the medical students in Bulgaria have both theoretical part and practice in parallel. I have found it's interesting to know similarities and differences between our country and Bulgaria. Last but not least, training in the hospitals seems to be more practical than that in Japan. The patients are very cooperative with us and they teach me a lot of things with their bodies.

Personnel experience: On my days off, I took some trips to Italy, France, Plovdiv, Belovo, and so on. Italy and France are the countries which I have always wanted to visit, so these experiences were exciting a lot. Since European countries are quite far from Japan, my stay in Bulgaria was really a good chance for me to travel to some of them. In addition, people in Bulgaria and from other countries are free-spirited and DIGNIFIED; therefore, **I have started accepting myself as a citizen of the world, and part of the young scientists worldwide. I believe this experience was quite advantageous and useful to me and will lead to further successful achievements in the near future!**

SUGIYAMA KENICHIRO:

“AT THE MU – SOFIA THE CLINICAL PRACTICE AND LECTURES ARE COMBINED TOGETHER, SO I WAS ABLE TO USE BOTH TEXTBOOKS AND EXPERIENCE FROM BEDSIDE TEACHING AT THE SAME TIME”

Erasmus+ Period: 05/10/2017 – 04/01/2018



Sugiyama Kenichiro
Incoming Student
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Academic point of view: **Erasmus+ mobility Programme was the first student exchange program that I attended and it has been a great experience!** At the Medical University – Sofia the clinical practice and lectures are combined together, so I was able to use both textbooks and experience from bedside teaching at the same time. The practice was done in small groups, which made each study very intensive and valuable. In Japan, clinical practices are done after we finish all the lectures and tests, so the clinical practice was something very fresh and also satisfying. Being able to practice and communicate with real patients is special and it was a precious experience which could only be gained through this mobility program.

In addition, from this program I learned the difference in the medical systems and the situation of the medical aspect of the country. Learning different techniques, different medical systems and understanding the local medical situations could only be done through experiencing and learning in that country. I believe the study and the experience through this mobility program will be a big advantage for me.

Personal experience: Comparing to Japan, students at the Medical University – Sofia are diverse in nationality. I had many opportunities to discuss about medical problems, economics, culture and other topics with the students. It gave me a greater understanding of other countries and I also learned the perspective of how Japan looked in other peoples ‘eyes. It was great to know how my country is seen from the outside. As a studying group I have learned how to be more active instead of being passive. Studying in a different environment made me more flexible, self-confident, provoked me think in a different prospective.

Another important moment is that every program included in this cycle is done in English. There are many students from different countries such as Italy, Germany, Greece, etc., and everyone can communicate with each other using English as a common language. By communicating and discussing with different people from different countries, I could understand not only the medical skills, but also the different culture and standards.

Personal experience: For me, this Erasmus+ Programme was the best opportunity to enhance my personal experience.

First of all, I have bettered my English communicating skills. In the modern society, the use of an international language becomes more and more important for us and our communication. Since I haven't use English in my country, it was hard at first to tell other people what I want to advocate during the discussion. But in a few months, I was gradually able to give my opinion using English. This was a great progress for me.

Secondly, it is about "activeness". During the classes, I found out that many people have confidence about what they know and think, whether it is correct or not. I learned that it is important to make clear statements and stay at firm positions for the successful communication. The Erasmus+ Programme gave me the chance to become more self-confident in stating my opinion before others.

